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CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE NESTORIAN CONTROVERSY

THE MAKING OF A SAINT
AND OF A HERETIC



Susan Wessel

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The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic

SUSAN WESSEL

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*To my parents
and
grandmother
(1912–2003)*

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

IN the pages that follow I tell the story of how one bishop rose to prominence and another was sent into exile. It is a story worth telling because the religious controversy that ensued was not resolved for the Chalcedonian Christians, i.e. the Greek East and the Latin West, for two hundred and fifty years. It was never resolved for the non-Chalcedonian Christians, who remain separate from the Chalcedonians unto the present day.

The dispute started in AD 428 when Nestorius, the newly appointed bishop of Constantinople, began to deliver sermons that denigrated the Virgin Mary by refusing to call her by her exalted name the 'Mother of God'. Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, responded to these sermons, publicly stating that the title 'Mother of God' was appropriate for the Virgin. As the controversy escalated, each side accused the other of subscribing to heretical views. My study considers how Cyril emerged from this controversy as a revered saint and Nestorius as a reviled heretic.

Examining this controversy from a cultural and historical perspective, I consider a number of themes: the combination of secular and Christian rhetoric; the relationship between church and state; the cultural and historical processes by which Christian doctrine is formed; and the bishop as a savvy politician. Portraying the late antique bishop as an ecclesiastical politician well versed in the techniques of secular and Christian rhetoric would not have troubled the men and women of the time. They believed that the truths of Christianity were fixed and immutable, and that nothing, not even the sort of political manoeuvring unearthed here, could alter it. Using every strategic ploy available to them may have been more acceptable to those living in the fifth century than it seems to us now, because they perceived the political battles they freely engaged in as serving those truths.

This story unfolded in all its twists and turns over the course of many years. I am especially grateful to my dissertation adviser, Roger Bagnall, and to my second reader, Alexander Alexakis, for providing me with expert guidance and encouragement during those years. The other members of my dissertation committee, Susan Harvey, Alan Cameron, and Robert Somerville, also offered helpful guidance—Susan Harvey from its earliest stages as a seminar paper—and Alan Cameron provided useful suggestions for the chapters on rhetoric.

I made the first revisions while I was a Mellon Post-Doctoral Teaching and Research Fellow in the Department of Classics at Cornell University (2000–1), and a Mary Seeger O’Boyle Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Program in Hellenic Studies, under the executive direction of Dimitri Gondicas, at Princeton University (2001–2).

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Peter Brown, who offered encouragement and many valuable suggestions for revision, and to Fergus Millar, who made numerous helpful comments on and corrections to the manuscript.

From Oxford University Press, Andrew Louth made many useful comments and suggestions for revision, as did the anonymous reader, to whom I am grateful for his corrections.

Allen Shin made a number of corrections and Alexander Alexakis corrected the proofs. I, of course, am responsible for all imperfections that remain.

I made the final revisions in Newton, MA, and I am grateful to my parents, Roger and Maureen Wessel, and to my grandmother, Susan Mulready, for supporting me during this time. To them I dedicate this book.

S.W.

Princeton, NJ
27 January 2004

Igitur ut eorum conciones etiam elegantes et sapidulas
superemus, dicamus τὸ θεοτόκος.

Nestorius

(‘That I may overcome their elegant and sophistic public
sermons, let me thus say “Theotokos”’)

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AASS</i>	<i>Acta Sanctorum Bollandiana</i> (Brussels, 1643 ff.)
<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
<i>ACO</i>	<i>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</i> , 4 vols. in 27 parts, ed. E. Schwartz (Berlin, 1914–40); J. Straub (1971); R. Riedinger, Series Secunda (Berlin, 1984–92)
<i>AHC</i>	<i>Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum</i>
<i>BHG</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i> , 3rd edn., ed. F. Halkin, 3 vols., Subs Hag 8a (Brussels, 1957)
<i>CCSG</i>	Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca (Turnhout, 1976 ff.)
<i>CCSL</i>	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina (Turnhout, 1953 ff.)
<i>CPG</i>	<i>Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i> , ed. M. Gerard (Turnhout, 1974–80)
<i>CPL</i>	<i>Clavis Patrum Latinorum</i> , 2nd edn., ed. E. Dekkers (Steenbrugge, 1961)
<i>CSCO</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (Louvain, 1903 ff.)
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna, 1866 ff.)
<i>CTh</i>	<i>Codex Theodosianus</i> , 2 vols. in 3 parts, ed. T. Mommsen, P. M. Meyer (Berlin, 1905); Eng. tr., C. Pharr, <i>The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions</i> (New York, 1969)
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>GCS</i>	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HE</i>	<i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library

- Mansi J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, 31 vols. (Florence and Venice, 1759–98)
- ODB *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols. (New York and Oxford, 1991)
- Opitz Athanasius, *Athanasius Werke*, ed. H. G. Opitz (Berlin, 1934–)
- PG Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Graeca, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1857–66)
- PL Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Latina, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris, 1844–55)
- PO Patrologia Orientalis, ed. R. Griffin and F. Nau (Paris, 1903 ff.)
- RevSR* *Revue des sciences religieuses*
- RHE* *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*
- RSPT* *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*
- SC Sources chrétiennes (Paris, 1924 ff.)
- SP* *Studia Patristica*
- TM* *Travaux et mémoires*
- TU Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literature. Archiv für die griechisch-christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte (Leipzig and Berlin, 1882 ff.)
- VC* *Vigiliae christianae*
- ZKG* *Zeitschrift für kirchengeschichte*

Introduction

In the city of Ephesus, on the eastern shore of the Aegean sea, in present-day Turkey, a council of bishops gathered together in AD 431 to address the doctrinal problems raised by Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, in his protracted dispute with Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople. Controversy began to stir when Nestorius, originally from the city of Antioch at the south-eastern boundary of present-day Turkey and Syria, was appointed to the bishopric of the Imperial City, Constantinople. He attempted to mediate a theological dispute between certain persons residing there by stating that the Virgin Mary should be known by the title *Christotokos*, ‘bearer of Christ’, and not by the designation for which she was more popularly known, *Theotokos*, the ‘Bearer/Mother of God’. When Cyril learned of these statements, he declared that the title *Theotokos* was indeed appropriate for the Virgin. The dispute quickly escalated into a prolonged controversy over the correct understanding of the person of Christ. The burning issue of the day was now a christological one, as monks, clerics, and laity alike vigorously debated the relationship between the human and divine natures in Christ. In Cyril’s view, the human and divine natures of Christ were intimately bound together into one incarnate nature of the Word of God (*μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λογοῦ σεσαρκωμένη*),¹ while Nestorius and his followers, the Antiochenes, believed that Christ consisted in two natures, his separate human and divine natures loosely connected by the *prosopon* (πρόσωπον, person).

Modern scholars have ascribed this diversity of christological

¹ This phrase was to cause Cyril numerous problems. For recent studies on Cyril’s theology, see B. Meunier, *Le Christ de Cyrille d’Alexandrie. L’humanité, le salut et la question Monophysite*, *Théologie Historique* 104 (Paris, 1997). M.-O. Boulnois, *Le Paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d’Alexandrie* (Paris, 1994).

interpretation to the differing ways in which Cyril and his followers ('the Alexandrians') and the Antiochenes responded to the heresy known as Arianism. Arius had adduced much evidence from Scripture to prove that Jesus was unlike God, including that he hungered, thirsted, and suffered. By interpreting Jesus in this way, Arius meant to confirm his conception of the divine Logos as a subordinate being in a hierarchical scheme. The modern scholar Young argues persuasively that, starting with Athanasius, Alexandrian Christology denied the claims of the Arians that Christ's essence differed from God's by asserting that the divine Logos did not experience suffering. Only Jesus' flesh was 'subject to these human limitations'.² To the Alexandrians, the Logos 'remained the subject of the incarnation', a christological assumption that the Nestorians rejected.³ Instead, Nestorius and his followers responded to the Arians by attributing weakness, fallibility, and passion only to Christ's human nature, the 'man that he assumed'.⁴ These divergent responses to Arianism have for some time been accepted as the standard explanation for the origins of the controversy that arose between these two bishops of the Eastern church.⁵

The debate was not simply an intellectual one, for both sides agreed that the outcome of this christological controversy would have serious consequences in the realm of soteriology, that is, on the efficacy of salvation as mediated by Christ. The Alexandrians believed that only a single-nature Christ, with an emphasis on Christ's divinity, could guarantee salvation for humanity, while Nestorius and his followers believed that retaining Christ's

² F. M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background* (London, 1983), 179.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* 180.

⁵ Though much indebted to this way of construing the origins of the christological conflict, which F. Young and R. Wilken have already convincingly treated, my study proceeds from a different question: what were the cultural and historical processes by which Cyril of Alexandria was elevated to orthodox status within the Eastern church? See R. Wilken, 'Tradition, Exegesis, and the Christological Controversies', *Church History* 34 (1965), 123–45. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 178–289. For a discussion of the Word-Flesh, Word-Man understanding of the Alexandrian and Antiochene christological schools, see J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco, 1960), 280–309. For a criticism of the Word-Flesh, Word-Man model, see R. A. Norris, 'Christological Models in Cyril of Alexandria', *SP* 13 (1975), 255–68.

human nature as distinct and separate from his divine nature was essential to ensure complete salvation. Different soteriological assumptions thus lay behind the contrasts between the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools.⁶ Cyril's understanding of the eucharist defined his christological and soteriological views, for he believed that Christians achieved salvation through participating in the body and blood of Christ. Only the indivisible bond between the human and divine natures of Christ ensured that Christians would receive the share of divinity necessary to make them secure against the forces of death.⁷ By dissolving the union of the natures of Christ, Nestorius jeopardized the eucharist, the very foundation of Christian soteriology, for Christians at communion no longer shared in the divine flesh and blood of Christ. Or so Cyril publicly interpreted Nestorius' view.⁸

For the Antiochenes, Christology proceeded from an entirely different set of assumptions. They believed that people were ethical beings possessed of free will, whose salvation depended on their emulation of Christ and his restoration of humankind after the Fall of Adam.⁹ This ethical dimension meant that Antiochene Christology stressed the Christians' relationship to the humanity of Christ, with particular emphasis on the Jesus of the Gospels as an ethical paradigm amenable to imitation and emulation. At stake in the christological controversies of the fifth century, therefore, were not simply arcane christological formulations, but an entire world-view, a conception of Christ's humanity and its relationship to the divine that held deeper implications for the individual and his or her place in the cosmos. Was humanity closely linked to the divine through the eucharistic consumption of Christ, as Cyril claimed, or was the gulf

⁶ See J. Guillet, 'Les Exégèses d'Alexandre et d'Antioch: conflit ou malentendu?' *Recherches de science religieuse* 34 (1947), 257–302. For a full discussion of Christian thought in Antioch, see D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch* (Cambridge, 1982).

⁷ W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972), 124; see H. Chadwick, 'Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy', *JTS* NS 2/2 (1951), 145–64.

⁸ Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 125; *Epistula iii (synodica) Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium* (CPG 5317), *ACO* I. I. 1, pp. 33–42.

⁹ D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch* (Cambridge, 1982), 125; Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 126.

nearly insurmountable, to be bridged only by emulating Jesus as the ethical exemplar?

These competing world-views clashed for the first time in an ecumenical setting at the Council of Ephesus where, on 22 June 431, with Cyril of Alexandria and Memnon, bishop of Ephesus, in the seats of authority, a council of bishops deposed and excommunicated Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, and condemned his doctrine as heresy.¹⁰

Nestorius had come to Constantinople from Antioch in Syria, where he had studied with Theodore of Mopsuestia, a Christian student of the pagan rhetorician, Libanius.¹¹ The emperor Theodosius II installed Nestorius as bishop of the Imperial City in 428. A staunch proponent of the Antiochene dual-nature Christology, Nestorius had debated Christology and soteriology with Cyril for several years before Theodosius II called for the ecumenical gathering at Ephesus to resolve their christological differences. The hazards of the six-hundred-mile journey from Antioch to Ephesus delayed the arrival of the Antiochene delegation of bishops, led by John, bishop of Antioch. When John of Antioch and his followers finally arrived, they found that Cyril and Memnon had begun the official conciliar proceedings several days earlier, and that the council had already deposed their fellow Antiochene, Nestorius.¹² Angered that the council had acted without their presence, John and the Antiochene delegation of bishops convened a counter-synod that promptly deposed Cyril of Alexandria and Memnon of Ephesus from their bishoprics, just as Cyril and Memnon had deposed Nestorius from his.¹³ Far from being the ecumenical gathering of bishops that Theodosius II had decreed, the bishops at Ephesus formed two councils and reached two contradictory decisions. When Theodosius II confirmed the findings of both councils, the ensuing confusion surrounding the christological issues was not resolved until two years later, and then only tentatively by the

¹⁰ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I* (22 Jun. 431) (CPG 8675), *ACO I. I. 2*, pp. 3–64.

¹¹ G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton, 1963), 193. See also J. W. H. Walden, *The Universities of Ancient Greece* (New York, 1909); P. Petit, *Les Étudiants de Libanius* (Paris, 1956).

¹² *Relatio ad imperatores de depositione Nestorii* (CPG 8684), *ACO I. I. 3*, pp. 3–5.

¹³ *Gesta a synodo Orientalium* (26 Jun. 431). (CPG 8691), *ACO I. I. 5*, p. 121.

Formula of Reunion in 433, in which Cyril and John of Antioch both made concessions for the sake of ecclesiastical peace.¹⁴

All the same, christological controversy continued intermittently throughout the next twenty years, when the Council of Chalcedon in 451 attempted to resolve it by embracing the doctrinal *Tome* of Pope Leo the Great (449), which taught that Christ was indeed true man and true God. By the time of Chalcedon 451, pro-Cyrrillian sentiments ran so deep that both the bishops who approved the findings of Chalcedon ('the Chalcedonians') and their single-nature opponents ('the Miaphysites'),¹⁵ who included Dioscorus, Cyril's successor to the bishopric of Alexandria, along with the archimandrite Eutyches of Constantinople and the Egyptian delegation of bishops, simultaneously claimed to preserve the teachings of Cyril from the (mis)interpretations of the other. At the same time, Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople deposed for his starkly dual-nature views, known as diphysitism, was considered a heretic of such immense proportions that no one save the most ardent Nestorians dared to invoke his name in connection with the seemingly similar dual-nature language contained in the doctrinal decrees of Chalcedon. Indeed, for the one hundred years following the Council of Chalcedon, Eastern Christians of various christological persuasions all claimed to be Cyril's true heirs by declaring their devotion to Cyrillian orthodoxy.

Previous scholarship is generally of one accord that Cyril emerged from the Nestorian controversy as a father of the

¹⁴ *Sacra directa per Iohannem comitem concilio* (CPG 8723), *ACO* I. I. 3, pp. 31–2; *Sacra ad Iohannem Antiochenum* (CPG 8810), *ACO* I. I. 4, pp. 3–5; *Sacra ad Acacium Beroensem* (CPG 8812), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 146.

¹⁵ Meaning, the Oriental orthodox churches, which include the Coptic orthodox, Syrian orthodox, Armenian Apostolic, Ethiopian orthodox, and Malankara orthodox Syrian Churches. See D. W. Winkler, 'Miaphysitism: A New Term for Use in the History of Dogma and in Ecumenical Theology', *The Harp*, 10/3 (1997), 33. See S. P. Brock, 'The "Nestorian" Church: A Lamentable Misnomer', in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 78/3 (1996), 23–35: 'rather, [Chalcedon] was the cause of much further controversy which continued on till the seventh century, when the Arab conquests effectively fossilized the different ecclesiastical positions that had emerged, and it is these positions which are still reflected today in the various Christian churches of the Middle East', *ibid.* 24.

Eastern orthodox churches because his doctrine was superior to that of the Antiochene school.¹⁶ But this conclusion is steeped in the assumptions of the more traditional variety of dogmatic history, which viewed the formation of Christian dogma as a process in which each theological doctrine was found to be logically connected to beliefs that had already been articulated and was then inextricably linked to a larger organic whole.¹⁷ That methodological approach, however, failed to explain why both the non-Chalcedonian Miaphysites and the Chalcedonians both wished to claim Cyril as their own, even while they espoused widely different christological views. Nor did it explain why Nestorius failed to achieve any hint of vindication from the conciliar bishops at Chalcedon in 451, even though they, in order to protect their creed from the single-nature doctrine of Eutyches, adopted dual-nature language reminiscent of the teachings of Nestorius.¹⁸ Some dogmatic historians have viewed their task as arranging these apparent contradictions into distinct logical structures.

My purpose is to explain this paradox of Eastern church history by situating the Nestorian controversy within a broader historical and cultural context. How did Cyril of Alexandria emerge during his lifetime and beyond as one of the most revered and influential church fathers of Byzantine history, his orthodox credentials impeccably intact, while Nestorius became one of the

¹⁶ See e.g. C. J. Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church* (Edinburgh, 1883), iii.

¹⁷ For a discussion of the methods used by this variety of dogmatic history, see R. Seeberg, *Textbook of the History of Doctrines*, trans. C. E. Hay (Grand Rapids, 1964), 19–20; German edn. R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Leipzig, 1920–33). ‘To delineate these historical processes [by which dogma is formed] is the office of the History of Doctrines—to show how the Dogma as a whole and the separate dogmas have arisen and through what course of development they have been brought to the form and interpretation prevailing in the churches of any given period.’ I suggest that the formation of orthodox doctrine does not proceed according to a logically connected series of beliefs, but according to the vicissitudes of polemical argumentation.

¹⁸ Nestorius has none the less received favourable scholarly attention in recent years. For basic bibliography, see M. V. Anastos, ‘Nestorius was Orthodox’, *DOP* 16 (1962), 119–40; R. C. Chesnut, ‘The Two Prosopa in Nestorius’ Bazaar of Heracleides’, *JTS* 29 (1978), 392–409; J. Jouassard, ‘Mélanges: Le Cas de Nestorius’, *RHE* 74 (1979); H. E. W. Turner, ‘Nestorius Reconsidered’, *SP* 13 (1975), 306–21.

archetypal heretics of the Eastern church?¹⁹ The question is explored in relation to a broader literary context by examining the full range of literary genres, including letters, homilies, conciliar acts, exegetical and christological treatises, and ecclesiastical narratives.²⁰ To retrieve the sometimes contradictory nuances of the literary text, my argument may seem to pay less attention to the rational consistency of dogmatic history. Instead, my abiding interest in language, including the arguments, tropes, and figures of secular rhetoric will be apparent in my use of this literary method.²¹

The term 'rhetoric' has become mired in the complexities of competing definitions, from its ancient usage deploying various stylistic figures in order to persuade listeners,²² to the present-day commonplace idiom suggesting oratorical mastery that uses verbal deception to persuade. Present-day popular usage owes something to Nietzsche's critique of the Enlightenment, his

¹⁹ See P. T. R. Gray, 'The Select Fathers: Canonizing the Patristic Past', *SP* 23 (1989), 21–36. Gray examines the practice of referring to certain revered church fathers of the past in order to lend authority to one's own theological position. For recent works that address theological controversy from a cultural perspective, see E. A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: the Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992); V. Burrus, *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995). In contrast to some recent scholarship, these works do not rehabilitate the heretical sects that they study. Instead, they reinterpret the very nature of theological discourse—Clark along the lines of social network theory, and Burrus according to power, gender, and authority.

²⁰ For a discussion of the methods of dogmatic history and its relationship to the Enlightenment, see R. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind* (New Haven, 1971), 222–3, discussing J. S. Semler, 'Historische Einleitung in die dogmatische Gottesgelehrsamkeit von ihrem Ursprung und ihrer Beschaffenheit bis auf unsere Zeiten', in S. J. Baumgarten (ed.), *Evangelische Glaubenslehre* (Halle, 1764). Wilken suggests that dogmatic historians aimed to reproduce the same theological categories of 19th-cent. systematic theologians, who believed that theology should apply rational intellectual thought to Christian belief.

²¹ See C. W. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body* (New York, 1995), p. xvi, '[M]y study moves beyond old-style intellectual history, for it argues that the linguistic trappings of texts are often more telling than the explicit arguments, particularly for a period such as the Middle Ages, which placed a high value on conforming to positions formulated, even canonized as "authority," in a distant past.' I similarly examine the language and rhetoric of theological arguments, and the way in which those arguments are used to construct a seamless historical trajectory to an 'orthodox' past.

²² I adopt this ancient definition of rhetoric throughout.

view being that language deceived, and was for that reason complicitous in liberal individualism's aspirations towards rationalism. Nietzsche claimed that belief in objective moral precepts was illusory, that such precepts were rationalizations based on a misguided literalism that made language seem capable of something it could not do. For him, language was virtually synonymous with rhetoric, 'the result of purely rhetorical tricks and devices'.²³ Metaphor, in particular, was a lie because its movement into literalism concealed the fact that all language was necessarily symbolic and referential, and did not in any way produce the truths it purported to convey.²⁴ Nietzsche's critique of rhetoric and of the Enlightenment's claims toward rationalism, however, presuppose a cultural milieu profoundly different from the interpretative presuppositions of Byzantine culture.

For Cyril of Alexandria, there were no such literal claims for figural language. Language, especially biblical language, necessarily signified something else—the entirety of the Christian sacred drama, which consisted in the Fall, the Incarnation, and the Redemption. It was the heretics, in Cyril's view, who degraded the figurality of language into a false literalism, failing to understand that biblical language was referential and symbolic, a signifier whose signified constituted Christ's sacred drama. Cyril's way of understanding language as overtly referential and symbolic meant that there was little danger of his falling prey to the 'tricks' of figural language, which were simply a shadow and type of the greater Christian truth that stood beyond the biblical text.

Cyril's theory of interpretation had implications for his method of argumentation and for the style of his homiletic discourse. He believed that the meaning and significance of Scripture lay beyond the boundaries of the literal text. Meaning for Cyril resided in the scope (*σκοπός*, *skopos*) of the Christian faith, i.e. in the narrative of Christ's Incarnation, Resurrection, and Redemption. Nestorius, however, believed that thorough re-

²³ P. de Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven, 1979), 105; F. Nietzsche, *Gesammelte Werke* (Munich, 1922), 5: 300.

²⁴ de Man, *Allegories of Reading*, 111. Nietzsche's critique of language has partly informed my method, which aims to uncover the layers of meaning embedded in the ecclesiastical discourse of the early fifth century. None the less, my approach studies Cyril's and Nestorius' use of rhetoric within the context of late antiquity and early Byzantium.

search into the entirety of the biblical text would lead anyone to conclude in favour of the two-nature doctrine of the Antiochene school. Their contrasting interpretative assumptions produced strikingly different styles of discourse: Nestorius' homiletic discourse was pedantic and recondite in style, while Cyril's was lively. He preserved the basic contours of the Christian narrative, the scope of Christian faith, by imparting to his congregations simple creeds, which he placed in juxtaposition to the figures and tropes of the secular rhetoric that he absorbed through his reading of the church fathers. The public that listened to Cyril's discourse heard it as being formidable to his adversary.

To explain Cyril's rise to the status of orthodox church father, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, examines his early years as bishop of Alexandria, during which he established his power base throughout Egypt; the political relationships that Cyril formed with the pope in Rome, the monks in Egypt and Constantinople, and with the Eastern imperial court; the formation of orthodox doctrine at the Council of Ephesus in 431; the emperor's intervention into the christological controversy in the years following Ephesus; and the tumultuous events that eventually culminated in the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Even though the christological problems raised at the Council of Ephesus resulted in a lasting schism within the Eastern church, and were not resolved for the Greek and Latin churches until the Sixth Ecumenical Council in AD 680/1, Cyril had by then been acknowledged for two centuries as the orthodox architect of Ephesus I. Both the Miaphysites who dissented from Chalcedon and the neo-Chalcedonians, its staunchest supporters, continued to claim Cyril's christological legacy as their own well into the seventh century. That is because Cyril borrowed the arguments that Athanasius had formulated against the Arians a generation earlier and used them successfully to inflame public opinion in his current debate with Nestorius. Cyril thereby established himself as one of the great orthodox fathers in the Eastern church, securing his position as the only genuine interpreter of and heir to the orthodox tradition of Nicaea.

Cyril's early episcopacy, including his polemical confrontation with Jews, pagans, and Arians is examined in Part I,

Chapter 1. By these polemics, Cyril forged his distinctly Alexandrian vision of Christianity, which favoured simple, repeatable formulations of the creed. At this time, too, Cyril borrowed Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse, which Cyril made relevant once again in his later controversy with Nestorius. Chapter 2 outlines Cyril's and Nestorius' political relationships with pope Caelestine in Rome, the emperor Theodosius II, and the monks of Constantinople. These political alliances and intrigues formed a complex network of relationships, the implications of which would ultimately play themselves out at the meeting of the council in 431. Chapter 3 examines the way in which Cyril borrowed Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse from the fourth century and used it when he confronted Nestorius before the council convened in the early fifth century. Cyril's use of Athanasius' writings brought an undeniable air of authority to his polemics against his adversary, for his listeners saw him (as he intended to be seen) as the heir to Athanasius' reputation as the victor *par excellence* over the Arians. Chapter 4 examines the proceedings at Ephesus I, including the problems of ecclesiastical procedure raised by the council; its relationship to the Council of Nicaea; the role of the emperor in convening an ecumenical proceeding; and the problems of authority implicit in the two opposing councils held by the parties competing at Ephesus I.

Part II explores Cyril's rhetorical method, which was to borrow the language and persuasive power of nearly a century of Alexandrian discourse that had been used against heretics and apply it effectively against Nestorius. But Cyril was also thoroughly familiar with the sermons of John Chrysostom and the Cappadocians and from them he absorbed elements of their rhetoric that helped make his public discourse persuasive to his audience and devastating to Nestorius. I thus demonstrate how Cyril's style and method of rhetorical argumentation, in conjunction with his distinctly Christian claims to truth, contributed to his elevation as one of the great church fathers, a rise to orthodox status that was the converse of Nestorius' downfall into exile and despair as one of the most infamous heretics of Byzantine history.²⁵

²⁵ Not surprisingly, Cyril himself claimed that the purpose of his discourse

Following a brief Introduction about rhetoric, Chapter 5 studies the homilies that Cyril delivered to the council during the summer of 431. Jews, Arians, and pagans, the object of Cyril's rhetorical and even physical abuse early in his episcopacy, appear prominently in these homilies as rhetorical weapons with which to devastate his opponent Nestorius and the rest of the Eastern bishops.²⁶ These homilies are particularly striking for their skilful use of figures in a Christian genre customarily used for *paraenesis* (instruction) and exhortation. Chapter 6 examines several homilies that Nestorius delivered during his controversy with Cyril, and analyses them in the light of Nestorius' biblical interpretative method and his early rhetorical training in the city of Antioch.

Part III examines the tentative resolution of the christological controversy according to the Formula of Reunion in 433, and then the renewal of the debate soon thereafter, as dissenting voices began to emerge. Chapter 7 studies the years between Ephesus I and Cyril's death in 444, by examining how Cyril persuaded the emperor Theodosius II to decide for the Alexandrians, and then succeeded in establishing his understanding of Christ as the ultimate statement of Nicene orthodoxy. The chapter concludes by considering Cyril's posthumous rise to orthodox status during the intervening years between Ephesus II in 449 and Chalcedon in 451.

The Epilogue continues that trajectory. After Chalcedon, Cyril's *Twelve Chapters*, which he had composed in opposition to Nestorius and which the Antiochenes had said were heretical, were finally reaffirmed at the Fifth Ecumenical Council that the emperor Justinian convened in 553. By the seventh century, Cyril was considered to be one of the greatest church fathers of Eastern Christianity, while Nestorius emerged as second only to Arius, the quintessential heretic of the Eastern church.

(*logos*) was to benefit the souls of his listeners, and not to entertain them with rhetorical display. *Homilia Paschalis* 29, PG 77. 957A.

²⁶ Note that the terms 'Eastern' (*οἱ ἐκ τῆς Ανατολῆς*) and 'Antiochenes' (*οἱ κατὰ τὴν Αντιόχειαν ἀδελφοί*) will be used to describe John of Antioch and his followers. In the sources they are also sometimes called 'Phoenicians' (*οἱ κατὰ τὴν Φοινίκην*).

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I

The Tapestry of Cyril's Episcopacy from Egypt to the Imperial City

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Confrontation in the Early Episcopacy

CYRIL'S ELECTION AND THE NOVATIANS

For Cyril's early episcopacy the sources are mostly silent. The ecclesiastical historians Socrates (c.380–439), a lawyer in Constantinople whose church history covers the period 305–439, and John of Nikiu, the Egyptian bishop and church historian of the late seventh century, provide our only extant narrative accounts for the period prior to the Nestorian affair.¹ From Socrates we learn that Cyril, then aged 34, was elected bishop of Alexandria on 17 October 412, two days after the death of his uncle Theophilus, who had served as bishop of Alexandria since 385. Problems arose from the very start of Cyril's episcopacy. Socrates reports that Cyril's election to the Alexandrian patriarchate was challenged by the archdeacon Timothy, who gathered a crowd of local supporters eager to install him on the episcopal throne.² Several days of violence and fighting erupted. Socrates reports that contention between the two parties vying for episcopal office became so heated that Abundantius, the commander of troops in Egypt (ὁ τοῦ στρατιωτικοῦ τάγματος ἡγεμὼν Ἀβουνδάντιος, a position loosely analogous to the *comes rei militaris*

¹ After the start of the Nestorian controversy the sources reveal very little about Cyril's episcopacy in Egypt.

² Socrates, *HE* 7. 7 (CPG 6028), GCS NS I (Berlin, 1995), 352–3. For bibliography, see generally T. Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople, Historian of Church and State* (Ann Arbor, 1997); M. Wallraff, *Die Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates Untersuchungen zu Geschichtsdarstellung, Methode und Person* (Göttingen, 1997); G. F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories* (Georgia, 1986), 175–98; F. Geppert, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Socrates Scholasticus* (Leipzig, 1898).

Aegypti) intervened with the aid of soldiers on behalf of Cyril's party.³ The commander of troops in Egypt probably did not report directly to the emperor, but was most likely under the authority of the regional magistrates (*magistri*) who, by this time, retained jurisdiction over both the commanders (*comites*) and generals (*duces*) of their regions.⁴ Responding to regional rather than imperial commands, Abundantius was not the direct extension of imperial authority that his rank seemingly implied.

An examination of Socrates' broader narrative reveals that his depiction of Cyril's election is not entirely trustworthy. Socrates was especially troubled by Cyril's having extended his authority beyond the traditional ecclesiastical functions associated with the episcopal office into the sphere of secular administration, thus wielding even greater power than had Theophilus.⁵ In Socrates' view, Cyril's failure to recognize the boundaries of his bishopric constituted an abuse of episcopal power that readily explained his most recalcitrant acts. That is why Socrates attributed Cyril's later conflict with the imperial prefect Orestes to Orestes' contempt for bishops, such as Cyril, who infringed upon the sphere of power previously reserved for imperial appointees.⁶ This critical assessment of Cyril's extension of

³ All the extant Greek manuscripts and the Syriac manuscript record that Timothy rather than Cyril received military support from Abundantius. When the scribes copying the Greek and Syriac manuscripts substituted Timothy for Cyril, however, the altered text implied that the military support received by Timothy [*sic*] resulted in Cyril's election as bishop: 'Abundantius . . . supported Timothy's [*sic*] party; wherefore (*διό*) Cyril was elected to the episcopate.' Relying on the 6th/7th-cent. Armenian manuscript, Hansen (1995) emended the text to read 'Cyril' in place of 'Timothy', and thereby restored the logic of the passage. G. C. Hansen, *ibid.* p. xxv. For a discussion of the textual problem and its implications for understanding Socrates' narrative, see S. Wessel, 'Socrates' Narrative of Cyril of Alexandria's Episcopal Election', *JTS* 52/1 (2001), 98–104.

⁴ A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire: 284–602* (Baltimore, 1964), 609. See *CTh* 7. 17. 1 (28 January AD 412), regarding control of *magistri* over *duces* and *limitanei*.

⁵ Socrates, *HE* 7. 7, GCS NS I, p. 353. ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ Ἀλεξανδρείας πέρα τῆς ἱερατικῆς τάξεως καταδυναστεύειν τῶν πραγμάτων ἔλαβε τὴν ἀρχήν. 'The bishopric of Alexandria exceeded the sacerdotal limit and took command of secular affairs.'

⁶ Socrates, *HE* 7. 13, GCS NS I, p. 358. Ὀρέστης δὲ καὶ πρότερον μὲν ἐμίσει τὴν δυναστείαν τῶν ἐπισκόπων (Ἀλεξανδρείας), ὅτι παρηροῦντο πολλὰ τῆς ἐξουσίας τῶν ἐκ βασιλείως ἄρχων τεταγμένων . . . 'Now Orestes had long hated the power of the

ecclesiastical power into the political domain was intimately bound with Socrates' general disdain for Cyril. That impression was shaped, in part, by Socrates' wary view of contentious bishops who threatened to disturb the peaceful functioning of the church.⁷ Socrates expressed this view by depicting the Council of Ephesus so negatively that he transformed the lengthy ecumenical proceedings into little more than a petty factional dispute between two contentious parties.⁸

Socrates' portrayal of Cyril was also influenced by his sympathies for the Novatian party, a schismatic sect named after the Roman priest Novatianus (d. 257/8) that had refused to readmit lapsed Christians into the fold after the persecutions of the emperor Decius in 250–1.⁹ Whether that implicates Socrates himself as a Novatian is difficult to say, although several passages from his *Ecclesiastical History* indicate his predilections towards the party.¹⁰ Particularly troublesome for

Alexandrian bishops, because they had infringed much upon the authority of those appointed by the emperor . . .'

⁷ For an elaboration of the last point, see Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople*, 120–37, and Wallraff, *Die Kirchenhistoriker Sokrates Untersuchungen zu Geschichte*, 112. See also Wallraff, *ibid.*, 79, in which he attributes Socrates' generally critical view of Cyril to Cyril's closing of the Novatian churches at the start of his bishopric.

⁸ Socrates, *HE* 7. 34, GCS NS 1, p. 383. διηροῦντο οὖν οἱ παρόντες εἰς δύο τμήματα. οἱ οὖν περὶ Κύριλλον συνέδριον ποιησάμενοι ἐκάλεσαν τὸν Νεστόριον. . . . τούτου γενομένου οἱ περὶ Νεστόριον ἕτερον καθ' ἑαυτοὺς συνέδριον ποιησάμενοι καθαιροῦσι Κύριλλον καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ Μέμνονα τὸν τῆς Ἐφέσου ἐπίσκοπον. 'Therefore, those present were divided into two factions. When Cyril's party gathered at a synod, they summoned Nestorius. . . . Once this had taken place, Nestorius' party gathered for another synod and deposed Cyril, and along with him, Memnon, the bishop of Ephesus.'

⁹ See T. E. Gregory, 'Novatianism: A Rigorist Sect in the Christian Roman Empire', *Byzantine Studies/Études Byzantines* 2 (1975), 1–18; *ODB* s. v., 1497.

¹⁰ For the view that Socrates was a Novatian, see the detailed discussion of Wallraff, *Die Kirchenhistoriker*, esp. 235–57, in which he observes that Socrates contrasts the Novatians with ἡ κρατούσα ἐκκλησία. (See review of Barnes discussing the same, *JTS* 50/1 (1999), 350–3.) This refutes the argument of H. de Valois that Socrates was not a Novatian since he approved of the church's abandoning the office of the penitentiary bishop. He reasoned that a staunch Novatian would surely have disagreed with abolishing this office. H. de Valois (ed. and trans.), *Socratis Scholastici et Hermiae Sozomeni Historia Ecclesiastica* (Paris, 1746), 244B; Socrates, *HE* 5. 19, GCS NS 1, p. 294. Note that Socrates frequently portrays the Novatians in flattering terms. See e.g. Socrates, *HE* 1.

Socrates was the fact that Cyril had closed the Novatian churches of Alexandria soon after his election to the episcopacy, without the authority of specific imperial legislation.¹¹ Socrates also believed that Cyril's closing of the Novatian churches of Alexandria, deposing their bishop, and seizing their consecrated vessels demanded an appropriate explanation and justification.¹² By asserting that these actions against the Novatians did not fall within the proper exercise of ecclesiastical authority, Socrates implied that the sect, in refusing to readmit lapsed Christians, had not committed an ecclesiastical or theological

13, GCS NS I, p. 45, in which the Novatian presbyter Auxanon accompanied Acesius to the Council of Nicaea; 2. 38, GCS NS I, p. 164, in which the Novatians are persecuted by the Arian bishop Macedonius for their adherence to the *homoousion* doctrine; 4. 9, GCS NS I, p. 236, the emperor Valens persecuted the Novatians because they agreed with the *Homoousians*; 5. 10, GCS NS I, p. 284, the emperor Arcadius found Novatian beliefs consistent with the *homoousion* doctrine and permitted them to assemble in Constantinople; 5. 14, GCS NS I, p. 288, the emperor Theodosius honoured the wishes of Leontius, bishop of the Novatian church at Rome; 7. 25, GCS NS I, p. 374, although the Novatians separated from the church, they never introduced innovations to the faith. See also Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople*, 26–8.

¹¹ Theodosius II passed legislation in 410 against heretics, naming the Montanists, Priscillianists, and Eunomians (*CTh* 16. 5. 48–51), and in 412, against the Donatists (*CTh* 16. 5. 52). Although Haas observes that the climate was ripe for Cyril's actions against the Novatian schismatics, we should also note that the Novatian churches are never explicitly named in the anti-heretic legislation until 423 and 428 (*CTh* 16. 5. 59, 65). C. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity* (1997), 299. In 413 (after Cyril's election), Theodosius II passed legislation authorizing proscription and deportation of any Novatian who celebrated Easter on a day different from that of the orthodox church (*CTh* 16. 6. 6). Socrates indicates that the Novatians, around that time (412), enjoyed high social status in the Imperial City, suggesting that Theodosius' omission of the Novatian churches from his anti-heretic, anti-schismatic programme (410–12) was intentional. See e.g. Socrates, *HE* 6. 22, GCS NS I, p. 346, in which Socrates alleges that the Novatian bishop Sisinnius (d. sometime after 407 and presumably before 412) was loved by the most important men of the Senate (*οἱ τῆς συγκλήτου περιφανείς*).

¹² ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ Ἀλεξανδρείας πέρα τῆς ἱερατικῆς τάξεως καταδυναστεύει τῶν πραγμάτων ἔλαβε τὴν ἀρχήν. εὐθέως οὖν Κύριλλος τὰς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ Ναυατιανῶν ἐκκλησίας ἀποκλείσας, πάντα μὲν αὐτῶν τὰ ἱερά κειμήλια ἔλαβεν, τὸν δὲ ἐπίσκοπον αὐτῶν Θεόπεμπτον πάντων ὧν εἶχεν ἀφείλετο. 'The bishopric of Alexandria exceeded the sacerdotal limit and took command of secular affairs. Cyril, then, immediately closed the Novatian churches in Alexandria, took all their consecrated treasures, and took from their bishop, Theopemptus, all that he had.' *HE* 7. 7, GCS NS I, p. 353.

offence.¹³ Later, Socrates offered the same argument against pope Caelestine's closing of Novatian churches in Rome.¹⁴ Attributing to the pope a similar disregard for the well-settled boundaries of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Socrates accused him of transgressing secular boundaries when he closed the Novatian churches. Only the bishops of Constantinople received a favourable assessment from Socrates, for only they observed the limits of ecclesiastical jurisdiction when they permitted the Novatians of the Imperial City to hold their assemblies in peace.¹⁵

The Novatians had enjoyed imperial tolerance and support for a number of years before Cyril's episcopacy. In June 383, Theodosius the Great held a synod in Constantinople at which he examined numerous heretical sects, in order to promote ecclesiastical unity and doctrinal agreement among the churches of Constantinople.¹⁶ Each bishop representing an alleged heretical sect was asked to present a credal statement. Socrates reports that only the Novatians held christological beliefs consistent with the *homoousian* (same essence) Creed of Nicaea, and were, therefore, the only 'heretical' group that was permitted to assemble within the Imperial City. Years later, Theopemptus and his Novatian followers in Alexandria had probably also enjoyed tolerance during the episcopacy of Theophilus.¹⁷ Why Cyril changed his uncle's policy of toleration with respect to the Novatian community remains unclear. Perhaps it was an important

¹³ Socrates implies that Cyril's improper foray into the secular sphere enabled him to close the Novatian churches and confiscate their treasures. Worldly power in a bishop was not considered a virtue by Socrates. See e.g. Socrates, *HE* 6. 7, GCS NS I, p. 323, in which Socrates reports with approval the Tall Brothers' charge that Theophilus was primarily motivated by a desire for material gain.

¹⁴ Socrates, *HE* 7. 11, GCS NS I, p. 356, ἀλλ' ὁ φθόνος καὶ τούτων ἤψατο, τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐπισκοπῆς ὁμοίως τῇ Ἀλεξανδρέων πέρα τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἐπὶ δυναστείαν ἤδη πάλαι προελθούσης. 'But envy also affected the bishopric of Rome, which, like that of Alexandria, had long ago proceeded beyond the sacerdotal boundaries into [secular] power.'

¹⁵ Socrates was, of course, critical of Nestorius for his actions against the Novatians of the Imperial City. He attributed Nestorius' eventual downfall to his widespread campaign against heretics. Socrates, *HE* 7. 29, GCS NS I, p. 378 ll. 9–10, 17–18.

¹⁶ Socrates, *HE* 5. 10, GCS NS I, pp. 282–5.

¹⁷ Cyrille D'Alexandrie, *Lettres festales*, ed. P. Évieux et al., SC 372, General Introduction (Paris, 1991), 49.

part of Cyril's larger ecclesiastical plan to secure his authority over the churches of Alexandria and beyond. Evidence for such a plan rests on the observations of an Arabic church historian from the tenth century who reports that Cyril, immediately after his election, appointed priests throughout the various churches in his diocese. By doing so, Cyril intended to unify the churches of Alexandria under his leadership.¹⁸ Perhaps the Novatians, who were known as the Pure (*Katharoi*) for refusing to admit lapsed Christians into their fold, claimed that their moral authority was superior to that of the churches under Cyril's control.¹⁹ Had they so questioned Cyril's exercise of spiritual authority, then the Novatians would have posed an insidious threat to Cyril's leadership throughout Egypt. For that reason Cyril closed the churches and attempted to integrate the Novatians into the mainstream orthodox churches.²⁰ After all, the Council of Nicaea had earlier rebuked the Meletians, a rigorist sect in Egypt who had likewise refused to admit lapsed Christians during the persecution of 306, by promulgating Canon Six, which declared that the bishop of Alexandria exercised authority over all the churches of Egypt.²¹ That was

¹⁸ Sawirus ibn al-Muqaffa, Bishop of el-Ashmunein, fl. 955–87. B. Evetts (ed.) *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1907), PO I, 12, pp. 430–1. Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, 49 n. 2.

¹⁹ See Epiphanius, *Panarion (Adversus haereses)*, nos. 59, 60 (CPG 3745) *Epiphanius II. Panarion* (nos. 34–64), ed. K. Holl and J. Dummer (Berlin, 1980), 363 ll. 13–14; 379 ll. 1–2; PG 41. 1017A, 1037B–C. See also Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC, 372, p. 49.

²⁰ For a different view from that presented here, see C. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1997), 299, in which he suggests that the Novatians had incurred Cyril's wrath when they came to the aid of Cyril's opponent Timothy during the episcopal election. I suggest, however, that Cyril's closing of the Novatian churches had nothing to do with the circumstances of his election. His enmity toward the Novatian churches was consistent with his ecclesiastical plan to unify the churches of Egypt by excluding those whom he regarded as heretics and who might threaten his exercise of ecclesiastical authority.

²¹ Canons of the Ecumenical Councils, *Fonti*, I, I, Nicaea, *Discipline générale antique. Les Canons des conciles oecuméniques*, ed. P. P. Joannou (Rome, 1962), canon 6, pp. 28–9. For the view that Meletius and his followers held trinitarian beliefs similar to those of Athanasius, see J. Zachhuber, 'The Antiochene Synod of AD 363 and the Beginnings of Neo-Niceneism', *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 4/1 (2000), 83–101; none the less, they were not interested in forming a Nicene alliance with him. On the Meletian schism in Egypt during the persecution of 306, see L. W. Barnard, 'Athanasius and the Meletian Schism in

meant to address the threat that the Meletians (perhaps like the Novatians) posed to the centralized authority of the Alexandrian bishop, for the Meletians had claimed a large number of Egyptian churches as their own. Moreover, imperial laws issued in 410, which imposed on schismatics the burden of compulsory public service, and in 412, which fined and otherwise penalized the Donatists, an orthodox sect that refused to admit lapsed Christians after the Great Persecution (4th century), suggest that Cyril's actions against the similarly orthodox Novatians were probably legal.²² As the newly elected bishop, Cyril may have intended to enforce a broader imperial mandate to control the proliferation of schismatic sects.

In any event, Socrates found Cyril's anti-Novatian actions deeply troubling. He meant to undermine Cyril's ecclesiastical authority by claiming that Cyril had access to secular imperial troops during the electoral process. This was consistent with his depiction of Cyril as a worldly bishop whose actions against the Novatians improperly extended his power beyond the boundaries appropriate for an ecclesiastical authority and into the secular sphere.²³ We should therefore be wary of Socrates' claim that the emperor supported Cyril and his followers militarily during the episcopal election.²⁴ To put it frankly, Socrates

Egypt', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 59 (1973), 281–9; idem, 'Some Notes on the Meletian Schism in Egypt', *SP* 12/1 (1975), 399–405; W. Telfer, 'Meletius of Lycopolis and Episcopal Succession in Egypt', *Harvard Theological Review* 48 (1955), 227–37. *ODB* s. v., 1333.

²² *CTh* 16. 5. 48 (21 February 410) imposed compulsory service on schismatics in spite of the law promulgated in the West (*ibid.* 16. 5. 40; 16. 6. 4) that prohibited such persons from entering into contracts, and nearly removed them from association with the Roman world. Heretics were liable for the penalty of proscription and death if they attempted to gather in public. *Ibid.* 16. 5. 51. A law dated 30 January 412 (*ibid.* 16. 5. 52) fined Donatists who did not return to the orthodox faith; punished their landlords with confiscation of property; and threatened exile to any Donatist clerics and priests. See Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 299.

²³ Socrates was not the first church historian to rebuke a bishop for extending his power into secular affairs. Eusebius reports that the bishops deposed Paul of Samosata for establishing a tribunal within the church. Eusebius, *HE* 7. 30. 9, *Eusebius Werke*, ii. 1–3. *Die Kirchengeschichte* ed. E. Schwartz (GCS 9. 2) (Leipzig, 1908), 708, 710.

²⁴ Cyril's election to the episcopate may indeed have culminated in violence. Even if troops were called in to quell the unrest, however, they need not have endorsed either party to the election.

probably does not provide accurate and unambiguous information about Cyril's relationship to imperial authority. That relationship was actually much more problematic than Socrates' account of Cyril's election implies, a fact illustrated by Cyril's later conflicts with an imperial representative, the prefect Orestes,²⁵ and with the imperial court during the early years of the Nestorian controversy.²⁶

Socrates' account of the electoral process is silent on the practical methods Cyril used to secure victory against his competitor, the archdeacon Timothy. Although Socrates reports that Abundantius marshalled his troops for Cyril's advantage, it is more likely that when (or if) military troops intervened to end the violent election, they supported neither party vying for the episcopal throne. But then, Socrates' narrative fails to identify Cyril's supporters in the electoral process, or any additional means by which Cyril may have responded to the contentious circumstances of his election. That Cyril armed the monks who practised asceticism on the mountains of Nitria, as Theophilus had done twelve years earlier in his assault upon four learned monks known as the Tall Brothers, remains a distinct possibility.²⁷ After all, Socrates reports that Cyril did not hesitate to use monastic force a few years later in his dispute with the prefect Orestes.²⁸ With little time to pursue new avenues of armed support during the first days following his uncle's death, Cyril may have benefited from the same monastic power base Theophilus had secured as bishop. That power base had included the menacing support of the monks from Nitria. Unlike Socrates' depiction of Cyril's electoral process as violent—a version of events meant, in part, to discredit Cyril's actions against the Novatian churches—the formal election procedure also surely required people to cast their votes rather than wield the sword. It probably included peaceful support from laity, monks, and ecclesiastics alike.

²⁵ Socrates, *HE* 7. 13, GCS NS I, pp. 357–9.

²⁶ Theodosius II chastised Cyril early in the Nestorian controversy for attempting to sow discord within the imperial family. It seems that Cyril had sent separate treatises to the empresses, thereby inciting the emperor's wrath. *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex* (CPG 8652), *ACO* I. I. 1, pp. 73–4.

²⁷ Socrates, *HE* 7. 7, GCS NS I, p. 324 ll. 21–4.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 359 ll. 23–9.

THEOPHILUS' ACTIONS AGAINST THE TALL
BROTHERS AND JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

While Cyril's anti-Novatian policies marked a distinct break from Theophilus' tolerance towards the schismatic sect, the uncle had left his nephew a potentially volatile legacy on two fronts: the divisive fragmentation of the monastic community resulting from Theophilus' vindictive actions against the Tall Brothers; and the thorny relationship with the Imperial City following Theophilus' campaign of slander against the noted bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom (d. 407). Theophilus' ecclesiastical and political intrigues with respect to the Imperial City extended at least as far back as his encounter with the Tall Brothers, so that Cyril inherited a complicated political situation more than ten years in the making.

The circumstances of Theophilus' dispute with John Chrysostom deserve close attention, for the early years of Cyril's episcopate can be better understood when juxtaposed to the ecclesiastical legacy of his uncle.²⁹ Furthermore, Cyril's later confrontation with Nestorius earned him the title 'the new Theophilus', a disparaging epithet meant to evoke his uncle's vindictive assault upon the former bishop of Constantinople.³⁰ Several historians, including Socrates, Sozomen (a lawyer in Constantinople whose church history covered the period 324–425), and Palladius (a writer and bishop, d. 431), bear witness to Theophilus' enmity towards John Chrysostom. Their differing narrative accounts are a repository of collected memories through which to evaluate Cyril's ecclesiastical inheritance from his uncle. Though each historian presents a biased depiction of Theophilus, this complex amalgamation of remembered events

²⁹ For basic bibliography see E. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy* (Princeton, 1992).

³⁰ Isidorus Pelusiota, *Epistula* 310 (CPG 5557), PG 78. 361C. Πολλοὶ γὰρ σε κωμωδοῦσι τῶν συνειλεγμένων εἰς Ἐφεσον, ὡς οἰκείαν ἀμυνόμενον ἔχθραν, ἀλλ' οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὀρθοδόξως ζητοῦντα. Ἀδελφίδου ἐστι, φασί, Θεοφίλου, μιμούμενος ἐκείνου τὴν γνώμην. 'For many of those who gathered at Ephesus ridicule you for having avenged a personal enemy, but for having [failed to] examine the orthodoxy of [the doctrine of] Jesus Christ. It is, they say, the nephew of Theophilus who imitated his purpose.' Cyril was also praised for imitating Theophilus. See e.g. *Epistula Alypii ad Cyrillum Alex.* (CPG 8751), ACO I. I. 3, p. 75 ll. 2–6.

imbues Cyril's title 'the new Theophilus' with meaning and significance.

In Socrates' version of the events, Theophilus' problems with Chrysostom and the Tall Brothers could be traced to a confrontation with several monks who became distraught—even to the point of threatening violence—when Theophilus denied that God the Father existed in a corporeal or anthropomorphic form.³¹ Eager to appease the monks, Theophilus agreed to denounce Origen for teaching that God was incorporeal, and to confirm the monks' belief that God's form was anthropomorphic and similar to their own.³² By thus deceiving the monks, as Socrates saw it, Theophilus gained the trust and support of the monastic community, which became a potent weapon in his later confrontation with the Tall Brothers. Trouble began after Theophilus invested Dioscorus, one of the Tall Brothers, as bishop of Hermopolis, and invested two of the others with clerical office.³³ They found that the responsibilities of their new ecclesiastical offices interfered with their exercise of spiritual and ascetic practice. Furthermore, the two brethren Theophilus supervised grew critical of his greedy acquisition of wealth while serving as bishop.³⁴ Disgusted, the two Tall Brothers demanded release from their clerical duties in order to return to the ascetic and spiritual life of the desert.

But Theophilus was not willing to honour their request. He enlisted monastic support, which he used later in his vindictive plan against John Chrysostom, by claiming that the Tall Brothers subscribed to an Origenist, non-anthropomorphic

³¹ Socrates, *HE* 7. 7, GCS NS 1, p. 322 ll. 7–20. See also Sozomen, *HE* 8. 11, GCS NS 4, ed. J. Bidez (Berlin, 1995), 364. Sozomen reports that Theophilus had preached to his churches and in one of his Festal letters that God was incorporeal. *Ibid.* 364 ll. 5–8. See also Cassianus, *Conlationes*, 10. 2 (*CPL* 512), CSEL 13 (Vienna, 1886), 287; SC 54 (Paris, 1958), 75–6, which claims that Theophilus denounced the Anthropomorphites in one of his Festal letters, that this was received badly by nearly all the monks of Egypt, and that the monks of Scetis openly denounced the letter. The Tall Brothers, counted among the philosophers at Scetis, included Ammonius, Dioscorus, Eusebius, and Euthymius. Sozomen, *HE* 8. 12, GCS NS 4, p. 364 ll. 18–22.

³² Socrates, *HE* 6. 7, GCS NS 1, p. 322 ll. 21–30. See J. Declerck, 'Théophile d'Alexandrie contre Origène,' *Byzantion* 54 (1984), pp. 495–507. See generally, G. F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories* (1986), pp. 199–207.

³³ Socrates, *HE* 6. 7, GCS NS 1, p. 323 ll. 7–12.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 323 ll. 14–19.

understanding of God. To the scripturally oriented monastic community, this was nothing less than heresy. Origen's belief that God was incorporeal contradicted the monks' anthropomorphic conception of deity, a view for which they found confirmation in any number of scriptural references pointing to God's human form. The Tall Brothers' reputation for erudition must have made Theophilus' charges of Origenism all the more plausible. Not all the monks were convinced, however, by Theophilus' arguments, for Socrates claimed that they were sharply divided according to the level of their education and erudition.³⁵ While the simpler monks were apparently persuaded by Theophilus' campaign of slander, the more educated among them favoured the new bishop Dioscorus and his partisans. A barrage of name-calling ensued. The contingent favouring Theophilus received the epithet 'Anthropomorphites', while Dioscorus and his followers were named 'Origenists'. Sozomen reports that both sides rejected a well-ordered and rational presentation of their theological views in favour of such insults.³⁶ To make matters even worse, Theophilus, accompanied by the armed monks from Nitria, threatened violence against Dioscorus and his supporters, claimed Socrates. To escape Theophilus' wrath, the Tall Brothers eventually fled to Constantinople, thereby dividing the monks all the more decisively.

Sozomen offers another account of the incident. He believed that Theophilus' enmity toward Isidore, the Alexandrian presbyter responsible for taking care of strangers and the poor of Alexandria,³⁷ was the root cause of contention, and that its ramifications reached as far as the Imperial City.³⁸ Theophilus

³⁵ Ibid. 324 ll. 13–17. ὅσοι μὲν οὖν γεγυμνασμένοι εἶχον τὸν νοῦν, οὐ συνηπάγησαν ὑπὸ τοῦ σοφίσματος, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς περὶ Διόσκορον καὶ Ὀριγένει ἐπέειθοντο, οἱ δὲ ἀπλούστεροι, πλείους τε ὄντες καὶ ζήλον ἔχοντες θερμόν, κατὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν εὐθέως ἐχώρουν. 'Those with an educated mind were not captivated by the sophistry, and so they continued to follow Dioscorus and Origen; but the simpler among them, who were more numerous and who were hot-headed and zealous, turned against their brethren.' Socrates reports that most of the monks were illiterate (*ἀγράμματοι*). Ibid. l. 6. See also Sozomen, *HE* 8. 11, GCS NS 4, p. 364.

³⁶ Ibid. 8. 13, p. 366 ll. 9–11. καὶ τὰς διαλέξεις οὐκ ἐν κόσμῳ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ποιούμενοι πείθειν ἀλλήλους οὐκ ἤξιουν, ἀλλ' εἰς ὕβρεις καθίσταντο. 'They did not think it worthwhile to persuade one another by making arguments for themselves in an orderly fashion, but they settled down to insults.'

³⁷ Ibid. 8. 12, p. 362 ll. 8–13.

³⁸ Ibid. 364 ll. 24–6.

had rebuked Peter, an arch-presbyter, for admitting to worship a Manichean woman who had failed to renounce her former heresy.³⁹ Peter claimed that his actions were consistent with ecclesiastical law and that Theophilus himself had given his consent. To prove his version of the story, Peter asked Isidore to testify on his behalf. When Isidore complied, Theophilus was outraged, charging Isidore and Peter with slander, and expelling them both from the church. There were two additional reasons for Theophilus' enmity toward Isidore, according to Sozomen: he had refused to recognize that an inheritance bestowed upon Theophilus' sister was, indeed, legitimate, and Isidore had failed to hand over money entrusted to him and reserved for the relief of the poor.⁴⁰

Socrates and Sozomen agree that a course of events unfolded that eventually brought Isidore and the Tall Brothers together as supplicants to Constantinople, where they presented their case against Theophilus before John Chrysostom and the emperor Arcadius. The Tall Brothers probably complained that Theophilus' accusation of Origenism was unjust and that he had wrongfully forced them into exile, while Isidore probably cited the incidents surrounding his expulsion from the church. Sozomen added one more detail to account for Theophilus' apparently vengeful wrath. Moved by Isidore's plight, one of the Tall Brothers had asked Theophilus to restore Isidore to communion. After a period of time had passed and Theophilus had failed to act, the four brothers again approached him, asking him to comply with their request. Theophilus grew angry and threw one of the brothers into prison. When the others voluntarily joined him in prison as a display of solidarity, Theophilus became all the more determined to exact vengeance against them, said Sozomen.⁴¹ But Socrates claimed that it was the brothers' dissatisfaction with Theophilus as a bishop that provoked him to slander them with the charge of Origenism. By accusing the Tall Brothers of subscribing to Origen's incorporeal vision of deity, Theophilus was thought to have intentionally created a rift within the monastic community.

³⁹ Sozomen, *HE* 8. 11, GCS NS 4, p. 364 l. 26 to 365 l. 7.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 364 ll. 8–16.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 366 ll. 3–4.

Socrates and Sozomen agree that John Chrysostom's fate was sealed when the Tall Brothers and Isidore arrived together in Constantinople in order to plead their case against Theophilus. Chrysostom received the five men and allowed their communion at prayers, but, consistent with ecclesiastical procedure, he delayed their inclusion in the sacred mysteries until he had conducted a proper examination of the matter.⁴² Rumours quickly reached Alexandria, however, that Chrysostom had already received Isidore and the Tall Brothers into the sacred mysteries.⁴³ Outraged at this perceived slight, Theophilus wrote to the bishops of all the various cities, ostensibly to condemn the books of Origen. But Socrates viewed Theophilus' anti-Origenism as a mere pretence for his personal campaign of vengeance and slander against his enemies, depicting his anti-Origenism as politically, rather than theologically, based. That is why he critically portrays Theophilus as a bishop whose political machinations threatened the unity of the church and its doctrine.⁴⁴ Even if Socrates' depiction of Theophilus is biased, it none the less reveals a strand of historical memory in which many persons apparently believed at the time that Theophilus' vengeance against the Tall Brothers was politically motivated, linked with both his campaign of anti-Origenism and his eventual condemnation of John Chrysostom.

Theophilus' letters, of course, betray no hint of disingenuous political motives. Charging the monasteries of Nitria with rampant Origenism, his synodal letter depicts Origenist practice in its most repugnant form, namely, as an extreme form of asceticism and bodily denigration in which unbridled fanaticism incited some monks to cut out their tongues and to publicly show contempt for their bodies.⁴⁵ Theophilus also slandered Isidore by implying that he had improperly placed a woman onto the widows' list for funds in order to silence her after she had charged him with immorality. He further accused Isidore of

⁴² Socrates, *HE* 6. 9, GCS NS 1, p. 327 ll. 9–12. Sozomen, *HE* 8. 13, GCS NS 4, p. 366 ll. 23–6.

⁴³ Socrates, *HE* 6. 9, GCS NS 1, p. 327 ll. 13–15. Sozomen, *HE* 8. 13, GCS NS 4, p. 367 ll. 7–10.

⁴⁴ See Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople*, 20–37.

⁴⁵ Hieronymus, *Epistula* 92 (Theophili Synodica Epistula ad Palaestinos et ad Cyprios Episcopos Missa) CSEL 55 (Vienna, 1906), 148.

subscribing to Origenism, claiming that his wealth supported the violent attacks the Origenists instigated.⁴⁶

Palladius' *Vita* of John Chrysostom provides another lens through which to view these same events. He attributes Theophilus' problems with Isidore to Theophilus' penchant for costly building projects.⁴⁷ A widow had given Isidore a large sum of money to spend on clothes for the poor women of Alexandria. When Theophilus learned that Isidore had done just that, he became angry because he had expected to appropriate the widow's funds to finance his extensive building projects. To punish Isidore, Theophilus reinstated a charge of sodomy that had been made against Isidore eighteen years earlier.⁴⁸ To escape Theophilus' wrath, Isidore supposedly fled to the monks of Nitria, who gave him refuge. Eager for vengeance, Theophilus expelled several monks from the monasteries and inner desert (including the Tall Brother Ammonius), and accused them of Origenism. The persecuted monks fled their monasteries and sought refuge from Chrysostom in the Imperial City.⁴⁹ When Theophilus was called to the city to answer for his deeds, Theophilus promptly began his vengeful plots and intrigues against John Chrysostom.

Socrates and Sozomen both report that Theophilus' next move was to enlist the help of Epiphanius, a confirmed Anthropomorphite and long-time foe of Origen's works. Having previously counted Epiphanius among his opponents,⁵⁰ Theophilus persuaded him to convene a council of bishops in Cyprus,

⁴⁶ Hieronymus, *Epistula* 92, 150–1.

⁴⁷ Palladius, *Dialogus de vita Iohannis Chrysostomi* (CPG 6037) (BHG 870, 870c–f), PG 47. 22. *Palladii Dialogus de Vita s. Joannis Chrysostomi*, ed. P. R. Coleman-Norton (Cambridge, 1928; 1958), iuxta cod. unicum Laurent. IX. 14, s. xi; *Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom*, ed. R. T. Meyer (New York, 1985). See F. Halkin, *AB* 47 (1929), 140–8, F. van Ommeslaeghe, 'Que vaut le témoignage de Palade sur le procès de saint Jean Chrysostome?' *AB* 95 (1977), 389–413. The authorship of the *Vita* (c.408) has been questioned.

⁴⁸ Since the actual witness had long since departed, Theophilus' sister, according to the *Vita*, bribed the mother of a young man to raise new accusations against Isidore. When the young man's mother confessed the plot to Isidore, Theophilus expelled Isidore from the church without a proper hearing. Palladius, *Dialogus de vita Iohannis Chrysostomi*, PG 47. 23.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 24.

⁵⁰ Socrates, *HE* 6. 10, GCS NS I, p. 327 ll. 21–4; Sozomen, *HE* 8. 14, GCS NS 4, p. 367 ll. 11–16.

at which the writings of Origen were condemned and the reading of his books prohibited. Zealously, Epiphanius wrote letters to the other bishops, including John Chrysostom in Constantinople, urging them to follow his example by convening local synods in order to condemn Origen's works. Theophilus, of course, eagerly complied, assembling a large number of bishops under his jurisdiction. While this anti-Origenist fervour blossomed under Epiphanius' campaign, John Chrysostom paid little attention to the intrigues (*σκευωρίας*) being set against him.⁵¹ Chrysostom's opponents, however, noted with approval this growing challenge to John's bishopric, and, combining forces with Theophilus, plotted to organize a synod at Constantinople to condemn the nearly two-hundred-year-old writings of Origen.

The environs of Chalcedon were finally selected as an appropriate location for the synod. Once the bishops formally convened, they invited John Chrysostom to answer the charges against him. John refused to attend, claiming that only his enemies were assembled against him. So he called for a general council. The synod responded with four more invitations, as ecclesiastical procedure required.⁵² Persisting in his refusal, John would not present himself before the tribunal. Finally, the synod pronounced their sentence of condemnation and deposition because he had disobeyed their summons. From the *Vita* of Palladius we learn that the empress Eudoxia was responsible for John's also being held guilty of treason.⁵³ Forced into exile, John surrendered on the third day after his condemnation by the

⁵¹ Socrates, *HE* 6. 10, GCS NS 1, p. 328 ll. 18–19. Sozomen, *HE* 8. 14, GCS NS 4, p. 367 l. 26 to p. 368 l. 3.

⁵² Socrates, *HE* 6. 15, GCS NS 1, p. 338 ll. 1–3; Sozomen, *HE* 8. 17, GCS NS 1, p. 373 ll. 3–5.

⁵³ Palladius, *Dialogus de vita Iohannis Chrysostomi*, PG 47. 30. Ἦν δὲ ἡ καθοσίωσις ἢ εἰς τὴν βασιλισσαν λοιδορία, ὡς ἐκεῖνοι ἀνήνεγκαν, ὅτι εἶπεν αὐτὴν Ἰεζάβελ. 'The [charge of] treason was a reproach for the empress, as they reported, because he called her Jezebel.' Palladius, an important witness to the impressions then current in the Imperial City, attributes the empress' wrath to the manipulative interventions of the devil, whose hirelings pretended that John's homilies mocked the empress and royal family. *Ibid.* PG 47. 21. . . . μεταποιήσαντες αὐτοῦ τινὰς ὁμιλίας εἰς ὕθλους κατὰ βασιλείσης, καὶ ἐτέρων τῶν ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ τοῦ βασιλέως. '[the devil] pretend[ed] that some of his homilies made fun of the empress and other members of the imperial court'.

synod. When the people of Constantinople learned of John's deposition, they rose in protest, claiming that this political intrigue was merely the result of Theophilus' sinister political designs against their bishop. They thus demanded John's prompt return.

Meanwhile, Theophilus adduced more evidence to support the synod's deposition of John, namely, that he had improperly ordained Heraclides as bishop of Ephesus.⁵⁴ Heraclides had unjustly beaten several persons and dragged them in chains through the streets of Ephesus, claimed Theophilus. But the Constantinopolitans present at the synod complained that Theophilus was wrong to accuse Heraclides *in absentia*. Their opponents, the Alexandrians, retorted that it was sufficient to hear only the testimony of Heraclides' accusers. A riot ensued in which many persons were injured and several killed. In fear for his life, Theophilus fled to Alexandria, where, as Socrates reports, he continued shamelessly to read the works of Origen, in spite of his having publicly condemned these very writings.⁵⁵ That final image of Theophilus exposed, for Socrates, the political expediency of his anti-Origenist campaign.

This rich tapestry of historical memory left Cyril with a complex ecclesiastical legacy, in which many persons believed that Theophilus' anti-Origenist campaign had merely served his political ends. All three historiographers—Socrates, Sozomen, and Palladius—portrayed Theophilus as a cruel bishop who exercised his ecclesiastical power to exact vengeance on his opponents, including the Tall Brothers, many Egyptian monks whom he called Origenists, the presbyter Isidore, and finally the bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom. The memory of Theophilus' political intrigues, which were thought to have divided the monks into opposed Anthropomorphites and Origenists, became one of the first challenges to Cyril's episcopacy. A unified monastic community would have helped Cyril extend his authority over the churches of Egypt, because it was

⁵⁴ Socrates, *HE* 6. 11; 6. 17, GCS NS I, pp. 329–30, 339–40; Sozomen, *HE* 8. 6, GCS NS 4, pp. 358–9.

⁵⁵ Socrates, *HE* 6. 17, GCS NS I, p. 340 ll. 8–10. *ἡ ὕξις αὐτοῦ μῖσος τὸ αὐθις αὐτὸν μηδὲν ὑποστειλάμενον τὰ Ὠριγένους βιβλία ἀσκεῖσθαι*. 'But the hatred against him increased all the more, for he never refrained from studying the books of Origen.'

a potentially significant power base, both spiritually and economically.⁵⁶

In contrast to the divisive politics of his uncle, Cyril's first public statement of his bishopric, his Festal letter for the year 414, called for unity among Christians.⁵⁷ It was this longing for a unified Egyptian church that had probably led Cyril to close the Novatian churches and reintegrate them into mainstream orthodoxy. He signalled his own quest for ecclesiastical unity and his departure from his uncle's contentious theological discourse by using a simile of two trumpets. Just as there are two trumpets, one for summoning the congregation, the other for dismissing them, Cyril envisioned two discourses for the church: one was to explain correct theological principles to those unable to understand, while the other was to prescribe morally appropriate behaviour.⁵⁸ Clear and pure, like the sound of a silver trumpet, Cyril intended the ecclesiastical discourse of his episcopacy to serve as a herald for the community, glorifying the practice of fasting, while recalling to worship those who had strayed from right moral conduct.⁵⁹ He was saying that Theophilus' politically motivated discourse would find no place in his episcopacy. Addressed to the bishops and monasteries, Cyril's first Festal letter also devoted considerable attention to the spiritual benefits of fasting for both monks and laity alike. At the time ascetic

⁵⁶ See E. Wipszycka, *Les Ressources et les activités économique des églises en Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle* (Brussels, 1972); idem, 'Les Terres de la congrégation pachômienne dans une liste de paiements pour les apora', in *Le Monde grec. Hommages à Cl. Préaux* (Brussels, 1975), 625–36.

⁵⁷ *Epistulae paschales* (CPG 5240), Cyrille, *Epistula 1, Lettres festales*, SC 372, p. 142. [ὁ μακάριος Δαβὶδ] . . . καὶ εἰς μίαν καὶ σύμφωνον διδάσκει συνάγεσθαι γνώμην, οὐ μεμερισμέναις διανοίαις, οὐδὲ νῶ διηρημένῃ τὴν εἰς Χριστὸν ὁμολογοῦντας πίστιν (ἀλλ' ἵνα σύμφωνοι, καὶ τὸ αὐτό, κατὰ Παῦλον, φρονούτες), ἀκλῆν καὶ βεβαίαν τὴν εἰς αὐτὸν φυλάττωμεν ὁμολογίαν. '[The blessed David] teaches [them] to come together in a single opinion, expressed in unison, confessing faith in Christ not in separate thoughts nor with a divided mind; but "as voices in unison expressing the same views," according to Paul, we guard our confession of faith in him steadfast and firm.' Brakke suggests that Theophilus' divisive anti-Origenist campaign may have widened the gap between Greeks and Copts which Athanasius had bridged through his ascetic policies. D. Brakke, *Athanasius and Asceticism* (Baltimore, 1995), 272.

⁵⁸ *Epistula paschalis 1*, SC 372, p. 156. Δύο γὰρ εἶναι κελεύει τὰς σάλπιγγας, ὅτι διπλοῦς τίς ἐστι τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὁ λόγος. 'He commands that there be two trumpets, because the discourse of the church is, in a sense, double.'

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 156, 158.

conduct was the province mainly of the monastic community. Athanasius had similarly emphasized ascetic practice in his first Festal letter, suggesting that Cyril consciously sought to emulate Athanasius' favourable initiative toward the monks rather than his uncle's divisive policies.⁶⁰ The monks of Cyril's world were the unappreciated spiritual elites of the Christian community. They were not the heretical Origenists Theophilus had painted them to be.

One modern scholar, Baynes, argues that Cyril wholeheartedly embraced the lessons from his uncle.⁶¹ He suggests that the diplomatic methods Cyril practised in his dealings with the Imperial City paralleled those of Theophilus. That view is only partly correct. Cyril plainly benefited from his presence alongside Theophilus at the Synod of the Oak: just as John Chrysostom was deposed, *in absentia*, for failure to answer the synod's summons, so did Cyril eventually condemn Nestorius, who, in violation of ecclesiastical law, refused to appear before the assembly of bishops in Ephesus. Contrasts between their methods of diplomacy remain, none the less. Theophilus began his anti-Origenist campaign well before his controversy with John Chrysostom, while Cyril's confrontation with Nestorius bears little evidence of an organized, wide-scale campaign against heretics prior to the onset of controversy. If that is true, there is no reason to assume that Cyril's quarrels with Nestorius proceeded from anything other than a genuine pastoral concern for the divisive problems caused by Nestorius' refusal to admit the title Mother of God (*Theotokos*) for the Virgin Mary.⁶² And

⁶⁰ Athanasius Alex., Epistula 1, *Epistulae festales* (CPG 2102), PG 26. 1360–6.

⁶¹ N. H. Baynes, 'Alexandria and Constantinople: A Study in Ecclesiastical Diplomacy', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 12 (1926), 151.

⁶² Socrates, Sozomen, and Palladius suggest that Theophilus' anti-Origenism was politically motivated and that his campaign against Chrysostom evolved from this anti-Origenist fervour. Cyril, in contrast, was genuinely interested in opposing a dual-nature Christology before his confrontation with Nestorius even began. All the same, the full-fledged controversy started only after Nestorius' sermons against the *Theotokos* caused trouble and dissension among the Alexandrian monks. For the view that the *Theotokos* debates were theologically and not politically motivated, and that Cyril participated in them before accusations were made against him in Constantinople, see M. Redies, 'Kyrill und Nestorius: Eine Neuinterpretation des *Theotokos*-Streits', *Klio* 80/1 (1998), 195–208 (redates the outbreak of strife to the end of 428); H. Chadwick,

strikingly absent from the entirety of Cyril's works and from the voluminous extant documents of Ephesus is any mention of the anti-Origenist proceedings conducted during his uncle's tenure as bishop. That, together with Cyril's discourse favouring the monasteries, suggests that Cyril consciously and unambiguously distanced himself from the ecclesiastical policies of his uncle.

CONFLICT WITH THE ALEXANDRIAN JEWS

Three years after Cyril closed the Novatian churches of Alexandria, Socrates reports that Cyril was once again embroiled in controversy, this time with the Alexandrian Jews and with the imperial prefect Orestes.⁶³

When the Jewish population of Alexandria closed their businesses to celebrate the Sabbath, many Jews attended the various mime shows in the city. Socrates depicts the Alexandrian Jews as a rowdy group, always ready to abandon the study of Torah to indulge their fondness for the mime shows. This contemptuous representation of the Alexandrian Jews, which is central to Socrates' narrative, borrows the standard topos or stereotype of the 'hypocrite Jew' who was thought to violate the very law he purported to uphold. The stereotype has antecedents in the Gospels' negative portrayal of Pharisees.⁶⁴ Socrates presents a similarly critical image of the Syrian Jews, whose so-called penchant for sports and drunken revelry eventually led them to mock Christians and the Cross.⁶⁵ As their drunken derision escalated, the Syrian Jews purportedly seized a Christian boy, bound him to a cross and scourged him to death. When the emperor was informed of this odious deed, the Jewish perpetrators were punished in some unspecified way that the emperor considered

'Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy', *JTS* 2 (1951), 145-64. See also S. Wessel, 'Nestorius, Mary, and Controversy in Cyril of Alexandria's *Homily IV (De Maria deipara in Nestorium, CPG 5248)*', *AHC* 31/1 (1999), 1-49.

⁶³ Socrates, *HE* 7. 13, 14, GCS NS 1, pp. 357-60.

⁶⁴ See e.g. the 'Woes against the Pharisees', Luke 11: 37-54; Mark 12: 37b-40; 7: 1-2, 5-6a; Luke 7: 36. See also, *Gospel of Thomas*, 39, 89, 102; *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus*, 840. 2; 655. ii. 11-23.

⁶⁵ Socrates, *HE* 7. 16, GCS NS 1, p. 361 ll. 12-25.

appropriate.⁶⁶ As Socrates saw it, the Syrian Jews suffered just retribution for their impious practices and acts of malevolence committed against Christians. This topos is applied by Socrates to the Alexandrian Jews, who are made ultimately responsible for the harsh punishment brought against them. Distorted as it was, the topos none the less had some meagre basis in fact. That the Jews of Alexandria were depicted as rowdy probably stems from an actual rivalry between Christians and Jews. Inscriptions from the Odeon of Aphrodisias indicate that seats were reserved for Jews, and the same was probably true of the mime shows that took place in Alexandria.⁶⁷ If Jews and Christians supported different performers at the mime shows, as one scholar suggests, hostility could have easily erupted among them.⁶⁸

The real trouble began, remarked Socrates, when Cyril sent the grammar teacher (*grammaticus*) Hierax to learn by covert means the contents of an edict Orestes had recently published regulating the mime shows.⁶⁹ Without explaining why Cyril was interested in this edict, Socrates said that the mere presence of Hierax, whom the Jews knew to be Cyril's spy from the enthusiastic way he listened to Cyril's sermons, was sufficient to incite them to riot. Hoping to circumvent such an outbreak, the imperial prefect Orestes seized Hierax and subjected him to public torture in the theatre. But Orestes' actions against Hierax were also politically motivated, evincing his intent to display his authority over Cyril. Purportedly jealous over the growing power of the Alexandrian episcopacy and its encroachment into the secular sphere, Orestes meant to rebuke Cyril for entering the exclusive domain of civil authorities the emperor appointed.

Although John of Nikiu's narrative depends on that of Socrates, he does not attribute the controversy with the prefect to Cyril's intrusion into secular affairs. More favourable to Cyril, John of Nikiu believed that certain Jews were responsible for the

⁶⁶ Socrates, *HE* 7. 16, GCS NS I, p. 361 ll. 21–5.

⁶⁷ Inscriptions from the Odeon in Aphrodisias confirm that seats were reserved for the Jews. See C. Roueché, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Periods*, JRS, Monographs, 6 (1993), 118–19: τόπος Ἑβραίων (Block B, Row 8), and τόπος Βενέτων/Ἑβραίων τῶν παλαιῶν (Block D, Row 6). 'Place [reserved] for the ancient Hebrews.'

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 30.

⁶⁹ Socrates, *HE* 7. 13, GCS NS I, p. 358 ll. 3–12.

expulsion of the Jewish community from Alexandria. But his narrative fails to mention the precise wrong the Jews had committed against the Christians, only that Cyril threatened them with retribution unless they ceased their actions.⁷⁰ John reports that the Jews complained to Orestes that Hierax was present at the theatre solely to incite their community to riot. Perhaps he thought the Jews were guilty simply because Orestes supported them when he, Orestes, subjected Cyril's spy to torture.⁷¹ Orestes' action would have therefore threatened Cyril's authority in the secular and ecclesiastical spheres. In responding to the complaints of the Jewish community, Orestes was made flagrantly to disregard, rather than envy, the fledgling bishop's powers.

Socrates and John of Nikiu agree none the less that the Jews, confident of Orestes' support, plotted their next scheme against the unsuspecting Christians.⁷² Some Jews were posted as sentinels during the night, while others were to deceive the Christians by shouting in the streets that the church of St Athanasius was burning in flames. When the Christians heard the cries, they rushed to save their church, only to find themselves surrounded by a crowd of 'tumultuous' Jews. Several Christians were slain. Enraged at the conduct of the Jews, Cyril and a crowd of supporters entered the synagogues looking for the perpetrators of the atrocity. Socrates alone reports that the incident resulted in Cyril's expelling the entire Alexandrian Jewish community, and then plundering all the property that the Jews possessed. Only one Jew eventually returned to Alexandria, reports Socrates, a physician named Adamantius, who had fled to Atticus, the bishop of Constantinople, in order to convert to Christianity. By this statement, Socrates unwittingly reveals

⁷⁰ John of Nikiu, *Chronicon* (Ethiopic). In Socrates' narrative, 'Cyril' threatens the Jews with punishment; in the Ethiopic text, the 'governor' or 'chief magistrate' does so. See H. Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean, évêque de Nikiou, Texte éthiopien publié et traduit*, Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale, 24/1 (Paris, 1883, 1935), 101. ('governor'); *Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, trans. from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text by R. H. Charles (London, 1916), 84. 94 ('chief magistrate').

⁷¹ John of Nikiu, *Chronicon*. Zotenberg, *Chronique*, 101; *Chronicle of John*, 84. 92.

⁷² Socrates, *HE* 7. 13, GCS NS 1, p. 358 l. 23 to p. 359 l. 22; John of Nikiu, *Chronicon*. Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean*, 101-2. *Chronicle of John*, 84. 95-8.

that such prominent Jews as Adamantius remained in the city well after their purported expulsion. Even John of Nikiu found Socrates' account implausible, for he reports that only the Jewish assassins were expelled from the city, and not the entire Jewish community.⁷³

John of Nikiu and Socrates agree that Orestes was ineffective. Socrates reports that Orestes, grieved over the loss of the Jewish population, wrote to the emperor, while John reports that Orestes could offer no help to the exiled Jews.⁷⁴ Likewise, both historiographers depict Cyril as a powerful bishop who was able to defy Orestes, the imperial authority in Egypt. Remember that for Socrates, only a bishop whose actions had exceeded the boundaries between secular and ecclesiastical authority could have succeeded in closing the Novatian churches in Alexandria. That is why Socrates made Cyril's confrontation with the prefect a similar demonstration of his, Cyril's, wrongful encroachment into the secular sphere. And to highlight his authority in ecclesiastical affairs, Socrates portrays him offering the Bible to Orestes, thereby suggesting that respect for religion and for the episcopal office might induce the prefect to reconcile with the bishop. When this gesture failed to achieve a peaceful accommodation, five hundred monks from Nitria were said to have emerged from the desert fringe and to have raised a seditious tumult against the prefect. Approximately fifteen years earlier, Theophilus had armed these very monks when he attacked the Tall Brothers.⁷⁵ One tradition has it that Cyril himself spent five years in ascetic training in the Nitrian desert, which, if accurate, would readily account for the monks' support of their patriarch.⁷⁶ They hurled numerous abusive epithets at Orestes, including 'pagan' and 'idolator'.⁷⁷ Denying the insults, Orestes proffered impeccable Christian credentials: his baptism by

⁷³ Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean*, 102; *Chronicle of John*, 84. 99.

⁷⁴ Socrates, *HE* 7. 13, GCS NS 1, p. 359 ll. 12–15; Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean*, 102; *Chronicle of John*, 84. 99.

⁷⁵ Socrates, *HE* 6. 7, GCS NS 1, p. 324 ll. 21–4.

⁷⁶ Sawirus ibn al-Muqaffa, Bishop of el-Ashmunein, fl. 955–87. Evetts (ed.), *History of the Patriarchs*, PO 1. 12, pp. 427–8. Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 372, p. 14.

⁷⁷ Socrates, *HE* 7. 14, GCS NS 1, p. 359 ll. 28–9. ἀπεκάλουν θύτην καὶ Ἑλληνα καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ περιύβριζον. 'They called him an idolator and a pagan, and hurled many other abuses at him.'

bishop Atticus of Constantinople. For the Nitrian monks, however, this merely confirmed Orestes' status as a recent convert from paganism, and one of the monks, Ammonius, allegedly threw a stone at Orestes' head. As the people of Alexandria came to the rescue of the injured prefect and seized Ammonius, the rest of the monks fled. In retribution for the deed, Orestes subjected Ammonius to public torture so severe that he died from his injuries. Cyril attempted to elevate Ammonius to the status of a martyr by depositing the body in an appropriate church, bestowing on the slain monk the appellation *Thaumasius* (*θαυμάσιος*, the wonderful), and eulogizing his 'pious act' in thus confronting Orestes.⁷⁸ But Cyril's strategy did not persuade the Christian populace. They complained that Ammonius had been tortured because of his seditious act against the prefect, and not because he had refused to deny Christ—a necessary prerequisite for true martyrdom. Socrates' narrative thus reveals Cyril's power struggle not only with the local imperial authority, but within the Christian community proper. Although the Nitrian monks appeared ready to support their bishop, some of the Alexandrian Christians openly disagreed with Cyril's attempt to enrol Ammonius among the martyrs. Instead, these dissenting Christians supported Orestes, quietly forcing Cyril to retreat from his political manœuvre.

Socrates' account of this incident with the Alexandrian Jews thus reveals more about Cyril's struggle to secure his leadership in Alexandria than about the quality of the relations between Jews and Christians in the city. From it we learn that Cyril was a fledgling bishop at the time whose exercise of power over the imperial prefect Orestes was thwarted by an unnamed group of Alexandrian Christians, perhaps the elite and educated of the city, who were not easily persuaded by the abusive slogans hurled at their prefect.

Although the Alexandrian Jews may, indeed, have opposed Cyril in his confrontation with Orestes, similar narratives depicting Jewish opposition to a newly elected orthodox Alexandrian bishop occur in at least two other instances. Athanasius in his Encyclical letter reports a tumultuous incident involving the Jews and the imperial prefect Philagrius.⁷⁹ When the Arian

⁷⁸ Ibid. 360 ll. 9–10.

⁷⁹ Athanasius, *Epistula encyclica*, 3 (CPG 2124), Opitz, ii. I 171 l. 21 to 172

bishop Gregory was appointed to replace Athanasius, the orthodox Christians sought to prevent his consecration. Philagrius, an Arian supporter, gathered an armed mob of pagans and Jews who broke into the churches, desecrated sacred vessels, and seized several monks and virgins. Athanasius' narrative served a twofold purpose. First, it showed that the episcopacy of the Arian bishop Gregory was illegitimate, for any bishop whose support depended upon an alliance of pagans and Jews was by definition unworthy of holding high ecclesiastical office. Second, by closely allying the prefect Philagrius with the pagan and Jewish contingent, it implied that any imperial support for the Arian cause was inconsequential.

Theodoret reports a similar confrontation with the Jews when Peter was elected as Athanasius' successor to the episcopacy. The governor of the province assembled pagans and Jews, surrounded the church where Peter was enthroned, and threatened him with exile unless he emerged from the church. According to Theodoret, the governor was an unrelenting pagan who pretended to comply with an imperial command but was merely acting on his own impiety.⁸⁰ As in Athanasius' narrative, the presence in Theodoret's account of armed Jews supporting the prefect compromised the spiritual and secular authority of the imperial representatives, both of whom had attempted to exercise their political power against an orthodox bishop. Socrates' and John of Nikiu's negative depiction of tumultuous Jews collaborating with Orestes similarly functioned to undermine the authority of Orestes and his initiatives against Cyril. When placed in this telling juxtaposition, Cyril's confrontation with the imperial prefect stands at the very centre of these narratives, which reveal a new bishop struggling to consolidate his power base in Alexandria. All the same, an important and powerful segment of the urban Christian community remained critical of

l. 21; PG 25. 228–9, cited by R. L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind* (New Haven, 1971), 47. See also *Apologia contra Arianos*, 30 (CPG 2123), Opitz, ii. III. 109.

⁸⁰ τῆ δέ γε ἀληθεία τῆς δυσεβοῦς ὀργῆς ἐμφορούμενος. 'But actually, he was consumed by his impious temperament.' Theodoret, *HE* 4. 21, GCS NS 5, *Theodoret Kirchengeschichte*, ed. G. C. Hansen and L. Parmentier (Berlin, 1998), 246–7. The threat of exile implied that the force of imperial command stood behind the governor's order that Peter leave the church.

Cyril's policies, and they exerted enough influence over the bishop successfully to halt his efforts to enrol Ammonius on the list of martyrs. These dissenting Christians temporarily thwarted Cyril's attempt to gain approval from the larger Christian community.

Although narratives that depict Cyril as boldly confronting unrelenting Jews disclose little about the true nature of Jewish/Christian relations in Alexandria, they may be interpreted as expressing the ways that Cyril and his contemporaries defined themselves as Alexandrian Christians. Cyril's public discourses, in particular, betray much of his virulent, if somewhat diffuse, anti-Jewish sentiment. In the early years of his episcopacy, Cyril paid little attention to the problem of Christian heretics, directing much of his invective instead towards Jews. A fair number of the Festal letters vilify Jews, thus becoming a significant repository of anti-Jewish polemic. Festal letters were circulated to all the churches and monasteries in every city of Egypt in order to announce the beginning of Lent and set the date for Easter Sunday.⁸¹ Well known for its didactic and stylistic qualities, and widely transmitted within Egypt and beyond, this genre of Christian discourse was especially effective at reaching large numbers of urban Christians.⁸² Synesius of Cyrene wrote to Theophilus when he was bishop of Alexandria, extolling the pastoral virtues of the Festal letter. Describing this revered tradition, Synesius urged a presbyter named Peter to offer every consideration for the messenger who disseminated these Festal letters, since he was 'forced to traverse a hostile terrain' in order to preserve the integrity of this ancient ecclesiastical custom. Although the Festal letter's main purpose was to set the date for Easter, it was also recognized as being well suited for imparting Christian instruction. It was, therefore, a potent form of discourse by which Cyril could transmit his anti-Jewish sentiment.

⁸¹ Cassianus, *Conlationes*, 10. 2 (CPL 512), CSEL 13, pp. 286–7; SC 54, p. 75.

⁸² Synesius of Cyrene, *Opere di Sinesio di Cirene*, ed. A. Garzya (Turin, 1989), Epistula 9, p. 94 ll. 5–7. 'Ὡς ὁ γὰρ τῆτες καταπεμφθεὶς λόγος καὶ ἦσε τὰς πόλεις καὶ ἄνησε, τὸ μὲν τῷ μεγέθει τῶν νοημάτων τὸ δὲ τῶν ὀνομάτων τῇ χάριτι. 'The one [i.e. letter] that you have this year sent us has both instructed and charmed our cities, as much by the grace of its language as by the grandeur of its thoughts.' *The Letters of Synesius of Cyrene*, trans. A. Fitzgerald (Oxford, 1926), 95.

Whether this polemic was addressed to an actual Jewish community remains a difficult question. As early as the *Epistle of Barnabas*,⁸³ written in the second century, Christians were interested in such questions as the relationship between the Old and New Covenants, and the proper means by which Christians should read and interpret the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. Addressed to Christians rather than Jews, this literature helped to refine Christian self-definition amid competing influences from pagans and Jews.⁸⁴ Cyril's polemic has numerous antecedents that made extensive use of the Christian/Jewish literary dialogue to forge a distinctly Christian self-understanding that was shaped in relation to *Christian* notions of Jewish belief and practice.⁸⁵ Jewish Midrash, for example, pondered a set of questions entirely different from those raised by the Christian exegetes of the period, suggesting that the exegetical issues these Christian writers addressed reveal more about theological problems arising within the Christian tradition than about actual theological confrontation between Jews and Christians. The anti-Jewish invective of Cyril's Festal letters none the less raises important questions about the nature of Christian polemic in the period, and about how this polemic was eventually transmitted to the populace of Egypt.

How did the numerous congregations who received and heard Cyril's letters understand the Jews, and how did that understanding ultimately shape their notions of Christian self-definition? Jewish practice came under immediate attack in Cyril's first Festal letter for the year 414. A pastoral meditation on the benefits of fasting, this letter embraced the fast as the source of all spiritual joy, and simultaneously condemned the Jews for practising the ritual poorly.⁸⁶ To support this assertion, Cyril offered several New Testament passages: Pharisaic pride

⁸³ *Epistula Barnabae* (CPG 1050), ed. P. Prigent and R. A. Kraft, *Épître de Barnabé* (SC 172) (Paris, 1971).

⁸⁴ See Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind*, 12 ff.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Epistula paschalis* 1, SC 372, p. 170; Ἰουδαῖοι δὲ πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὑπερβαλλόμενοι τῇ τῶν ἀσεβημάτων καινότητι, εἰδέναι μὲν οὐκ ἀρνοῦνται, πράττουσι δὲ οὕτως αἰσχρῶς, ὡς εἶναι τάχα που κρείττους, ὅτε μὴ τοῦτο ποιοῦντες εὐρίσκονται. 'But the Jews, who surpass all humanity in the novelty of their impiety, do not deny knowing [of it, i.e. the fast], but they practise it so shamefully that it is perhaps better when they are found not doing this [i.e. the fast] [at all].'

over ritual achievements, such as fasting and tithing, contrasted sharply with the humble piety of the tax collector, whose task was none the less morally reprehensible.⁸⁷ A literary topos from the Gospel narratives, the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees served Cyril's larger polemical ends. The Jews were, for Cyril, rebellious and obstinate. They were thought to have received just retribution for their sins, for God had utterly and completely abandoned them.⁸⁸ Cyril went so far as to compare the impiety of the Jews with that of the pagan Greeks, who rejected God in favour of corruptible images, because the Jews were said to have exchanged an exemplary life for something approximating the apostasy of the pagans. In no way representative of Jewish-Christian dialogue, Cyril's anti-Jewish polemic functioned as a negative exemplar intended to exhort the Christian populace to correct ritual practice. Christians who failed to heed Cyril's advice were led to believe that they were in imminent danger of succumbing to a fate similar to that of the 'unbelieving' and 'disobedient' Jews.

Cyril launched another vehement attack against Jewish practice in 418. This time, not Jewish hypocrisy troubled him but Jewish 'ignorance'. He believed that such ignorance was the result of incorrect interpretative assumptions, that the Jews had failed to appreciate that ancestral practices, such as circumcision and the Sabbath, were no more than shadows and types.⁸⁹ These practices had continued because the Jews had interpreted the Septuagint literally, claimed Cyril, when the relevant passages should have been understood figuratively. Jewish practice was therefore made to defy the sound interpretative principles Cyril had inherited from the allegorical and typological tradition of scriptural exegesis that had begun with the Jewish philosopher, Philo of Alexandria.⁹⁰ Viewing the exegetical problem in anthro-

⁸⁷ Luke 18: 11, 12; Matt. 23: 24, 27.

⁸⁸ *Epistula paschalis* 1, SC 372, p. 172.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 6, SC 372, p. 364, Festal Letter 6; Cyril posed several rhetorical questions to the Jews, including: *Πότε τῆς σῆς ἀμαθίας τὸ πέρασ ἀφθήσεται; Πότε τῆς ἐν νόμῳ σκιᾶς ἀποστήσεις τὸν νοῦν;* 'When will the extent of your ignorance be discovered? When will you distance your mind from the shadow which is in the law?'

⁹⁰ For a discussion of the reception of Philo in the Alexandrian tradition, see D. T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Assen, 1993), 184–211.

polological terms, he said: man, who is made in the image of God, does not contain anything superfluous. By removing flesh from the body, the Jewish ritual of circumcision defied this fundamental truth of divine creation.⁹¹ To correct the interpretative problem, Cyril recommended that circumcision be understood in a typological sense, as a figural representation of a more spiritual meaning, namely as a ‘circumcision or purification of the heart’. Following the tradition established by Paul, Cyril believed that Abraham’s circumcision was to be understood as a sign of his justification by faith. Cyril applied the same typological method to his reinterpretation of the Jewish Sabbath: it was a type that prefigured the saints’ repose at the *eschaton* (the end-time) as they soared to the celestial city.⁹² This was Christian *paraenesis*, reflections on the proper interpretation of Hebraic practice that did not, in any sense, reveal current discussions between Jews and Christians. Meant to instruct the various churches, this reinterpretation of Jewish ritual and practice was an attempt to reconcile current Christian practice with the traditions that the Christians had inherited from the Judaic past.

Questions of scriptural interpretation were also important in matters of religious belief. The refusal of the Jews to believe in both Moses *and* Jesus meant to Cyril that the secrets of Scripture were inaccessible to them.⁹³ Only the believers in Christ were thought to possess the necessary interpretative abilities, for only they automatically transformed the literal sense of the law into a spiritual *theoria* (θεωρία πνευματική), rendering the true Christian meaning of Scripture readily intelligible.⁹⁴ The outcome of this interpretative process was that truth replaced the ‘shadow of the law’, as the ‘spiritual truth’ that was once hidden under the

⁹¹ *Epistula paschalis* 6. SC 372, p. 366, μάλλον δὲ τὴν τοῦ δημιουργήσαντος γράφεται τέχνην, ὡς εἰκαίους τισὶ περιττώμασι τὸ τοῦ σώματος καταβρίθοντος σχῆμα. ‘rather, it indicts the art of the creator, as if the form of the body had been weighed down with some pointless excesses.’ See also *ibid.* 367 n. 1.

⁹² *Epistula paschalis* 6. SC 372, p. 386, Σημαίνει τοίνυν ἢ κατὰ τὸ Σάββατον ἀργία καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων ἀπόθεσις τὴν ἐσομένην ἐπὶ τέλει τῶν ἀγίων κατάπαυσιν. ‘The rest on the Sabbath and the ceasing of work signifies the future repose of the saints at the end-time.’

⁹³ *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam* (CPG 5203), PG 70. 653D–656A. See also A. Kerrigan, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Interpreter of the Old Testament* (Rome, 1952), 176–9.

⁹⁴ *Glaphyra in Pentateuchum* (CPG 5201), PG 69. 448B.

veil of Mosaic law was made to shine forth at the Incarnation of the Logos and reveal its types, transforming the law into a spiritual song.⁹⁵ For the Jews' unwillingness to acknowledge that Christ the Logos had removed the shadows of the law and revealed truth in its spiritual sense, Cyril relegated them to the interpretative obscurity of shadows and types.⁹⁶ Unable to comprehend the spiritual meaning of Scripture, the 'literal-minded Jews' were, as Cyril put it, consigned to life in the shadows, in which the full significance of Scripture was ultimately to elude them.

Cyril used this method of typological exegesis in order to claim the entire history of the Jewish people, starting with Moses, Abraham, and Isaac, and culminating with Christ. Charging that the Jews had failed to recognize what Scripture had represented to them in figures and types, Cyril thereby made the Christians the rightful heirs to the Judaic past.⁹⁷ For example, he applied this method to the Genesis account of Abraham and Isaac, and by it he understood the sacrifice of Isaac to prefigure Christ's sacred mystery: Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, functioned as a type and foreshadow of God's ultimate sacrifice of Jesus.⁹⁸ But what was revealed through types must, as Cyril put it, then be explained and interpreted before the significance of this mystery could be fully comprehended.⁹⁹ That Isaac was placed on the wood, while the ram

⁹⁵ Ibid. 241B. *Περὶ σὺρει γὰρ ὡσπερ ὁ Χριστὸς τὴν τοῦ νόμου σκιάν, καὶ προφητικῶν συγγραμμάτων τὸ οἰοεὶ κατακάλυμμα, λελευκασμένον δὲ οὕτω καὶ εὐκάτοπτον κομιδῆ τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἡμῖν ἀποφαίνων λόγον, ἐπωδὴν ἀναφέρει πνευματικὴν.* 'For as Christ destroys the shadow of the law, and the seeming veil of prophetic writings, thus he reveals to us the discourse in them as being quite distinct and clear, and brings forth a spiritual song.'

⁹⁶ *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate* (CPG 5200), PG 68. 253A. Christ transformed the slow speech (*βραδυγλώσσα*) of the law into something clear, just as he transfigured the weak expression of the letter into a melodious interpretation.

⁹⁷ *Epistula paschalis* 5. SC 372, p. 292.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 304. *Ἀναγκαῖον γὰρ οἶμαι φαίεσθαι τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὸν Ἰσαὰκ γενέσει, καθάπερ διὰ τύπου μορφούμενον.* 'For it is necessary, I suppose, that Christ appear in the birth of Isaac as having been represented as a type.' See also *ibid.* 312-18.

⁹⁹ Ibid. 318. *Ἡμᾶς δὲ ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἐν τύπῳ γεγενημένοις τῆς ἀληθείας ἐφαρμόσαι τὸ κάλλος, καὶ τῶν εἰρημένων ἕκαστα διαπτύξαι σαφῶς.* 'But it is necessary that we adapt the beauty of the truth to those things which are represented in types, and that we clearly disclose each of the words expressed.'

suffered immolation, revealed to Cyril an important christological truth: Isaac bound to the wood prefigured Christ mounted on the cross. The immolated ram signified that Christ did not himself suffer death because by his very nature it was not possible for him to suffer: he was impassive (*ἀπαθής*).¹⁰⁰ To avoid the theological difficulties that arise when Christ is made to suffer, Cyril attributed the Passion not to the impassible deity of Christ, but to his temple born of the Virgin. The ram that God provided signified and prefigured that christological doctrine. By claiming that the Word suffered in his own body, not in that of another, Cyril constructed a vision of Christ that was singular and undifferentiated.¹⁰¹ By assuring his congregations that the essence of Christ's incorporeal deity did not suffer on the cross, only the temple born of the Virgin, Cyril carefully avoided attributing to Christ a dual nature. Significant in his later confrontation with Nestorius, this passage illustrates how Cyril instructed the Christian community in matters of doctrinal importance. His reinterpretation of Jewish belief and practice thus served a broader *paraenetic* function. While the Jews believed that types and figures stood for literal truths, Cyril's figurative reading of Scripture revealed not only the reality of Christ's Passion on the Cross but its proper christological interpretation as well. Through this wholesale appropriation of a continuous Judaic past, Cyril established an interpretative framework for his churches that simultaneously distinguished Christians from

¹⁰⁰ *Epistula paschalis* 5. SC 372, p. 324, ἔπασχε δὲ Κύριος οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπαθής ὡν φύσει. 'But the Lord himself, being impassive in nature, does not suffer.' See J. M. Hallman, 'The Seed of Fire: Divine Suffering in the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius of Constantinople', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5 (1997), 369–91, in which the author suggests that Cyril and Nestorius held different views on the impassibility of the Logos. Cyril expressed the idea with a paradox, saying that the Logos suffered impassibly (*ibid.* 383). This was not acceptable to the Antiochenes. For the view that Antiochene Christology sought to protect the impassibility of God, a theology that prevailed even when the scriptural text conflicted with it, see J. J. O'Keefe, 'Impassible Suffering? Divine Passion and Fifty-Century Christology', *Theological Studies* 58 (1997), 39–60; see also *idem*, 'Kenosis or Impassibility: Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret of Cyrus on the Problem of Divine Pathos', *SP* 32 (1997), 358–65.

¹⁰¹ *Epistula paschalis* 5. SC 372, p. 324. Οἰκειοῦται δὲ ὁ Λόγος . . . τὸ πάθος· αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἦν τὸ σῶμα, καὶ οὐχ ἑτέρου τινός. 'But the Word makes suffering . . . its own; for it was his body, and not that of another.' See also *ibid.* 325 n. 1.

their Jewish forebears and allowed him to impart dogmatic instruction to a wider public.¹⁰²

These Festal letters of Cyril were written between 414 and 418, the same years in which Cyril's conflicts with the Jewish community occurred, according to Socrates. They reveal that Cyril used polemical discourse to instruct Christians on matters important for Christian self-definition, and should not be understood as reflecting a genuine dialogue with the Alexandrian Jewish community. All the same, there is abundant material about Cyril's confrontation with the Jewish community in the ecclesiastical histories of Socrates and John of Nikiu. That Jewish confrontation with the orthodox Christian establishment figures prominently in these narratives of Cyril's early episcopacy should come as no surprise. As we have already seen, two narratives similarly depict Jews conspiring with local imperial officials against an orthodox bishop: Jews purportedly fought for the augustal prefect in his support of an Arian replacement for Athanasius during one of his many exiles, and Jews came to the aid of the governor who opposed an orthodox bishop's election. The literary topos of the Jews thus served to undermine the spiritual authority of the Arian villain. The negative depictions of tumultuous Jews collaborating with the prefect Orestes likewise served the purposes of Socrates and John of Nikiu, both of whom wished to undermine the authority of the prefect and his initiatives against Cyril. They implied that Cyril was morally superior to Orestes. But their accounts of Cyril's dispute with the Jews do not necessarily mean that Cyril was implicated in a violent confrontation with the Alexandrian Jewish community. Instead, both historians reveal Cyril's struggle for power over the imperial authority amid the dissenting voices of the local Alexandrian Christian populace.¹⁰³

¹⁰² See H. Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (I.–II. Jh.)* (Frankfurt, 1982).

¹⁰³ Cyril's efforts to consolidate and unify the churches were helped to a large extent by Athanasius' earlier success in that regard. For a discussion of Athanasius and the consolidation of the Egyptian churches during his episcopacy, see D. Brakke, *Athanasius and Asceticism*, 10–13. On the relationship between Alexandria and the cities and towns of Upper Egypt, see R. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993), 99–109. On the links between villages, see *ibid.* 138–42.

THE MURDER OF HYPATIA

The murder of the renowned pagan and neo-Platonist philosopher Hypatia was to cast a grim shadow on Cyril's episcopacy that has persisted in the popular imagination unto the present day. Writers such as Kingsley, freely embellishing upon the meagre facts of her story, have without exception portrayed Cyril in the most unflattering terms. 'True [Cyril] and his monks had conquered; but Hypatia did not die unavenged. In the hour of that unrighteous victory, the Church of Alexandria received a deadly wound. It had admitted and sanctioned those habits of doing evil that good may come of pious intrigue, and at last of open persecution.'¹⁰⁴ Scholars have not been any kinder. Gibbon expressed the sentiments of many who have reflected on Hypatia's grisly murder when he wrote that 'the murder of Hypatia has imprinted an indelible stain on the character and religion of Cyril of Alexandria'.¹⁰⁵ In more recent years, Gibbon's outright condemnation of Cyril has yielded to muted criticism, yet the unknown facts surrounding Hypatia's death are still speculated against Cyril. As one modern commentator put it: 'Whether Cyril actually ordered her death or not is debated by the historians, but he did not attempt to stop it and afterwards he did try to hush it up with bribes.'¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Ch. Kingsley, *Hypatia or New Foes with an Old Face* (London, 1853), ii. ch. 30. In 1720 an Irishman named John Toland published a piece entitled, 'Hypatia, or the History of a most beautiful, most vertuous, most learned and every way accomplished Lady, who was torn to pieces by the Clergy of Alexandria to gratify the Pride, Emulation and Cruelty of their Archbishop commonly but undeservedly stiled St. Cyril' (cited in an unpublished lecture by A. Cameron).

¹⁰⁵ E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York, 1960), 601, cited by S. A. Takács 'Hypatia's Murder—The Sacrifice of a Virgin and Its Implications', in K. B. Free (ed.), *The Formulation of Christianity by Conflict Through the Ages* (New York, 1995), 47. The bibliography on Hypatia is extensive and only a few studies will be listed here. For basic bibliography: A. Cameron and J. Long, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1993), 39–62; M. Dzielska, *Hypatia of Alexandria* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995); J. Rougé, 'La Politique de Cyrille d'Alexandrie et le meurtre d'Hypatie', *Cristianesimo nella storia* 11 (1990), 485–504; F. Schaefer, 'St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Murder of Hypatia', *Catholic University Bulletin* 8 (1902), 441–53.

¹⁰⁶ K. Wider, 'Women Philosophers of the Ancient Greek World', *Hypatia* 1

Daughter of the philosopher Theon, famous for his achievements in mathematics and astronomy, Hypatia was herself an accomplished teacher of philosophy and mathematics. Her published works may have included editions of Greek texts, including a revision of her father's commentaries on two major astronomical works of Ptolemy, the *Almagest* and the *Handy Tables*, in addition to her own exegetical commentaries on Apollonius of Perga and Diophantus of Alexandria, both of which were apparently intended primarily as school texts.¹⁰⁷

Socrates, John of Nikiu, and Damascius, the neo-Platonist who taught and studied rhetoric at Alexandria (d. after 538), all attest to the incidents surrounding Hypatia's gruesome murder. Socrates attributes the origins of the problem to Cyril's dispute with Orestes during his, Cyril's, confrontation with the Jewish community.¹⁰⁸ The Christian populace, according to Socrates, blamed Hypatia, who was frequently seen in the presence of Orestes, for preventing Cyril's reconciliation with the prefect. Under the direction of Peter, a reader for the church, a group of zealous Christians was so determined to remove her, whom they perceived to be the only obstacle to reconciliation, that they banded together, dragged her from her carriage, and forcibly carried her to a church. There, they stripped her naked and murdered her with tiles. She had often appeared publicly in the company of magistrates, and she had attended assemblies of men, so she was clearly a powerful woman among the Alexandrian notables.¹⁰⁹ Some Christians may have found her overt

(1986), 57. We know only that Cyril did not succeed in stopping it, not that he did not try.

¹⁰⁷ Cameron and Long, *Barbarians and Politics*, 44; A. Cameron, unpublished paper, pp. 7ff. The following works are attributed to Hypatia: commentaries on the *Arithmetica* of Diophantos of Alexandria, on the *Conic Sections* of Apollonius of Perga, and on the *Astronomical Canon*. For a full discussion, see Cameron and Long, *Barbarians and Politics*, 44–60. See also A. Cameron, 'Isidore of Melitus and Hypatia: On the Editing of Mathematical Texts', *GRBS* 31 (1990), 103–27. On critical editions of Theon's work, see *ODB* s. v., 2061.

¹⁰⁸ Socrates, *HE* 7. 15, GCS NS 1, pp. 360 l. 28 to 361 l. 1.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 360 ll. 24–6. διὰ (δέ) τὴν προσοῦσαν αὐτῆ ἕκ τῆς παιδείσεως σεμνὴν παρρησίαν καὶ τοῖς ἀρχουσιν σωφρόνως εἰς πρόσωπον ἤρχετο, καὶ οὐκ ἦν τις αἰσχύνῃ ἐν μέσῳ ἀνδρῶν παρεῖναι αὐτήν. 'Because of the stately confidence which she acquired through her education, she appeared in person, discretely, with magistrates, and she was not ashamed to be present in the company of men.'

display of influence and power threatening, especially if she readily communicated with Orestes.

It is surprising that Socrates should attribute the murder of Hypatia to jealous Christians, for this contradicts his earlier depiction of Cyril. Portraying Cyril as a powerful, though contentious, bishop, Socrates had blamed Cyril's problems with Orestes on his, Orestes', envy and jealousy over the encroaching power of the Alexandrian bishops. But if *Christians* were jealous of Hypatia's power and influence with the prefect, then Cyril and his supporters were perhaps not as influential with the Alexandrian elite as Socrates would have us believe. Were Cyril that all-powerful bishop, whose ecclesiastical power extended into the secular domain, then politically minded Christians would have had no reason to commit this heinous crime. But Cyril's confrontation with Orestes and the Jews suggests that Cyril was not so powerful: he was merely a bishop struggling to secure his power base at the start of his episcopacy. Socrates' account of the murder of Hypatia may therefore capture the genuine political concerns of Cyril's followers. Eager to build Cyril's power and influence among the local notables, a band of Christians believed that Hypatia's public encounters with the Alexandrian elite were somehow threatening to their bishop's exercise of power. How such a reprehensible act could have ever reconciled Orestes with their bishop remains a mystery. Even Socrates reports that the incident brought ignominious reproach upon Cyril and the entire church of Alexandria.

John of Nikiu presents Cyril and this band of wayward Christians in an altogether favourable light. He ascribes the murder not to political machinations but to the pious intention of Peter and his followers.¹¹⁰ A 'perfect believer in Christ', Peter (elevated by John to the status of a magistrate) gathered a group of like-minded Christians and murdered the pagan Hypatia. She had used the 'evil arts of magic' to enchant the people of Alexandria and their prefect, said John. A witch and beguiler, Hypatia was, in John's view, justly murdered for her pagan beliefs and practices, her body destroyed with fire. The people of Alexandria were then said to have surrounded their bishop and

¹¹⁰ Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean*, 102-3; *Chronicle of John*, 84. 100.

named him 'the new Theophilus', for he had triumphantly stamped out the last vestiges of paganism in the city.¹¹¹

Theophilus was in fact famous for his actions against the great temple shrines of Egypt. He exposed to public ridicule the pagan mysteries of the Mithreum, and he destroyed the Serapeum, both under the direction of the emperor Theodosius I. With the assistance of the prefect and commander-in-chief of the imperial troops stationed in Egypt, Theophilus demolished pagan temples and shrines throughout Alexandria.¹¹² But unlike Peter's (and Cyril's?) alleged murder of a pagan intellectual, Theophilus apparently had the support of imperial officials. None the less, it seems unlikely that Christians eager to remove every trace of pagan influence from the city would have named Cyril 'the new Theophilus'. Cyril had earnestly tried to distance himself from his uncle's episcopacy in every way, going so far as to reinstall John Chrysostom in the diptychs following John's deposition by Theophilus at the Synod of the Oak fifteen years earlier.¹¹³ Designating Cyril as 'the new Theophilus' was, in all likelihood, an interpretative gloss later imposed on an embarrassing set of events that required explanation and justification in order to present Cyril's early episcopacy in the best possible light. More flattering to Cyril than Socrates' account, John's version presents Hypatia's murder as a just and pious act committed by a zealous group of Christians with the implicit consent of their bishop.

John of Nikiu's account raises the question of the extent to

¹¹¹ Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean*, 103; *Chronicle of John*, 84. 103. In the context of John of Nikiu's narrative, the title 'the new Theophilus' is meant to celebrate Cyril's elimination of paganism from the city, as his uncle had done before him. When Cyril receives the same epithet during the Nestorian controversy, however, the comparison is a negative one, suggesting that Cyril's controversy with Nestorius was personally and politically motivated, similar to his uncle's attack on John Chrysostom at the Synod of the Oak.

¹¹² Socrates, *HE* 5. 16, GCS NS 1, p. 289 ll. 21-4.

¹¹³ Although Cyril at first refused to restore John Chrysostom's name to the diptychs because he had been condemned by an official synod, Cyril eventually (419) agreed after being pressured by the West. Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 372, pp. 66-71, citing *Ad Atticum CPolitanum. Epistula* 76 (CPG 5376), *Codex Vaticanus gr.* 1431, ed. E. Schwartz, 25-8; PG 77. 352-60. However, John of Nikiu depicts Cyril as being eager and willing to restore Chrysostom. Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean*, 96; *Chronicle of John*, 84. 38, 41-3. John of Nikiu blames the empress Eudoxia for John's banishment.

which Hypatia's paganism posed a threat to Cyril's ecclesiastical political strategy. Cyril's early Festal letters betray not the slightest hint of an anti-pagan ecclesiastical agenda. Filled with anti-Jewish polemic, the letters for the years 414 to 416 contain only a few passing condemnations of pagan Greek religion. Even these criticisms were directed against the impiety of the Jews rather than being an assault on pagans. The Greeks were, in Cyril's view, the implacable polytheists who had exchanged an incorruptible God for corruptible images of man, animals, birds, and reptiles, while the Jews had foolishly emulated the Greeks by pursuing their same way of life.¹¹⁴ These scant criticisms, which were contemporaneous with Hypatia's murder, indicate that pagan thought and practice posed less of a threat to Cyril's episcopacy than it had to that of his uncle. Still, Cyril found cultic paganism troubling enough that on 28 June 414, almost a year before the murder, he transferred the relics of Saints John and Cyrus to the Church of the Evangelists, built by Theophilus near Canopus, on the former site of the cult of Isis Medica.¹¹⁵ Displacing the former pagan shrine, this new site drew many pilgrims interested in the healing properties of these saints.¹¹⁶ Paganism, nearly under control during the early years of Cyril's episcopacy, was no longer the vexing problem that occupied his uncle.

Not until Cyril's Festal letter for the year 418, several years after Hypatia's murder, did Cyril openly attack the intellectual presuppositions that defined pagan belief. This intellectual confrontation with paganism focused and defined Cyril's anthropology (his philosophical views on the nature of humanity), and made it fully accessible to the congregations of churches throughout Egypt. Mankind was, in Cyril's view, endowed with reason and created in the image of God. Those who practised idolatry had defiantly violated this precept by worshipping every

¹¹⁴ *Epistula paschalis*, 1. SC 372, p. 180.

¹¹⁵ Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 372, p. 61, citing A. Martin, 'Les Premiers Siècles du christianisme à Alexandrie. Essai de topographie religieuse (iiè-ive siècles)', 224 n. 82. See also S. A. Tacáks, 'The Magic of Isis Replaced or Cyril of Alexandria's Attempt at Redirecting Religious Devotion', *Poikila Byzantina* 13 (1994), 491-507; J. A. McGuckin, 'The Influence of the Isis Cult on St. Cyril of Alexandria's Christology', *SP* 24 (1992), 191-9.

¹¹⁶ Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 372, p. 62.

sort of element in place of true divinity, thought Cyril. Believing that pieces of wood and stone could be superior to the Divine Creator, pagan idolaters were thought to have denigrated the reason and intelligence with which their humanity endowed them.¹¹⁷ The pagans had also dangerously inverted the natural order by admiring the products of creation instead of the Artisan and Creator.¹¹⁸ Cyril believed that free will, not reason, constituted the very essence of man, the single defining quality that rendered mankind fully human. Pagan belief was thought to have deprived mankind of this most sacred characteristic by asserting that the day of one's birth wholly determined the course of one's life.¹¹⁹ Shackled in the ineluctable chains of fate, pagans could assume no responsibility for their actions. Whether Cyril's intellectual attack on paganism bore any relation to the murder of Hypatia remains a difficult question. Attacking pagan belief and practice immediately following the murder would have surely cast a damning light on Cyril. But this muted condemnation of paganism, several years after the deed, may have served to ameliorate the collective guilt of the Alexandrian churches. If pagans misunderstood the nature of mankind, they were somehow less than fully human; therefore, the Christians of Alexandria need not feel guilty for the murder of a pagan committed by a militant few.

That did not stop the hagiographer Damascius from condemning Cyril and the Christians of Alexandria. Damascius' *Philosophical History*, written from the pagan perspective, places culpability for the murder squarely on Cyril himself.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ *Epistula paschalis* 6, SC 372, p. 350.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 348–50. Only later, in his *Contra Julianum*, did Cyril fully develop his discourse against Hellenism. *Cyrille D'Alexandrie, Contre Julien*, ed. P. Burguière and P. Évieux, SC 322. 1 (Paris, 1985). Cyril began the treatise in the late 420s at the start of his controversy with Nestorius. He did not finish it until 439–41. R. Wilken, 'Cyril of Alexandria's *Contra Julianum*', in W. E. Klingshirn and M. Vessey (eds.), *Limits of Ancient Christianity* (Ann Arbor, 1999), 42–55, 44. Wilken notes that from the preface it is clear that Cyril was responding to 'a contemporary challenge by pagan thinkers', *ibid.* 46. He met that challenge by making plain Christianity's relationship to Israel, *ibid.* 55.

¹¹⁹ *Epistula paschalis* 6, SC 372, p. 352.

¹²⁰ Damascius' *Philosophical History* has been reconstructed based on entries in the Byzantine encyclopedia composed c.1000 known as the *Souda* and on Photius' *Bibliotheca Cod.* 181, 242. See *Damascii Vitae Isidori Reliquiae*, ed. C. Zintzen (Hildesheim, 1967); *Damascius: The Philosophical History*, text

According to this account, as Cyril travelled through the city, he noticed a crowd of men gathered around the house of Hypatia.¹²¹ Threatened by Hypatia's influence among the notables of the city, Cyril incited a different crowd to commit the murder. Like Socrates before him, Damascius implicitly agreed that Cyril's thirst for power and influence created the necessary political climate that enabled the Christians to carry out their deed. Unlike Socrates' more forgiving depiction of the bishop, however, Damascius' narrative allowed no room for doubt that Cyril was responsible. Damascius was not entirely kind to Hypatia either, portraying her as a wandering philosopher who was in every way inferior to Damascius' teacher Isidore, delivering lectures on Plato and Aristotle to whoever would listen as she travelled through the streets.¹²² Hypatia's readiness to philosophize before the urban crowds made her seem to be like the Cynics, who also openly philosophized in the market place.¹²³ Her response to an amorous student also conjures images of Cynic behaviour. When one of her students declared his love for her, Hypatia reportedly displayed her sanitary napkin (*γυναικεία ῥάκη*) and responded, 'Indeed, this is what you love, young man, nothing beautiful.'¹²⁴ An alternative version of the same story presents Hypatia calming the student's passion by playing music.¹²⁵ Damascius rejects that version as ignorant legend

with trans. and notes, ed. P. Athanassiadi (Athens, 1999); R. Strömberg, 'Damascius: His Personality and Significance', *Eranos* 44 (1946), 175–92. See also A. Adler, *Suidae Lexicon* (Stuttgart, 1971) (*Hypatia* 4).

¹²¹ *Damascii Vitae Isidori Reliquiae*, ed. Zintzen, 79 ll. 18–25. 104 *Souda* III. 111. 19. *Damascius*, ed. Athanassiadi, 130 ll. 10–12.

¹²² *Damascii Vitae Isidori Reliquiae*, ed. Zintzen, 77. 102 *Souda* IV. 644. 12. *Damascius*, ed. Athanassiadi, 128 ll. 4–7; see also *ibid.* 254. περιβαλλομένη δὲ τριβωνα ἢ γυνή καὶ διὰ μέσου τοῦ ἄσπεως ποιουμένη τὰς προόδους ἐξηγεῖτο δημοσίᾳ τοῖς ἀκροᾶσθαι βουλομένοις ἢ τὸν Πλάτωνα ἢ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλην 'And wrapping herself in a philosopher's cloak, she progressed through the town, publicly interpreting the works of Plato [and] Aristotle . . . to those who wished to listen', *ibid.* 129.

¹²³ Cameron, unpublished paper, 4.

¹²⁴ *Damascii Vitae Isidori Reliquiae*, ed. Zintzen, 77 ll. 15–17. *Souda* IV. 644. τοῦτου μέντοι, φάναι, ἐρᾶς, ὃ νεανίσκε, καλοῦ δὲ οὐδενός. 'She said, "This is what you are in love with, young man, and not a thing of beauty."' *Damascius*, ed. Athanassiadi, 43c, pp. 128–9. See also, D. Shanzer, 'Merely a Cynic Gesture?' *Rivista di filologia classica* 113 (1985), 61–6.

¹²⁵ See J. M. Rist, 'Hypatia', *Phoenix* 19 (1965), 221; Wider, 'Women Philosophers', 53.

(ἀπαίδευτοι λόγοι), probably because it made Hypatia appear more like a true philosopher (τῷ ὄντι φιλόσοφος) than a Cynic.

Although Hypatia was surely not a wandering Cynic philosopher, and although she was not the only pagan intellectual residing in the city, she attracted attention for reasons that Socrates, John of Nikiu, and Damascius suggest:¹²⁶ she was a woman, she travelled openly in her carriage, she visited with the imperial prefect, and she lectured before the urban crowds. The public nature of her paganism, her influence with the local Alexandrian notables, and her connection with the prefect provoked the hostility and jealousy of a few militant Christians who were ready to support their bishop at any cost.

Hypatia's pupil, the Christian Neoplatonist Synesius of Cyrene, the bishop of Ptolemais (d. 413), confirms the impression left in virtually all the extant sources that Hypatia enjoyed influence among the Alexandrian elite. In a letter asking Hypatia to help his friends Nicaeus and Philolaus, Synesius appealed to her friendship, her resources, and her extensive power and influence, imploring her to put it to good use, consistent with late antique utilitarian conceptions of friendship.¹²⁷ That the Christian bishop was a student of the pagan philosopher raises

¹²⁶ Several of the sources, including the letters of her pupil Synesius, make it equally clear that Hypatia embraced the more rarefied branches of philosophy. See e.g. *Damascii Vitae Isidori Reliquiae*, ed. Zintzen, 77 l. 4; *Damascius*, ed. Athanassiadi, 128A ll. 3–4; p. 129, . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἤψατο τῆς ἄλλης οὐκ ἀγεννῶς. ' . . . but occupied herself with some distinction in the other branches of philosophy'. Synesius, Epistula 137, *Opere*, 330 l. 8. καθηγεμόνος τῶν φιλοσοφίας ὀργίων. '[the woman] who presides over the mysteries of philosophy'. Socrates identifies Hypatia as a Neoplatonist, *HE* 7. 15, GCS NS 1, p. 360 ll. 21–3. τὴν δὲ Πλατωνικὴν ἀπὸ Πλωτίνου καταγομένην διατριβὴν διαδέξασθαι καὶ πάντα τὰ φιλοσοφία μαθήματα τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐκτίθεσθαι. 'Having succeeded to the Platonic diatribe which was transmitted from Plotinus, she explained all the philosophical teachings to whomever wished [to hear them].' Paralos of Aphrodisias, Horapollon, and Asklepiodoros were other pagan intellectuals residing in Alexandria at the time. See R. L. Wilken, 'Cyril of Alexandria's *Contra Julianum*', in W. E. Klingshirn and M. Vessey (eds.), *Limits of Ancient Christianity* (Ann Arbor, 1999), 46, citing Zachariah of Mytilene, *Vita Severi*, ed. M.-A. Kugener, PO 2 (1907), 33.

¹²⁷ Synesius, Epistula 81, *Opere*, 230 ll. 15–18. Synesius urged Hypatia to approach all her friends, both private persons (ιδιώται) and magistrates (ἀρχαί). Σὺ μὲν οὖν αἰεὶ καὶ δύνῃ καὶ δύναιο κάλλιστα χρωμένῃ τῷ δύνασθαι, . . . 'You always have power, and long may you have it and make a good use of that power.' *The Letters of Synesius of Cyrene*, ed. and trans. A. Fitzgerald (Oxford, 1926), 174.

important questions about the relationship between pagan and Christian intellectuals at the time. When his book *Cynegetics*, with its frequent use of Attic constructions, disappeared from his house and fell into the possession of persons 'who are concerned with Greek culture and graceful periods' (*Ἑλληνισμοῦ τε καὶ χάριτος ἔμελε*), Synesius was accused of indulging himself in trivial matters of style. In response to his critics, Synesius composed a treatise to promote philosophy as an excellent choice in life, and to defend the books that comprised his library. From Hypatia he wished to know whether this treatise was worthy of publication before a Greek audience.¹²⁸

That Synesius, a Christian, maintained such close ties with the Greek intellectual traditions and with his teacher Hypatia, suggests that a hybrid amalgam existed between the intellectual pagan and intellectual Christian traditions. Neoplatonic syncretist tendencies that regarded the One as a singular manifestation of all types of deity might have promoted such a relationship.¹²⁹ Among Christian intellectual elites, this Neoplatonic variety of paganism posed no real threat to their theological views. Such easy coexistence between certain pagan and Christian intellectuals suggests that Hypatia's paganism *per se* may not have angered Cyril as much as John of Nikiu claimed. While Cyril was not trained in advanced rhetoric or sophism, he certainly passed through basic rhetorical training before he was directed towards a clerical career.¹³⁰ Moreover, Cyril's uncle Theophilus was friends with Synesius, which probably meant that Theophilus enjoyed a cordial relationship with Hypatia, in spite of her pagan intellectual beliefs.¹³¹ It therefore seems unlikely that Cyril, in the early years of his episcopacy, found Hypatia's paganism overtly threatening. Her rarefied paganism had obviously weathered the storm of Theophilus' assault on pagan ritual sites, including his having demolished the Serapeum and Mithreum. Her intellectual paganism may have posed even less of a threat to Cyril, whose early Festal letters contain no evidence of a concerted anti-pagan effort.

¹²⁸ Synesius, Epistula 154, *Opere*, 370–6.

¹²⁹ *Letters of Synesius*, ed. Fitzgerald, 32.

¹³⁰ See Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 372, p. 12.

¹³¹ On Synesius' high regard for Theophilus, see Synesius', Epistula 105, *Opere*, 274.

The sources do not record anything more about Cyril's dispute with Orestes. But laws addressed to the praetorian prefect of the East, Monaxius, indicate that Cyril's confrontation with the prefect produced strained relations with the imperial court. Two laws, dated 29 September and 5 October, in the year 416, suggest that imperial authorities in Constantinople wished to curtail the political activities of clerics by prohibiting them from participating in public affairs and in matters pertaining to the city council.¹³² The Alexandrian *curial* (propertied) class had been barraging the imperial court with municipal petitions and reports, bypassing the proper channels of the hierarchy.¹³³ The edict of 5 October required all the *curiales* residing in the city to gather together for a full meeting of the *boule* (city council) before the matter under consideration would be dispatched through the appropriate channels. Only after the entire *boule* endorsed these petitions and decrees, which originated from all strata of society, could they be forwarded to the prefect, who would then send his report to the proper imperial officials.¹³⁴ The imperial court was to decide whether Alexandrian ambassadors should go to Constantinople to pursue whatever matter their petition addressed. Intended to stem the tide of complaints from Alexandria, this series of imperial laws established a formal procedure that permitted only the imperial officials of Constantinople to decide whether to receive ambassadors from Alexandria. Thus, any complaints filed by the bishop and his supporters would fall within the discretion of the imperial court. Enacted in the midst of Cyril's dispute with Orestes, this law must have produced some animosity in Cyril and his party, for the power given to the prefect, who was now charged with forwarding petitions to Constantinople, produced a noticeable shift in the power relations between the Alexandrian elite and the

¹³² *CTh* 16. 2. 42; 29 Sept. and 5 Oct. AD 416, cited by Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 315.

¹³³ *CTh* 12. 12. 15, prohibited delegations from being dispatched to the Imperial City unless the *curiales* first held a meeting of the city council and then notified the Augustal prefect. The prefect was charged with informing the emperor, who determined whether to receive the delegation; *ibid.* 16. 2. 42, cited by Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 315. See also Rougé, 'Débuts de l'Épiscopat de Cyrille et Code Théodosien', 343 f.

¹³⁴ *CTh* 12. 12. 15 applies whenever a delegation is dispatched. See also Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity*, 315.

imperial court. At a time when access to the emperor helped define one's power and influence, this law significantly curtailed Cyril's access to him.¹³⁵

At the urging of an Alexandrian embassy, the imperial edicts of 29 September and 5 October also addressed the 'reign of terror' induced by the *parabalani* (attendants of the sick) thanks to their disruption of public affairs.¹³⁶ Prohibited from attending public gatherings of any kind, including meetings of the city council or court (with certain exceptions), the *parabalani* were now limited to five hundred members, subject to approval by the prefect. The law also prescribed that the *parabalani* be recruited only from the poor of the city.¹³⁷ Violation of these provisions resulted in unspecified punishment and permanent removal from office. The imperial regulations controlling the *parabalani* indicate that the embassy from Alexandria not only complained about the acts of terror they committed but also requested the imperial court to order Cyril to prohibit 'certain persons' from leaving Alexandria. By prohibiting the *parabalani* from gaining access to imperial authority, the Alexandrian embassy probably wished to curtail the group's power in public affairs and prevent them from receiving due process before an imperial court. The *parabalani* thereby had little chance to defend their 'acts of terror' before an impartial tribunal. All the same, the *parabalani* were never officially implicated in the greatest 'act of terror' of the time, Hypatia's murder, for none of the laws even alludes to the incident.

The new laws that directed the balance of power towards imperial appointees simultaneously shifted it away from the tumultuous Christian *parabalani*. The newly imposed restrictions on the group's membership indicate that the imperial court wished further to circumscribe their power within the city. By eliminating wealthy Christians from the *parabalani*, the imperial

¹³⁵ See generally, P. Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity* (Madison, 1992), 24; 'The process by which the imperial government had come to permeate the upper echelons of the civic notables . . . ensured that networks of patronage and friendship linked each locality to powerful figures at the court itself.'

¹³⁶ See generally, *parabalani*, *ODB* iii. 1678; A. Philipsborn, 'La Compagnie d'ambulanciers "parabalani" d'Alexandrie', *Byzantion* 20 (1950), 185–90; W. Schubart, 'Parabalani', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 40 (1954), 97–101.

¹³⁷ *CTh* 16. 2. 42.

restrictions ensured that ambitious persons seeking office merely in order to implement their own political ends would not belong to the group. Such persons would have made the *parabalani* a destabilizing force within the city, capable of disrupting the peaceful administration of public affairs by the imperial representatives.

It seems unlikely that the imperial court believed Cyril and his supporters were responsible for the 'acts of terror' committed by the *parabalani*, for in February 418 Theodosius II promulgated a new set of laws that restored Cyril's authority over the *parabalani* and increased their numbers from five to six hundred.¹³⁸ The financial limitations on membership in the group remained, none the less. Still restricted to Alexandria's poor, the *parabalani* posed little threat to imperial control in Alexandria. Had Cyril and the *parabalani* been unambiguously implicated in the murder of Hypatia, then it is most unlikely that Theodosius would ever have restored the group to Cyril's control.¹³⁹ We may plausibly conclude that Hypatia's murder can be attributed to a ruffian band of Christians who were not among the *parabalani* but who believed that Hypatia's highly visible encounters with the Alexandrian elite threatened Cyril's exercise of power within the city.

THE LINGERING PROBLEM OF ARIANISM

In the year 424, Cyril wrote a Festal letter and several treatises against Arians, including the *Thesaurus*, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, and *Dialogues on the Trinity*.¹⁴⁰ Why Cyril chose

¹³⁸ *CTh* 16. 2. 43. The laws restricting their membership to the Alexandrian poor and prohibiting their attendance at city councils remained in effect. (Cited by Haas, *Alexandria*, 316.)

¹³⁹ Damascius was troubled by the fact that Theodosius never avenged Hypatia's murder. He believed that Cyril's party had bribed a key official to prevent that from happening. *Damascius*, ed. Athanassiadi, 130E ll. 22–5.

¹⁴⁰ See generally G. Jouassard, 'L'Activité Littéraire de Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie jusqu'à 428', *Mélanges E. Podechard* (Lyons, 1945), 159–74. *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate* (CPG 5215), PG 75. 9–656; Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentarii in Iohannem* (CPG 5208), ed. P. E. Pusey, *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Ioannis evangelium* (3 vols.; Brussels, 1965); PG 73. 9–1056; PG 74. 9–756; *De sancta trinitate dialogi vii*

that time to do battle against Arianism remains unclear. Supposedly Arians were only a dim memory of the ecclesiastical conflict that Theodosius (I) the Great had decisively dealt with in 383/4 by banishing Eunomius, the leader of an Arian sect.¹⁴¹ Theodosius' campaign to decimate the sect by a series of anti-Arian laws culminated in 389 with legislation that made it a crime for adherents of the sect to be beneficiaries or testators under a will. Any property that Eunomians received as inheritance would be confiscated and placed in the fiscal treasury.¹⁴² In 394, only months before his death, Theodosius rescinded the law, probably well after the sect had already faded from the scene.¹⁴³ Little evidence remains of Arian activity following this period of legislation against them by a succession of uncompromisingly pro-Nicene emperors, Theodosius I and his sons Honorius and Arcadius. But in the year 410, Theodosius II felt that Eunomians posed enough of a threat in the Imperial City to warrant further legislation, including laws to prevent their receiving and bequeathing testamentary property. In 413, Theodosius II again prohibited assemblies of Eunomians. The penalty for anyone who presided over such gatherings was confiscation of property.¹⁴⁴ As late as 415, houses belonging to Eunomian clerics, where assemblies or rebaptisms occurred, were summarily confiscated to the fiscal treasury of the Imperial

(CPG 5216), ed. and trans. G. M. de Durand, *Cyrille d'Alexandrie. Dialogues sur la Trinité*, i. *Dial. I et II*, SC 231 (Paris, 1976); ii. *Dial. III, IV, V*, SC 237 (Paris, 1977); iii. *Dial. VI, VII*, SC 246 (Paris, 1978); PG 75. 657-1124. See generally N. Charlier, 'Le Thesaurus de Trinitate de S. Cyrille d'Alexandrie', *RHE* 45 (1950), 25-81; 'La Doctrine sur le Saint-Esprit dans le 'Thesaurus' de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie', *SP* 2 (1957), 187-93.

¹⁴¹ *CTh* 16. 5. 11-13, 25 July 383. The law prohibited Arians, Eunomians, and other alleged heretics from assembling in groups. The law of 4 (5) May 389, 16. 5. 17, proscribed Eunomian eunuchs from making a will or from being named as beneficiaries. On 20 June 394 the law was revoked, however, and Eunomians were permitted to write wills and be named as heirs, 16. 5. 23. (Cited by T. A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism* (Philadelphia, 1979), 518-19, 542.) On Eunomius, see *Eunomius: The Extant Works*, ed. R. P. Vaggione (Oxford, 1987); R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh, 1988), 611-36.

¹⁴² *CTh* 16. 5. 17.

¹⁴³ *CTh* 16. 5. 23 (cited by Kopecek, *History of Neo-Arianism*, 542).

¹⁴⁴ *CTh* 16. 5. 49; 16. 6. 7. (Cited by C. Luibheid, 'Theodosius II and Heresy', *JEH* 16 (1965), 37).

City and the clerics were exiled. The same harsh punishment of exile was exacted against anyone who received rebaptism into the Eunomian sect, and against Eunomian clerics who consecrated clergy into the sect.¹⁴⁵

The Arian ecclesiastical historian Philostorgius (d. 439) provides some evidence that Eunomians continued to flourish in Constantinople well after Theodosius the Great promulgated laws against them. After Eudoxius, the leader of the Eunomian sect in Constantinople, died, a schism occurred when Eunomius' nephew, Lucian, was chosen as leader. Philostorgius reports that Lucian was consumed with the vice of greed, and, to avoid being punished by the sect, he separated from it and instituted his own group.¹⁴⁶ Although Philostorgius ascribes the schism to Lucian's avarice, earlier schisms within the Eunomians were more aptly attributed to theological and exegetical differences among themselves. Shortly after Theodosius banished Eunomius, one of his disciples, Theophronius of Cappadocia, continued to propagate the sect's tradition.¹⁴⁷ When Theophronius attempted to demonstrate through scriptural exegesis that God's knowledge of the past changes over time, the Eunomians excommunicated him from their church. He later emerged as the leader of a splinter group under his own name. Theophronius was not the only Eunomian to find himself in conflict with the group's majority. Eutychus originated another sect in Constantinople when exegetical differences led him to conclude, in opposition to his fellow Eunomians, that the Son, along with the Father, knows the time of the final hour. Exegetical disputes were probably also to blame for the schism that occurred when Lucian rose to power within the sect sometime in the early 420s, during the reign of Theodosius II.

As late as 412, Synesius of Cyrene, the same bishop who had been a student of Hypatia, complained that Eunomians could once again threaten the church, for a certain Quintianus had apparently emerged as the sect's newest leader. Synesius reports

¹⁴⁵ *CTh* 16. 5. 58. The law also confirmed the previous law prohibiting Eunomians from acting as testators or beneficiaries under a will. See 16. 5. 49. (Cited by Luibheid, *ibid.*)

¹⁴⁶ Philostorgius, *HE* 12. 11 (*CPG* 6032), *Philostorgius Kirchengeschichte*, ed. J. Bidez and F. Winkelmann, GCS 21 (Berlin, 1981), 148.

¹⁴⁷ Sozomen, *HE* 7. 17, GCS NS 4, p. 325 ll. 1-3; Socrates, *HE* 5. 24, GCS NS 1, p. 306 l. 21 to p. 307 l. 3.

that several false teachers had come to Cyrene ostensibly to engage in commercial litigation, but, in reality, they hoped to win additional converts to their sect.¹⁴⁸ Synesius therefore urged the elders to eliminate the Eunomians from the city, for they had recently been received in certain well-known estates and houses. While Synesius urged banishment for the 'evil bankers' who threatened to sully his church, he made equally clear that these newest adherents to the Eunomian sect should leave the shores of Pentapolis with their property intact, contrary to the legislation that Theodosius II had just passed. A friend of bishop Theophilus, Synesius very probably told him, and eventually Cyril (whose episcopacy began the very same year of 412), about his experience with the Eunomian sect.

Just as Eunomians continued to pose lingering problems in Constantinople and Pentapolis, so did mainstream Arianism appear to flourish, to some extent, within the Imperial City. The Arianism of this period (late fourth century), however, was marked by schism. Their most recent leader, a certain Dorotheus from Antioch, believed that God was not the Father before the Son existed, while their ousted leader, Marinus, held that the Father was always the Father even before the Son existed.¹⁴⁹ Dorotheus and his followers retained possession of their houses of prayer, while Marinus' adherents promptly constructed new buildings in which to assemble their party. With the support of Selinus, bishop of the Goths and former secretary of Ulphilas, and of Theoctistus, a certain cake vender (*ψαθυροπώλης τις*), Marinus' group acquired the epithets, 'Goths' and 'Psathyrians' (*Ψαθυριανοί*). After thirty-five years of separation, however, the Arians of Constantinople were finally reconciled in 419 during the reign of Theodosius II, while Plintha, a general of the cavalry and infantry who was himself a member of the Psathyrians, was consul.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Synesius, Epistula 5, *Opere*, 74. Eunomians continued to survive past the last legislation (428) against them. A century later a Roman emperor was accused of Eunomianism. R. Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford, 2000), 363.

¹⁴⁹ Socrates, *HE* 5. 23, GCS NS I, p. 305 ll. 22–6. This was the Homoian variety of Arianism, which subscribed to the second Creed of Sirmium of 357 and to that of Nicaea-Constantinople of 360. See Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 568.

¹⁵⁰ Socrates, *HE* 5. 23, GCS NS I, p. 306 ll. 14–18.

Arianism continued to affect the fortunes of at least one orthodox bishop in Egypt, whose expulsion from his bishopric by Arians for failure to embrace their dogma was sympathetically addressed by bishop Synesius of Cyrene.¹⁵¹ To console the exiled bishop, Synesius urged him to embrace his fate, since Arian Egypt had long been ‘rebellious to God and an enemy of the Holy Fathers’. Written c.412, this letter indicates that Arianism continued to threaten the stability of churches in Egypt well into the fifth century. In the meantime, Theodoret reported that Arians were present in Antioch during the episcopacy of Alexander, for when he reinstated an enormous festival to celebrate the great Eustathius, Arians, Jews, and the few remaining pagans looked on in utter dismay.¹⁵² A smattering of evidence remains, therefore, to suggest that Arians and Eunomians continued to exist throughout the Eastern empire well into the fifth century.

Twelve years after Synesius of Cyrene mentioned the continuing problem of Arianism in Egypt, Cyril began to fire off anti-Arian invective in his Festal letter for the year 424.¹⁵³ Primarily an argument against the Eunomian heresy, Cyril’s Festal letter attacked the philosophical assumptions behind their scriptural exegesis.¹⁵⁴ Cyril’s strategy was to present the Eunomians as similar to the Jews in their failing to understand that words represent mere shadows and types of a greater spiritual truth: the Eunomians conflated words with what they signified.¹⁵⁵ The outcome of the Eunomians’ ‘failure’ to inter-

¹⁵¹ Synesius, *Epistula* 128, *Opere*, 308–9.

¹⁵² Theodoret, *HE* 5. 35, *GCS NS* 5, pp. 337–8. Theodoret reports that this event took place during Cyril’s episcopacy.

¹⁵³ *Epistula paschalis*, 12, *SC* 434, ed. M.-O. Boulnois and B. Meunier (Paris, 1998).

¹⁵⁴ The neo-Arianism of Eunomius made careful use of Greek philosophical terms, of Aristotelian logic, and of late Platonic philosophy. Confined to Greek theologians, it did not generally designate the Son as begotten, and frequently used the concept and term ‘ingenerateness’. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 557.

¹⁵⁵ *Epistula paschalis*, 12, *SC* 434, pp. 72–4. Ὅτι γὰρ ἀμαθῶς οὐσίας εἶναι σημαντικόν φασι τὸ (ἀγέννητον), κἀντεῦθεν ἔσται καταφανές, καὶ μοί τι δότε βραχὺ τῶν παρὰ πολλοῖς φιλοσοφουμένων εἰπεῖν. ἐπυθόμην ὅτι ὄρους εἶναι φασί τε καὶ ὀνομάζουσι τὰ δι’ ὧν αἱ ὄντων οὐσαὶ σημαίνονται· καὶ δοκεῖ τοὺς ὄρους ἀναπλέκειν αὐτοῖς ἐκ γένους καὶ διαφορᾶς ἢ διαφορῶν. ‘For it is ignorant to say that “unengendered” signifies an essence, as will be clear from what follows; so allow me to speak briefly about

pret correctly how names signified in Scripture was inevitable for Cyril. Although the Eunomians claimed that the negative epithet ‘unbegotten’ signified the very essence (οὐσία) of God, Cyril told the churches that negative definitions can never signify the essence of things.¹⁵⁶ To simplify a potentially difficult theological discussion for the benefit of his churches, Cyril offered an analogy: if fire is defined by that which is not cold, then the definition is a negative one, for it explains what fire is not, rather than what it is.¹⁵⁷ In the same way, deity defined as ‘unbegotten’ signifies that God is not begotten, and does not signify that essence from which God is, but only that which God is not, for the name merely demonstrates that God is not begotten. How then, asked Cyril, can heretics claim that such a negative name has the power to define, or that it truly signifies a substance, when the name ‘unbegotten’ merely adds an attribute to that which the heretics wrongly believed to be an essence?¹⁵⁸

Cyril’s excursus on the signification of names was more than a dogmatic refutation of the Eunomians’ philosophical claims. It also addressed the presuppositions that comprised the theory of religious language.¹⁵⁹ The Eunomians violated these presuppo-

something that has been expounded upon by many philosophers. I have learned that they both call and name definitions as that through which the essences of beings are signified. And it seems that for them, definitions are composed of “genus” and “difference” or “differences”.’ See also *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 2 (CPG 5215) PG 75. 28c, in which Cyril states that ‘unbegotten’ is not a substance, but only signifies a substance. For the view that the dialectical issues of the Eunomian controversy must be understood in the wider framework of the quest for the correct reading of Scripture, see R. Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus* (2000), 80ff.

¹⁵⁶ The Eunomians believed that the term ‘unbegotten’ defined the essence (οὐσία) of God; since the Son was begotten (γενητός), he was not of the same essence (ὁμοούσιος) as the Father.

¹⁵⁷ *Εἰ δὲ λέγοι πῦρ εἶναι τὸ μὴ ψυχρόν, οὐκ ἀφ’ ὧν ἐστιν, ἀλλ’ ἐξ ὧν οὐκ ἐστι δηλοῖ.* ‘But if one were to say that fire is that which is not cold, then one would not be designating it from that which it is, but from that which it is not.’ *Epistula paschalis* 12, SC 434, pp. 74, 75.

¹⁵⁸ *Πῶς οὖν κατ’ αὐτοὺς ὄρου δύναμιν ἢ λέξις ἔχει ὅπως οὐσίας ἔσται σημαντική, καὶ οὐχὶ μᾶλλον τιнос τῶν τῆ οὐσία προσεῖναι πεπιστευμένων;* ‘How then, according to them, does the word have the power to define, so that it may signify an essence, and not rather something which is believed to belong to the essence?’ *Ibid.* 76, 77.

¹⁵⁹ On the philosophy of language in patristic exegesis, see F. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge, 1997), 140–60.

sitions when they assumed that negative definitions signified the substance of things, said Cyril. Following the strategy of his opponents, Cyril based his arguments on Aristotle, explaining that definitions are composed of genus (*γένος*) and difference (*διαφορά*). Although humans and horses are both defined as animals, they are differentiated by mankind's ability to reason.¹⁶⁰ As Cyril put it, the term 'unbegotten' does not define the essence of God, as 'animal' and 'reason' define that of man, because God, 'who is beyond all things' (*ὁ ὑπὲρ πάντα θεός*), could not be circumscribed by genus and difference.¹⁶¹ Although Aristotelian philosophy was the foundation for Cyril's arguments against the Eunomians, Origenist and middle-Platonist beliefs shaped his understanding of religious language. Before Cyril, Origen had similarly espoused an interpretative theory in which words themselves were secondary to what they signified, for a 'treasure of divine meaning lies hidden within the frail vessel of the poor letter'.¹⁶² Likewise, the neo-Pythagorean Numenius believed that both language and universe were structured from principles or elements that formed an unstable and inadequate expression of a permanent underlying reality.¹⁶³ This implied that words were mere shadows of the greater reality they signified, that words could only hint at the permanent truths tantalizingly beyond their reach. Cyril's interpretative method stands within this trajectory his predecessors forged.

Postmodern in its sensibilities, Cyril's reproach to the heretics foreshadows the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure by nearly fifteen hundred years, for de Saussure argues that the signifier (word) bears no intrinsic relationship to its signified (object).¹⁶⁴ By detaching the signifier from its signified, de

¹⁶⁰ *Epistula paschalis* 12, SC 434, p. 74. Aristotle, *Topica*. VI. 6. 143^{a-b}, *Aristotelis Topica et Sophistici Elenchi*, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford, 1958), 126–7.

¹⁶¹ Aristotle, *Topica*, VI. 6. 143^b, *Aristotelis Topica et Sophistici Elenchi*, 127. See *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 2 (CPG 5215), PG 75. 28c–d. Cyril also denied the heretics' claim, however, that 'unbegotten' denoted a difference (*διαφορά*).

¹⁶² Origen, *De principiis* 4. 3. 14 (CPG 1482), GCS 22, *Origenes Werke*, ed. P. Koetschau (Leipzig, 1913), v. 345 ll. 8–10, cited by Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 24: 'et divinorum sensuum thesaurus intra fragile vasculum vilis litterae continetur inclusus'.

¹⁶³ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 27, citing R. Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1986), 77.

¹⁶⁴ F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale* (Paris, 1968).

Saussure produced seemingly endless possibilities for linguistic play that have resonated throughout structuralist and post-structuralist hermeneutics. Cyril, like the postmodernists, believed that names do not necessarily have the power of definition, that negative names signify, but do not constitute, the essence of that which they define.

Striking differences between Cyril and the postmodernists remain, none the less, for de Saussure's separation of signifier and signified ultimately destabilizes linguistic meaning, since meaning or signification is delayed until the signifier reaches its appropriate, and often unknown, destination.¹⁶⁵ Cyril's linguistic presuppositions, however, presuppose a destination and context that is readily known and identified, namely the soteriological (salvation) narrative (ἱστορία) of Christ's Incarnation, Resurrection, and Eschaton (the end-time).¹⁶⁶ Proper theological interpretation, according to Cyril, demands careful attention to the overarching narrative drama that allows the interpreter to transform events previously hidden in shadows and types into a clear explication of Christ's mystery.¹⁶⁷ His method preserves intact the historical narrative (ἱστορία) that constitutes the basic teachings of the church.¹⁶⁸ Athanasius had a similar way of refuting the Arians, for he claimed that the Arians resorted to the words of divine Scripture, but failed to see the mind (intent) in those words (οὐχ ὁρῶσι τὸν ἐν τούτοις νοῦν).¹⁶⁹ When the Arians

¹⁶⁵ J. Lacan, 'La Lettre Volée' (26 Apr. 1955) in J.-A. Miller (ed.), *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan* (Paris, 1978), 235–40.

¹⁶⁶ Irenaeus expressed those truth claims most succinctly in his *Adversus haereses*, in which he explained that the proper interpretation of Scripture applies the rule of truth that every Christian receives at baptism. The scriptural text should be interpreted in a manner consistent with that body of truth (σῶμα τῆς ἀληθείας). Only then is the proper meaning of Scripture revealed, and the interpretation of the heretics exposed as falsehood. See *Adversus haereses* (Latin), 1. 9.

¹⁶⁷ *Glaphyra*, PG 69. 16A.

¹⁶⁸ Lit. the body of truth, σῶμα τῆς ἀληθείας. This resembles the Christian Rule of Faith, which sought to preserve the narrative of Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection as the basis for Christian belief. See e.g. Irenaeus, *Demonstratio praedicationis apostolicae (Epideixis)* (Armenian) (CPG 1307). For a discussion of the Christian Rule of Faith and Athanasius, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 43–5.

¹⁶⁹ Athanasius, *Orationes contra Arianos iii*, 1. 52 (CPG 2093), PG 26.

rejected Nicaea for including terms that were not found within the sacred texts, Athanasius argued that the Arians had failed to recognize that the greater scriptural sense (*διάνοια*) permitted the use of all the council's terms.¹⁷⁰

Cyril made explicit the interpretative method that was implicit in Athanasius' exegetical discourse. The whole of divine Scripture was thought to signify Christ's mystery (*μυστήριον*) by means of countless objects. These objects acquire special and sacred significance especially when they take the form of figural language, such as enigmas (*αἰνίγματα*), types (*τύποι*), and shadows (*σκιά*).¹⁷¹ Just as a magnificent city has several public images of its king, remarked Cyril, so the figures that comprise sacred Scripture are a type (*τύπος*) of a greater spiritual reality. And that reality was said to encompass all Christ's mystery.¹⁷² For Cyril, this mystery, which includes virtually every aspect of the divine economy (*οἰκονομία*), consists in truths hidden behind a veil of figural language.¹⁷³ Its secrets are finally revealed only to

¹⁷⁰ Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaeanae synodi*, 21, Opitz, ii. 1. 1–45; p. 17 l. 29 to 18 l. 20, esp. 18 ll. 2–3; PG 25. 453A–B. For Athanasius, the Arians' criticism of Nicaea was the product of their own disordered mind (*τὸν νοῦν οὐχ ὑγιαίνοντες*). See the discussion of Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 44.

¹⁷¹ See e.g. Cyril's use of the term *αἶνγμα*, *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate* (CPG 5200), PG 68. 133, 1125; 68. 597B, 613B, 616C, 632B, 640C, 641C. Cyril often used the term to mean 'figure' or 'type'; re: *τύποι*, see PG 68. 164A, 164B, 189B, 592D. Cyril used the term 'type' to mean a figural representation of a greater spiritual truth; types, therefore, must be interpreted spiritually. On Cyril's use of the term *σκιά* (generally meaning 'foreshadowing') see e.g. PG 68. 596B, 596C, 600C, 616C–D, 624A. Cited by A. Kerrigan, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 126.

¹⁷² See e.g. *Glaphyra in Pentateuchum* (CPG 5201), PG 69. 308C. *Σκοπὸς τῆ θεοπνεύστῳ Γραφῇ, τὸ Χριστοῦ μυστήριον διὰ μυρίων ὄσων ἡμῖν κατασημῆναι πραγμάτων*, 'The point of divinely inspired Scripture is to signify to us, through countless means, the mystery of Christ.'

¹⁷³ For a discussion of Cyril's exegetical interpretation of the Moses typology as a complex symbol of the continuities and discontinuities of the Old and New Covenants, and as a vivid foreshadowing of the 'mystery' of Christ, see J. McGuckin, 'Moses and the "Mystery of Christ" in St. Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis', *Coptic Church Review* 21/1 (2000), 24–32; see also R. L. Wilken, 'St. Cyril of Alexandria: the Mystery of Christ in the Bible', *Pro Ecclesia* 4 (1995), 454–78. For a discussion of the eucharist as the foundation of the mystery of the unification of Christ, and as standing between the unity of the Trinity and the mystical life of the church, see M.-O. Boulnois, 'Die Eucharistie, Mysterium der Einigung bei Cyrill von Alexandrien: Die Modelle der trinitarischen und christologischen Einigung', *Theologische Quartalschrift* 4 (1998), 294–310.

those endowed with the gift of comprehension.¹⁷⁴ That is the process by which sacred Scripture becomes the repository of numerous narrative and linguistic devices, all of which signify the greater spiritual reality that preserves the narrative (*ἱστορία*) of Christ's sacred drama.

Cyril imparted this teaching to his congregations in simple credal (kerygmatic) formulations.¹⁷⁵ Since the creeds of the church expressed the fundamental beliefs necessary for salvation and redemption, they served an important didactic function. If the Arians attributed too much significance to the power of negative definitions, and thereby failed to grasp the spiritual meaning of Scripture, then Cyril's congregations had only to embrace the creeds of the church in order to avoid the Arians' interpretative errors. The kerygma instructed Cyril's churches and promoted orthodox doctrine in at least two ways: by condemning the aberrant beliefs of heretics, and by instructing Christians in proper behaviour and morals.¹⁷⁶ When Cyril juxtaposed his kerygmatic formula to his interpretative theory of language, the kerygma acquired an additional significance: the

Among the main texts in which Cyril elucidates his concept of mystery are *De adoratione* and *Glaphyra*. See e.g. *De adoratione*, PG 68. 140A, 145A, 285B (the power of Christ's mysteries overcomes death and Satan); *Glaphyra*, PG 69. 16A.

¹⁷⁴ Cyril equates mystery with figural language in several places, including: *Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam* (CPG 5203), PG 70. 9A, 'Although the discourse of the holy prophets is obscure and has been filled with hidden meanings, it predicts for us the divine mysteries.' Cyril believed that the proper interpretation of those divine mysteries, which are presented in figures and enigmas, requires careful attention to the accuracy of the narrative (*τῆς ἱστορίας τὸ ἀκριβές*) and to the interpretation of the spiritual *θεωρία*. That would assure readers that the explication of meaning was not in any way deficient; *De adoratione*, PG 68. 260A, 280A, 288C (the law begets knowledge of the mystery of Christ through enigmas and shadows. Moreover, one should contemplate, as in a mirror, the mystery of Christ in subtle images and in the plan of the *oikonomia*). Only those with correct understanding are able to comprehend the mystery. *Glaphyra*, PG 69. 645D.

¹⁷⁵ *Epistula paschalis* 12, SC 434, p. 76.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* I, SC 372, p. 156. *Δύο γὰρ εἶναι κελεύει τὰς σάλπιγγας, ὅτι διπλοῦς τίς ἐστι τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὁ λόγος· εἰς μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν ὀρθὴν τῶν θείων δογμάτων κατάληψιν τοὺς ἀγνοοῦντας καλῶν· ἕτερος δὲ τὸ μὴ δεῖν τοῖς ἀτόποις τῶν ἔργων ἐμφύρεσθαι συμβουλεύων.* 'He commands that there be two trumpets, because the discourse of the church is, in a sense, double: one calls to correct understanding those who are ignorant of the divine teachings; the other advises us not to abandon ourselves to foul deeds.'

proper method for interpreting scriptural and conciliar language was now subsumed under the simple, kerygmatic decrees of Cyril's church.¹⁷⁷ Though words do not necessarily reveal the essence of things, as the Eunomians had falsely claimed, they were made to signify a greater spiritual reality. The kerygma defined that reality for Cyril's churches. It consisted in the basic affirmations that Christians must believe in the *homoousion* trinity; that Christ, who was born of a woman, died for their sins in order to vanquish death; and that Christ was raised from the dead in order to open the doors to heaven for those confined to earth.¹⁷⁸ For a wide cross-section of Christian believers, the stark simplicity of the typical kerygmatic formulation offered ample protection against the misinterpretations of the Arians and Eunomians.

Cyril argued against the same Eunomian view in his treatise, the *Thesaurus*, written sometime between 423 and 425. Most of his *Thesaurus* was, in fact, a recapitulation of Athanasius' *Contra Arianos*, and both works organize the material in a similar fashion: they present a statement of Arian objections followed by a detailed refutation.¹⁷⁹ Cyril's argument closely resembles other anti-Eunomian treatises, such as those written by Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Didymus the Blind. But Cyril probably borrowed from some *Contra Eunomium* no longer extant when he asserted at the beginning of his treatise that the substance of divinity is not determined by its being unbegotten. As in his Festal letter for the year 424, the Eunomian theory of names troubled Cyril, for he believed that the heretics had wrongfully claimed that the negative definition 'unbegotten' (τὸ ἀγένητον) denotes the essence (οὐσία) of deity, even though the term does nothing more

¹⁷⁷ Ἀλλὰ ταυτὶ μὲν ἡμῶν πρὸς ἐκείνους· εἰρήσεται δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὡς ἔστω ἀπλοῦν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τὸ κήρυγμα. 'But we [consider] such things [i.e. philosophical understanding] to be [appropriate] for them. For you it will be said that the kerygma of the church is simple.' Ibid. 12, SC 434, p. 76.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. 78.

¹⁷⁹ Although the arguments that Cyril specifically directed against Eunomius were borrowed from Athanasius, Athanasius himself, of course, did not argue against Eunomius because he rose to notoriety after Athanasius composed his *Contra Arianos*. For a textual comparison between Cyril's *Thesaurus* and Athanasius' *Orationes contra Arianos iii*, see J. Liébaert, *La Doctrine christologique de Saint Cyrille D'Alexandrie avant la querelle nestorienne* (Lille, 1951), 19–64.

than indicate that what is begotten (τὸ γενητὸν) is dissimilar (ἀνόμοιον) from it.¹⁸⁰ ‘Unbegotten,’ which delineates what is *not* an essence (οὐσία), merely *signifies*, but does not constitute, that essence, thought Cyril.

Interpretative and philosophical differences had also largely defined Athanasius’ conflict with the Arians, most notably in his *Contra Arianos*, which Cyril had liberally paraphrased throughout his *Thesaurus*. In the third discourse against the Arians, for example, Athanasius addressed Arian misinterpretation of an important New Testament passage.¹⁸¹ Ascribing ignorance to the Son, Arians had apparently relied on a literal interpretation of Mark 13: 32 to support their doctrinal assertions: ‘But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.’ The Arians claimed that an ignorant Son necessarily implied a Son whose essence was not that of the Father. In the late fourth century, Eunomians had found this same text difficult to understand, and that is why the Eunomian Eutychus had formed a separate sect in Constantinople after he was expelled from the majority sect for ascribing to the Son a perfect knowledge of the final day.

For Athanasius, all the Arians’ exegetical problems could be attributed to their incorrect interpretative method. By being ignorant and confused (ἀγνοήσαντες καὶ σκοτοδινώντες) about the nature of words, the Arians had failed to grasp the appropriate interpretative context (ὁ εἶρμος τοῦ ἀναγνώσματος) that would have given these scriptural words their correct religious meaning.¹⁸² That the Arians had appropriated certain biblical phrases to support their non-orthodox views only confirmed Athanasius’ scepticism regarding the expressive power of words. He feared that a clever or artful phrase, when uttered by a heretic, could dangerously disguise its heretical and irreligious meaning. Although even strange phrases (ξεπίζουσαι λέξεις) were thought to

¹⁸⁰ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 2 (CPG 5215), PG 75. 28c. Cyril also refuted the Eunomian heretics who claimed that the term ‘unbegotten’ denoted a difference (διαφορά), for Cyril believed, following Aristotle, that every difference is defined in relationship to a substance. If the heretics claim that ‘unbegotten’ is a difference, then they must identify the substance that subsumes it. See also Aristotle, *Topica*, VI. 6. 143^{a-b}, *Aristotelis Topica et Sophistici Elenchi*, 126–7.

¹⁸¹ And that exegetical confrontation resonates well into the Nestorian affair.

¹⁸² Athanasius, *Orationes contra Arianos iii*, 3. 42 (CPG 2093), PG 26. 412.

be acceptable when uttered with the proper religious intent (ἕως μόνον ὁ λέγων εὐσεβὲς ἔχει τὸ φρόνημα),¹⁸³ they were susceptible to error and misinterpretation when the words were severed from their context. To prevent such dangerous misreadings, Athanasius advised that all the words of a church council, especially the difficult ones, should be understood squarely within the occasion and setting that produced them.¹⁸⁴

This same concern for interpretative context can be seen in Athanasius' interpretation of Scripture, for he claimed that common sense could refute the Arian misinterpretation of Mark 13: 32. How, asked Athanasius, could the omnipotent Word and Son of the Father be ignorant about a day? The narrative context revealed the absurdity of the Arians' claims, for the Word who knows what occurs that day must likewise know when the final day will unfold. Cyril reproduced this same passage in his *Thesaurus* when he asserted that the Word, who is author of time, cannot in any sense be ignorant of the final hour and day.¹⁸⁵ The Arians had made the mistake of trying to interpret the scriptural text apart from its larger religious context. Athanasius and then Cyril claimed to interpret that text within its proper setting. A complete exegetical explanation, however, demanded that the biblical words themselves be fully accounted for. If the text did not mean what the Arians claimed, then what was its significance? According to Athanasius and Cyril, this 'ignorance' that Scripture asserted was in no way an indication of the Word's deficiency, for it was merely a property of the Son's human nature: spoken only after the Incarnation, the epithet properly ascribed ignorance to the Son by virtue of his humanity. Though the Son, as man, remained ignorant, the Word enjoyed the full and perfect knowledge appropriate to its divinity. Cyril's (and Athanasius') response to the Arians demonstrates that these exegetical differences were the result of different interpretative methods. Basic presuppositions about the nature of reading thus informed their christological reflections.

Cyril argued against Arians and Eunomians once again in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, written between 425 and 428,

¹⁸³ Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, 18. 4 (CPG 2120), Opitz, ii. I. 1-45; PG 25. 456C.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. 18. 5; PG 25. 456C.

¹⁸⁵ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 22, PG 75. 368-80.

before the start of the Nestorian controversy.¹⁸⁶ John the Evangelist had, according to Cyril, composed his Gospel to refute the heretical belief current among the simpler people of John's community that the Word of God was first called into being when born of Mary. This was a fictitious account of the Gospel's origin. It served as a foil against which Cyril could write an extensive commentary to dispose of the threat posed by the Arian interpretation of John. Believing the task of scriptural explication to be fraught with the danger of misinterpretation, Cyril set forth its difficulties by using an extensive metaphor.¹⁸⁷ Just as the preacher of *Ecclesiastes* explained that one who chops wood is endangered whenever the iron head slips, so does the interpreter of the spiritual wood of Scripture find himself in danger whenever the iron head of the mind slips from its path and misses correct understanding. An image and figure for the thoughts of sacred Scripture, 'wood' was thought to serve as a metonymic figure for trees that must be properly maintained and cultivated. Cyril feared that the heretics had lighted upon even the best cultivated trees—the sacred Scriptures—and culled from them kindling for their views. Righteous Christians were not to abandon Scripture and cut down its trees because they still bore fruit for those who interpreted well.¹⁸⁸ Correct reading, therefore, protected the words of sacred Scripture from the misinterpretations of the heretics.

¹⁸⁶ Cyril, *Commentarii in Iohannem*. The absence of certain theological terms central to the Nestorian affair, such as 'bearer of God' (θεοτόκος) and 'natural union' (ἔνωσις φυσικῆ) strongly suggest that the treatise was composed before 428. See generally, G. O. Mazur, 'Introduction to St. Cyril of Alexandria's Commentaries on the Fourth Gospel: Preface, Chapter I and II', *Orthodox Life* 49 (1999), 17–29. Although in large part a line-by-line commentary on the Gospel of John intended to rebut the Arians' interpretative claims, the commentary also includes continuous streams of anti-Jewish polemic. Similar to the Festal letters of Cyril's early episcopacy, however, this anti-Jewish polemic must be placed within Cyril's larger anti-Arian agenda. He meant to say that the Arians were no better than the Jews who misunderstood the nature of Christ and his relationship to the Father. For a discussion of Cyril's commentary on the Gospel of John, see generally, G. Münch-Labacher, *Naturhaftes und geschichtliches Denken bei Cyrill von Alexandrien: die verschiedenen Betrachtungsweisen der Heilswerklichkeit in seinem Johannes-Kommentar* (Bonn, 1996).

¹⁸⁷ Cyril, *Commentarii in Iohannem*, PG 73. 9–12A.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.* PG 73. 12A–C.

Cyril also argued against a dualist Christology whose author he does not name. When the Word became flesh, it became a rational creature endowed with a soul and earthly flesh, thought Cyril. The Word was also God by nature, although in no way severed from the flesh, for 'He is one Christ, from both.'¹⁸⁹ As early as his Festal letter for the year 420, Cyril had similarly written of a unified Christ: by means of the ineffable union, the Word made flesh may be understood to come into its own temple.¹⁹⁰ The mysterious commingling of Word and Flesh was thought to be a matter of simple faith, wholly incomprehensible to human sensibilities. It was certain unnamed heterodox Christians, said Cyril, who had been unable to comprehend the depth of this mystery, and who had for that reason wilfully separated what God united, creating two Christs and two Sons, designated by the two distinct titles 'firstborn' and 'only begotten'.¹⁹¹ Objecting to this dualist Christology, Cyril explained that the many titles referred to the very same Son, he who was the image and impress of his Father's hypostasis.¹⁹²

Cyril went so far as to implicate these unnamed heterodox Christians in the bad fortune then plaguing the country. Natural disasters had beset the Egyptian countryside the previous year, including hailstorms that wiped out crops just before harvest time, causing famine especially among the peasants. Bandits ambushed whatever crops could be harvested as they were transported along the canals and river.¹⁹³ By discussing the mystery of the unity of Christ at a time when banditry and famine ravaged

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. I, 9, PG 73. 161A. Cyril in this passage explicates John 1: 14, 'And the Word became flesh'. A tantalizing hint at the Nestorian debate to come, Cyril's phrase 'one from both' was repeated throughout his controversy with Nestorius. L. Koen, *The Saving Passion: Incarnational and Soteriological Thought in Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Stockholm, 1991), 74.

¹⁹⁰ *Epistula paschalis* 8, SC 392, p. 100. *Εἰς δὲ ἐξ ἀμφοῦν ὁ Χριστός*. This phrase was, of course, troublesome to the Antiochenes, who believed that it evoked the teachings of Apollinarius.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. 100. *καὶ χωρίζοντων μὲν . . . ἃ συνέλεξε ὁ θεός, δύο δὲ εἶναι Χριστοὺς καὶ δύο Υἱοὺς οἰομένων*. 'They separate that which God has united . . . supposing there to be two Christs and two sons.'

¹⁹² Ibid. 104. *ἀπαύγασμα γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ*. 'For he is the image and impress of his hypostasis.'

¹⁹³ Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 392, Introduction, 58; *Epistula paschalis* 8, SC 392, p. 86.

the country, Cyril led his congregation of churches to believe that the heretical, dualist Christology was somehow responsible for Egypt's having been chastised by an angry God.¹⁹⁴

CONCLUSIONS

Cyril's use of Athanasius' work in his later confrontation with Nestorius helped him secure his long-term victory in the orthodox church. As early as his first Festal letter, Cyril alluded to the ecclesiastical policies of Athanasius when he urged the monks and laity to ascetic practice. And just as Athanasius had protected Nicene orthodoxy from the doctrinal attacks of the Arians, Cyril attacked the Arian heresy in his *Thesaurus*, which itself borrowed extensively from the *Contra Arianos* of Athanasius. Cyril's elaborate paraphrase did not necessarily violate the conventions of literary composition, since *mimesis* was the mainstay of literary theory and rhetorical instruction for antiquity.¹⁹⁵ Indeed, the literary theorist Longinus had said that imitating the great writers and poets of the past ultimately led the author down one possible road toward the sublime style.¹⁹⁶ It is true that Longinus probably had in mind something more like literary inspiration than flagrant copying.¹⁹⁷ But what

¹⁹⁴ *Epistula paschalis* 8, SC 392, p. 88. Ἀκολουθεῖ γὰρ τοῖς πλημμελοῦσιν ἐκτόπως, τὸ χρῆναι δικαίως κολάζεσθαι, καὶ ταῖς παρ' ἡμῖν ἀπονοίαις ἰσοστατεῖν ἀνάγκη τὴν δίκην. 'For it follows that it is necessary for those who commit wrongs indiscriminately to be corrected justly, and it is necessary that punishment be administered in equal measure to the arrogant among us.' That Cyril opposed this unnamed, dual-nature Christology during such a tumultuous period probably served his later attack upon the Antiochene dualism of Nestorius. The congregations who heard Cyril's words may have feared that similar disasters would strike Egypt unless they condemned Nestorius.

¹⁹⁵ See e.g. Quintilian, *Inst. orat.* 10. 2, *Institution Oratoire*, ed. J. Cousin (Paris, 1979), 106–14. On imitation as a form of flattery, Quintilian writes: 'Atque omnis vitae ratio sic constat, ut, quae probamus in aliis, facere ipsi velimus.' *Ibid.* 107. Nevertheless, Quintilian urged the orator to improve upon his model and to avoid mere copying.

¹⁹⁶ Longinus, *Libellus de Sublimitate*, 13. 2, ed. D. A. Russell (Oxford, 1968), 19 ll. 12–13, cited by Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 101: ⟨ἡ⟩ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν μεγάλων συγγραφέων καὶ ποιητῶν μίμησις τε καὶ ζήλωσις. 'It is the imitation and emulation of the great prose writers and poets of the past.'

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* ll. 17–19: οὕτως ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν ἀρχαίων μεγαλοφυΐας εἰς τὰς τῶν ζηλούντων

Cyril's anti-Arian writings may have lacked in sublimity of literary style, they gained in practical effectiveness. By adopting Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse, Cyril was deliberately making the past present. He was implicitly claiming that Athanasius' reputation as the anti-Arian bishop *par excellence* should also be his.¹⁹⁸ That reputation would serve him well in his controversy with Nestorius.

Cyril's patient consolidation of ecclesiastical power throughout Egypt during the early years of his episcopacy would also further his cause in his later confrontation with the imperial court and religion. His first Festal letter, which called for an end to division among the churches, made explicit his plan to depart from Theophilus' divisive politics and forge a unified church. The anti-pagan, anti-heretic, and anti-Jewish polemics of Cyril's early episcopacy were simply the manifestation of this broader ecclesiastical plan to consolidate Christian belief and practice. Through simple kerygmatic formulations, Cyril imparted these views to the churches. Those who disobeyed his kerygmatic decrees were led to believe that they would meet the same abysmal fate as the pagans, Jews, and Arians, whose impiety was thought to preclude their participation in the Christian soteriological scheme. Cyril would ultimately impose this particular vision of Alexandrian Christianity, with much success, on the church of the Imperial City.

ἐκείνους ψυχὰς ὡς ἀπὸ ἱερῶν στομιῶν ἀπόρροιαί τινας φέρονται. 'So that certain effluences are carried from the talent of the ancients, as if from sacred fountains, into the souls of those emulating them.'

¹⁹⁸ Cyril achieved a kind of sublimity of literary style when he made Athanasius' reputation his own, for he borrowed Athanasius' good character when he reproduced Athanasius' literary texts. See e.g. *ibid.* ll. 26–7. *ἔστιν δ' οὐ κλοπή τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀπὸ καλῶν ἡθῶν ἢ πλασμάτων ἢ δημιουργημάτων ἀποτύπωσις.* 'The matter is not a theft, but rather an impression [made] from excellent characters or moulds or works of art.' Athanasius established for later generations the historical understanding of Arius, just as Cyril established the understanding of Nestorius. On Athanasius and his quest to re-evaluate Alexandrian Christian self-definition, see Ch. Kannengiesser, 'Athanasius of Alexandria vs. Arius: The Alexandrian Crisis', in B. A. Pearson and J. E. Goehring (eds.), *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1992), 204–15.

Political Alliance and the Onset of Controversy

When the Council of Ephesus met on 21 June in the year 431, Cyril and Nestorius were in different positions with respect to the imperial court, the monks of Constantinople, and the papal authority in Rome. Although the emperor Theodosius II favoured Nestorius, the papal delegates from Rome supported Cyril, and the monks of the Imperial City offered Cyril strong support in the form of public demonstrations. Thus did Cyril and Nestorius form political alliances with the groups central to the ecclesiastical dispute, including the monks of Egypt and Constantinople, the emperor Theodosius II, and the Western bishops under the direction of pope Caelestine in Rome. Attentive to both the immediate ecclesiastical political context, and to the political and theoretical legacy inherited from the past, this discussion of the political alliances formed throughout the period preceding Ephesus reveals how the political strategies of Cyril and Nestorius differed in persuading the monks, emperor, and pope to take sides in the christological dispute.

CYRIL, NESTORIUS, AND THE MONKS

In the early years of his episcopacy, Cyril formed a relationship with the monks of Egypt that drew more inspiration from the episcopal/monastic alliance Athanasius had forged than from Theophilus' vindictive and certainly divisive campaigns against the monastic community.¹ Monks were a powerful force in the

¹ See Brakke, *Athanasius and Asceticism*, 272, and Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, 43–9. On the alliance between the monks of Egypt and their patri-

economic life of Egypt, for even the solitary hermits among them, though they claimed to avoid any interaction with the inhabited world (*oikoumene*), actively participated in the vicissitudes of the marketplace, openly peddling their wares.² At the same time, the Pachomian monks, who lived in large groups of monasteries organized under a central authority, engaged in a sophisticated and highly developed network of economic exchange.³ Even more renowned for their ascetic rigour and spiritual prowess, the monks of Egypt were often called upon to perform intercessory prayers for laity and clergy alike. The monks were the spiritual elite of the Christian community who would receive heavenly recompense for their efforts. Or so Cyril claimed in his first Festal letter, delivered in 414, in which he urged the laity to emulate the monks' ascetic discipline by practising the virtue of fasting.⁴ Their lofty spiritual virtues were compromised, however, when one of their ranks, the monk from Nitria, Ammonius, expressed his hatred towards the prefect Orestes, for his ongoing conflict with Cyril, by throwing a stone at him. Seized by the angered crowd of local Alexandrian Christians, Ammonius was ultimately executed for his deed. Cyril attempted to elevate the slain monk to the status of a martyr, an effort that failed only when the Alexandrian Christians rejected the gesture. Cyril's powerful alliance with the Egyptian monastic community was nevertheless well begun. It had implications that extended into both the economic and spiritual spheres.

arch, see G. J. M. Bartelink, 'Les Rapports entre le monachisme égyptien et l'épiscopat d'Alexandrie (jusqu'en 450)', in *Mélanges Mondésert* (Paris, 1987), 365–79.

² J. E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1999), 39–52.

³ See J. E. Goehring, 'New Frontiers in Pachomian Studies,' in B. Pearson and J. Goehring (eds.), *Roots of Egyptian Christianity* (Philadelphia, 1986), 236–57; idem, *Chalcedonian Power Politics and the Demise of Pachomian Monasteries* (Claremont, 1989); idem, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert*, 137–95, 221–61; E. Wipszycka, 'The Economic Organization of the Pachomian Community: Critique of the Evidence of Jerome', unpublished paper. The Pachomians were monks who lived and worked together, while the hermits were those who practised solitary asceticism. The compromise between these two types of monasticism was the *lavra*, in which monks lived in separate dwellings grouped together around a central complex. *ODB* s. v., 1190.

⁴ Athanasius Alex., Epistula 1 (*CPG* 2102), PG 26. 1360–6.

About ten years later, in 428, a number of Nestorius' sermons were brought into Egypt, perhaps by Cyril's detractors.⁵ The sermons, which taught that the appellation 'Bearer of God' (*Theotokos*) was not appropriate for the Virgin Mary, caused much confusion within the monasteries, where the epithet had been applied to the Virgin as a title of devotion for many years.⁶ Because of Nestorius' sermons, the monks were suddenly questioning whether the Virgin should be known by this popular designation, for many now believed that the title '*Theotokos*' was deeply problematic. Others inferred from Nestorius' sermons that Christ was merely an instrument (*ὄργανον*) of the deity but not the deity himself.⁷ This plainly implied that Jesus was not God. To end this theological dispute stirring within the monasteries, Cyril immediately composed an encyclical letter to the monks of Egypt that circulated not only to the leaders of the monastic communities but to many deacons and priests as well. In it, Cyril revealed much about his strategy with respect to the monastic communities. It is therefore worth studying in some detail, for monastic support was destined to play an important role in the events at Ephesus.

Cyril's letter attempted to teach the monks how to understand correctly the theological doctrines that were the basis for the mystery of the divine economy (*oikonomia*). It is something of a commonplace that, after Athanasius, Alexandrian Christianity developed along distinctly soteriological lines.⁸ And Cyril believed that when his monks impugned the divinity of Christ, in declaring that Christ was merely an instrument of God and not God himself, they played havoc with this simple soteriological scheme. With the divinity of Christ at stake, Cyril was deter-

⁵ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Caelestinum per Posidonium* (mid-430) (CPG 5310), *ACO* I. I. 5, p. 11 ll. 15–23. Cyril complained to the pope that some of Nestorius' homilies had been brought into Egypt, causing dismay among the simpler monks, who were now unsure what the correct faith was. To address the problem, Cyril composed his letter to the monks of Egypt, which eventually made its way to Constantinople.

⁶ S. Wessel, 'Nestorius, Mary, and Controversy . . .', *AHC* 31/1 (1999), 23–6.

⁷ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos* (CPG 5301), *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 19 ll. 28–30; 22 ll. 25–6. See generally, J. S. Liébaert, 'L'Évolution de la christologie de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie à partir de la controverse Nestorienne', *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 27 (1970), 27–48.

⁸ Baynes, 'Alexandria and Constantinople', 148.

mined to use every conceivable means to persuade the monks to restore 'orthodox' belief and practice within the monasteries. Defining the theological dispute in its starkest terms, Cyril declared that if Mary is not *Theotokos*, as Nestorius' sermons claimed, then Christ is not God. The monks probably heard this assertion as the inflammatory statement Cyril meant it to be. Put in such a way, Nestorius' teachings were thus made to undermine completely the Alexandrian understanding of salvation that Cyril had carefully imparted to the congregations of Egypt early in his episcopacy.

To prevent the discord and division within the monastic community that had caused so much difficulty for Theophilus throughout the Origenist affair, Cyril dealt swiftly and directly with the theological quarrels troubling the monasteries of Egypt. From observing Theophilus, Cyril probably concluded that the doctrinal speculations of intellectual monks might cause insurmountable difficulties for the Alexandrian episcopacy. Socrates himself characterized Theophilus' dispute with the Tall Brothers by distinguishing between learned and simple monks. Socrates plainly associated simplicity with ecclesiastical unity and correct understanding, while he understood intellectualism to be the source of doctrinal confusion and theological dispute. Sozomen, in contrast, did not hesitate to criticize the simple, anti-intellectual monks in *his* account of the Origenist affair. He saw such monks as abandoning rational and orderly argumentation in favour of hurling insults, for they were thought to have cast the theological complexities of the Origenist debate into simple-minded slogans.⁹ Though Sozomen implicitly criticized the monks' unwillingness to engage in reasoned debate, Cyril, like Socrates, praised their avoidance of formal theological dispute as something of a virtue.¹⁰ He saw the burgeoning christological controversy as well beyond the simplistic understanding of his monks. His purpose was to convince the monks that simple faith and understanding would extricate

⁹ Sozomen, *HE* 8. 12, GCS NS 4, p. 366 ll. 8–12. καὶ τὰς διαλέξεις οὐκ ἐν κόσμῳ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ποιούμενοι πείθειν ἀλλήλους οὐκ ἤξιον, ἀλλ' εἰς ὕβρεις καθίσταντο. 'They did not think it worthwhile to persuade one another by making arguments for themselves in an orderly fashion, but [rather] they hurled insults.' *Ibid.* ll. 9–11.

¹⁰ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 11 ll. 12–15.

them from the quagmire of theological erudition presented in Nestorius' sermons. Only then would unity and correct doctrinal understanding return to the monasteries.¹¹ By this ploy, Cyril virtually ensured that the erudite distinctions of the Nestorian controversy would indeed elude their grasp.

The strategy relied, in part, on concepts Cyril had already set forth in his Festal letters, where he celebrated simplicity of doctrine as a virtue. In his letter for the year 424 Cyril had said that basic credal formulations of the church were the stable theological foundation for correct belief and dogma, and that they alone sufficed to protect Christians from making heretical errors. Four years later, Cyril was telling the monks of Egypt that simple and virtuous faith, along with a proper understanding of the divine mystery, was the only system of true belief that was needed to refute the complex theological errors that were then infiltrating the monastic communities. Monks who engaged in abstruse theological discussion were accused of violating the soteriological principles upon which Cyril intended to build a unified Christian community. That soteriological foundation demanded belief in credal formulations that simply and unambiguously affirmed the several tenets necessary for ordinary Christians to achieve salvation. The most basic affirmation of Alexandrian Christian piety was certainly the belief that Christ is God. By participating in the theological discussions that Nestorius' insidious sermons raised, the monks were thought to undermine this foundation of Christian piety.

Cyril was not the first to criticize conventional disputation. According to one modern scholar, that strategy is rooted in the evolution of the philosopher-teacher into a figure of eminence and authority. By post-classical times, 'truth resided not in the dialectic of inquiry but in the very person of the philosopher . . . [and] dialectic was robbed of its ultimate legitimacy as a method

¹¹ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*, ACO I. I. 1, p. 11 ll. 15–18. καὶ ἦν μὲν ἄμεινον τῶν τοιούτων ὑμᾶς ζητημάτων εἰς ἅπαν ἀποφοιτᾶν καὶ ἂ μάλιστα ἐστὶν ὡς ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ καὶ αἰνίγματι θεωρούμενα τοῖς ἀρτίοις τὴν φρένα καὶ βεβηκόσι τὸν νοῦν, μηδὲ ἀνορύττειν ὄλωσ (τὰ γάρ τοι τῶν θεωρημάτων ἰσχνότερα τὸν τῶν ἀκεραιότερων ὑπερνῆχεται νοῦν): 'It would be better for you to abstain entirely from such questions, which are only contemplated with effort "as in a mirror and an enigma" by those suitable in spirit and advanced in mind; [and] not to delve into such things at all, for, I tell you, the more subtle of the subjects of investigation [far] surpass the mind of the simpler people.'

for arriving at truth', paving the way for Christianity's claim to be the one 'true philosophy'.¹² Cyril's criticism of the monks suggests that dialectical disputation was no longer considered to be the means by which late antique Christians arrived at the truth. Christian truth now resided elsewhere, namely in the traditions of the orthodox fathers.¹³

When many monks, under the influence of Nestorius' sermons, claimed that the Virgin Mary should not receive the title 'Mother of God' (*Theotokos*) because it appeared neither in sacred Scripture nor in the Symbol of Faith promulgated at Nicaea,¹⁴ Cyril assured them that Athanasius, the orthodox father *par excellence*, had already used the term, and that the epithet was well within the traditions of the orthodox fathers.¹⁵ If Christ is God then Mary must receive the correlative designation, 'Mother of God', Cyril told his 'simple' monks.¹⁶ Dismissing the claims that dialectical debate and disputation were the surest path to truth, Cyril replaced those claims with others that were closely linked with the traditions of the fathers. By aligning himself with Athanasius, therefore, Cyril not only resolved a potentially divisive theological issue but also reminded the monks of Athanasius' strong alliance with the monastic community and of his reputation for unblemished orthodoxy in his celebrated fight against the Arians.

The simple piety of the monks, none the less, demanded some adequate explanation for the absence of the designation *Theotokos* from the sacred texts and from the proceedings at Nicaea. The title *Theotokos* was theologically justified for Mary, said Cyril, because it expressed views consistent with the overall

¹² R. Lim, *Public Disputation, Power, and Social Order in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1995), 33.

¹³ On appealing to the fathers as bearing witness to the origin and preservation of the kerygma, see G. Florovsky, 'The Authority of the Ancient Councils and the Tradition of the Fathers', in idem, *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View* (Belmont, 1972), 100–3.

¹⁴ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad apocrisarios CPoli constitutos* (CPG 5309), ACO I. I. 1. pp. 110–12.

¹⁵ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos* (CPG 5301), ACO I. I. 1. p. 11 l. 31 to 12 l. 20.

¹⁶ Ibid. ACO I. I. 1. p. 11 ll. 28–9. εἰ γὰρ ἐστι θεὸς ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, πῶς οὐ θεοτόκος ἢ τεκοῦσα παρθένος; 'For if our Lord Jesus Christ is God, how is the Virgin who begets not Theotokos?'

sense of the divine economy. To designate Mary *Theotokos* preserved intact the narrative framework that comprised Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection. Furthermore, Scripture and the Symbol of Faith both unequivocally decreed that Jesus born of Mary is God by nature, for Nicene orthodoxy held that the Son is consubstantial with the Father, and the Scriptures revealed a Son equal in glory and power to God.¹⁷ From these scriptural and Nicene truths, Cyril reasoned that the Virgin Mary must have borne one who is truly God by nature. To deny Mary her rightful appellation 'Bearer of God' impugned the divinity of Christ; violated the sacred narrative that constituted Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection; and undermined the christological foundations on which humanity's salvation depends. As Cyril put it, only the unbelieving heretics (i.e. the Arians) imagined a Son similar in nature to the rest of us who are creatures. This assertion would find little opposition from the monastic communities of Egypt, who were deeply committed to the Nicene Creed. Just as Athanasius called upon the monastic communities of his day, including the solitary monk Antony, to safeguard the tenets of Nicene orthodoxy, Cyril commanded the present monks of Egypt to preserve the basic truths contained in the Nicene Symbol of Faith.¹⁸

While Cyril urged the Egyptian monastic communities to reaffirm the divinity of Christ, he addressed a related theological conundrum, one that would soon occupy Cyril and Nestorius in their exchange of letters—the assertion that the Virgin Mary herself bore one who was fully God. He explained this paradoxical notion with a simple analogy: although earthly mothers produce the physical bodies of their children, and God provides the spirit, these mothers nevertheless give birth to the whole living being consisting of body and soul.¹⁹ In a similar way, when

¹⁷ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*, ACO I. I. 1, p. 13 ll. 23–7.

¹⁸ See J. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 248 n. 2.

¹⁹ See T. J. van Bavel, *Recherches sur la Christologie de Saint Augustin, l'Humain et le Divin dans le Christ d'Après Saint Augustin* (Freiburg, 1954), 30, where Bavel notes that the comparison was not found before 400. It appears in a sermon of Augustine around 402–4. *Sermon 237. 2*, S. Poque (ed.), *Sermons sur la Pâque*, SC 116 (Paris, 1966), 284: Jesus' humanity is composed of a human soul and a human body. Human beings are composed of a soul united to a body; Jesus is the Christ because he is at the same time God and man. By 410 the analogy is common. See T. Weinandy, 'The Soul/Body Analogy and the

Christ became flesh, he too was born of a woman in a fleshly manner, though no one would claim that Mary was only mother of his flesh. She bore a composite being 'skilfully formed of two dissimilar things, but, nevertheless, creating one man, so that each part remains what it is, combining together into a natural union and mingling the constituent parts that are proper to each'.²⁰ Designed to explain the theological necessity of the appellation *Theotokos* for the Virgin, this analogy also addressed the more recondite theological concerns embodied in Cyril's dispute with the dual-nature Christology of Antioch. The Word, born of God, and the flesh, born wholly of the Virgin Mary, came together in perfect and complete unity, not unlike the composite of body and soul in ordinary human beings.²¹ The epithet *Theotokos* was thought to designate this ineffable unity, for if Christ is truly God by nature, and not merely a man like Moses or an instrument of the Godhead, then the Virgin is surely *Theotokos*, the bearer of God. Those who subscribed to the heretical views contained in Nestorius' sermons put themselves in grave danger, warned Cyril, for the soteriological implications were clear: Christ suffered and died as a man, but he conquered death as God, and this perfect commingling of God and man ultimately made salvation for humanity possible.²² Those who rejected the title *Theotokos* for the Virgin denied Christ's true

Incarnation: Cyril of Alexandria', *Coptic Church Review* 17 (1996), 59–66, for the view that Cyril uses the analogy to illustrate that Christ is ontologically one, but not to illustrate the relationship between the two natures. The author suggests that the Arians and Apollinarians used the analogy to illustrate their Logos/Sarx Christology, while the Antiochenes used it to show how two natures 'can be united and yet remain what they are'. The body/soul analogy is only one among several symbols of the Incarnation that Cyril uses in his *Scholia de Incarnatione Unigeniti*, ACO I. 5, pp. 184–231. Others include the burning coal, the lily, the ark of the covenant, Moses' rod and hand, and the two birds of the rite for the cleansing of leprosy. L. R. Wickham, 'Symbols of the Incarnation in Cyril of Alexandria', in M. Schmidt and C. F. Geyer (eds.), *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den Östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter* (Regensburg, 1982), 41–53.

²⁰ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*. ACO I. I. 1, p. 15 ll. 30–3. τέτοκε γάρ, ὡς ἔφην, συνθεθειμένον εὐτεχνῶς ἐξ ἀνομοίων τὸ ζῶον καὶ ἐκ δυοῖν μὲν, πλὴν ἀνθρωπῶν ἓνα, μένοντος μὲν ἑκατέρου τοῦθ' ὅπερ ἐστίν, συνδεδραμηκότων δὲ ὡς περ εἰς ἐνότητα φυσικῆν καὶ οἶον ἀνακρινάντων ἀλλήλοιν ὅπερ ἂν ὡς ἴδιον ἑκατέρω προσῆ.

²¹ *Ibid.* 18 ll. 4–16.

²² *Ibid.* 22 ll. 19–22.

divinity, a blasphemy that destroyed the very identification between God and man necessary for human beings to achieve salvation. For the monks of Egypt to attain the unequivocal certainty of their salvation, they needed to accept without questioning the Incarnation of a complete Godhead, whose humanity and full divinity formed a proper commingling in the person of Christ.

The monastic communities of Egypt accepted Cyril's arguments virtually wholesale. Convinced that Nestorius had denigrated the divinity of Christ, the Coptic monk Shenute accused Nestorius of teaching that Jesus was simply an ordinary man like Moses. Nestorius was therefore no better than a reprobate heretic.²³ Besa's *Vita* of Shenute records one tradition in which Shenute, while attending the Council of Ephesus, confronted an arrogant Nestorius. When Nestorius chastised Shenute, a 'lowly monk', for attending the synod, Shenute replied that he had come to rebuke Nestorius for his impiety and for belittling the Lord's sufferings. With not the slightest hint of Marian worship,²⁴ Shenute fully embraced Cyril's view that the christological and soteriological implications of Nestorius' doctrine of the dual nature of Christ denigrated Christ's divinity: a Christ who was not fully God, and who did not himself endure suffering in the flesh, could not secure salvation for humanity.²⁵

Cyril maintained good relations with the monks of Constantinople as well. In September/October of 430, Cyril composed a brief letter to inform the monks of the Imperial City that their archbishop Nestorius had recently been condemned by a synod held in Rome. If Nestorius wished to remain bishop, he must repent and readily confess the faith of the Catholic church. This letter subtly elicited the help of the monastic community in Constantinople in returning their wayward bishop to correct belief and practice. Though Cyril carefully avoided any overt call to action, he praised the monks for their good conduct

²³ J. Leipoldt, *Schenute von Atripe*, TU, NS 10 (Leipzig, 1903), 88.

²⁴ Coptic Christianity generally embraced the worship of the Virgin Mary. One might expect, therefore, the Coptic monk Shenute to condemn Nestorius for denigrating the dignity of the Virgin Mary by refusing to designate her the 'Bearer of God'.

²⁵ Besa, *Vita Simuthii*, 129, *Simuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia*, ed. J. Leipoldt and W. Crum, CSCO 41 (Copt. 1) (Leipzig, 1906), 58.

towards Christ, admiring their 'zeal for piety that [they] made manifest for Christ, who was blasphemed in the church of the orthodox'. In fact, the canons promulgated by the Council of Constantinople in 381 specifically prohibited the bishop of Alexandria from participating in the ecclesiastical politics of the Imperial City,²⁶ and Theophilus' flagrant disregard for this pronouncement twenty-five years earlier must have made Cyril's overtures toward the monks immediately suspect. All the same, Cyril's letter marked the beginning of an ecclesiastical political alliance that would later gain momentum as the events at Ephesus unfolded.

This was not the first time that an Alexandrian patriarch challenged the authority of the archbishop of Constantinople. Fifty years earlier, Maximus the Cynic, aided by Peter, bishop of Alexandria, had attempted to remove Gregory of Nazianzus from the episcopal throne. With the help of several sailors dispatched from Alexandria, who roused the local populace to action, Maximus stormed Gregory's church one night demanding to receive ordination. Gregory later described to bishop Theodore of Tyana how several monks and mendicants entered the chapel and cast stones at their new bishop, disrupting the altar and desecrating the mysteries. The incident was not finally resolved until the Council of Constantinople in 381.²⁷ Responding to these events, the council promulgated Canon Two, which decreed that all bishops must remain within the boundaries of their diocese, and avoid any ecclesiastical politics beyond their jurisdiction. Bishop Peter's role in the political intrigues of Constantinople was deemed so reprehensible by the council that special legislation singled out his bishopric: Canon Two declared that the bishop of Alexandria may administer only the affairs of Egypt, while Canon Four rendered utterly void Maximus the Cynic's ordination, which Peter had orchestrated.²⁸

²⁶ Canons of the Ecumenical Councils, *Fonti* I. I, Constantinople I, canon 2, ed. Joannou, 46–7.

²⁷ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio* 34 (CPG 3010) *In Aegyptorum adventum*, PG 36. 241–56. Canons, *Fonti* I. I, Constantinople I, canon 4, ed. Joannou, 48. Maximus the Cynic was declared never to have been a bishop and all his ordinations were deemed invalid. See also G. Dagron, 'Les Moines et la ville: Le Monachisme à Constantinople jusqu'au concile de Chalcédoine (451)', in *TM* 4 (Paris, 1970), 262.

²⁸ Canons, *Fonti* I. I, Constantinople I, canons 2 and 4, ed. Joannou, 46–8.

The canonical pronouncement ordering Theophilus not to participate in the ecclesiastical politics of the Imperial City clearly did not prevent him from doing so more than twenty years later. Isaac the monk, a long-time foe of John Chrysostom, deplored John's forthright criticism of the urban monks.²⁹ Because Theophilus shared this enmity for John, Isaac's disdain for his own archbishop made a political alliance between the two virtually a foregone conclusion.³⁰ Charged with summoning John for the third and last time to appear before the Synod of the Oak in 403, Isaac became one of John's most virulent accusers.³¹ Theophilus' expedient political alliance with the local monastic establishment proved instrumental in John's demise. The complex web of political intrigue eventually culminated in the condemnation of John Chrysostom by two ecclesiastical synods.³²

A history of ecclesiastical political alliance between the Alexandrian patriarch and the monks of Constantinople, therefore, preceded the conciliar events at Ephesus. In all cases, the monastic/patriarchal alliance was based on a mutual enmity toward the bishop of the Imperial City. When Nestorius unwittingly entered this complex political scene in 428, newly installed as bishop of Constantinople, he immediately set in motion a series of events that would find no resolution until the Council of Chalcedon tentatively settled the matter in 451. An outsider from Antioch, Nestorius had little knowledge of the multifarious web of political alliances formed throughout the city. That was in fact the reason that Theodosius rejected all potential candidates within the city of Constantinople in favour of this Antiochene 'import' (ἐπιηλυς).³³ Nestorius reports in his *Book of Herakleides*, his *apologia* written during the long period of his exile, that Theodosius, beset with dissenting parties and factions among the clergy, bishops, and monks, finally received authority from all relevant parties to select an appropriate candidate. Eager to maintain their solitary ascetic practice, Dalmatius and other prominent monks from the environs of Constantinople had

²⁹ Sozomen, *HE* 8. 9, GCS NS 4, p. 362 ll. 7-12.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 8. 19, GCS NS 4, p. 375 ll. 3-4.

³¹ Dagron, 'Les Moines et la ville', *TM* 4, 264.

³² Chrysostom was condemned at the Synod of the Oak in 403, and by the Synod of Constantinople in 404.

³³ Socrates, *HE* 7. 29, GCS NS 1, p. 377 ll. 10-16.

refused the office, yielding all authority in the matter to the emperor Theodosius.³⁴ It was presumably with these monks' implicit consent, therefore, that Nestorius assumed the office of bishop in April of the year 428.

Soon after Nestorius took office, however, he found himself in the midst of a controversy whose implications he could never have foreseen. Quarrelling factions had developed within the Imperial City. Some persons claimed that the Virgin Mary should receive the title 'Mother of God', and others the 'Mother of Man'. Each party hurled abusive epithets at the other. Those who favoured the first were called 'Manicheans', presumably because their adversaries believed that if Mary was the Mother or bearer of God, then the God (Jesus) whom she bore could have been an ordinary human being only in appearance. Those favouring the second were called 'Photinians,' because their adversaries charged them with refusing to acknowledge that Christ was truly divine.³⁵ Nestorius received the dissenting factions at the bishop's palace in order to evaluate the heretical implications of their claims. Once he determined that the contending parties did not use these titles for Mary in a heretical sense, he urged them to reconcile quickly.³⁶ In a letter to John of Antioch, Nestorius proposed the term 'Mother of Christ', 'christi eam vocavimus genitricem', as a reasonable compromise because it acknowledged that Christ was both God and man, yet clearly avoided the heresies implicit in the parties' pejorative terms.³⁷

³⁴ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (Syriac) (CPG 5751); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, ed. P. Bedjan (Paris, 1910); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, trans. F. Nau (Paris, 1910), 243-4. See generally, G. Bebis, 'The Apology of Nestorius: A New Evaluation', *SP* 11 (1972), 107-12; L. Abramowski, *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius* (Louvain, 1963). Regarding authenticity, see R. Abramowski, 'Untersuchungen zur "Tragödie" des Nestorius,' *ZKG*, 47 (1928), 118-34.

³⁵ The Manicheans, a dualistic sect named for its founder Mani from Persia, understood the cosmos in terms of a struggle between good and evil. They believed Christ to be docetic, i.e. that he only seemed to be an ordinary human being. See generally, P. Brown, 'The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire', *JRS* 59 (1969), 92-103.

³⁶ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis*, *Le Livre d'Héraclide*, trans. Nau, 91-2.

³⁷ *Epistula Nestorii ad Iohannem antiochenum* (CPG 5671), F. Loofs, *Nestoriana* (Halle, 1905), 185 ll. 1-16.

Who were these quarrelling factions whom Nestorius deemed 'in need of being taught'?³⁸ Nestorius' *Book* leaves their identity a mystery, though his letter to John of Antioch offers a hint: they were 'certain persons in opposition to each other' (*aliquos hic adversum semet ipsos eorum*). Perhaps they were the same men whom Nestorius had earlier identified as among the dissenting factions at the time Theodosius appointed him. That they included persons from the monastic establishment remains a distinct, if ultimately unverifiable, possibility.

Nestorius presents himself in his *Book* and letter to John of Antioch as a reasonable and conciliatory bishop striving to resolve factional disputes within the Imperial City. But his first public address betrayed a more contentious ecclesiastical plan: he intended to rid the Imperial City of any taint of heresy. Addressing the emperor Theodosius, Nestorius proclaimed, 'Give me, emperor, the earth cleansed of heretics, and I will give you heaven in return. Assist me in destroying heretics, and I will assist you in conquering the Persians.'³⁹ A unified and orthodox church was considered to be the foundation for the military strength of the empire. Its existence implied an empire favoured by God and capable of defending its borders against enemy forces. Nestorius envisioned a spiritual alliance with the emperor that would free the Imperial City from heretics and ultimately secure the borders of the empire from Persian attack.⁴⁰ His plan, however, paid little attention to the existing ecclesiastical political conditions within Constantinople. Eager to set in motion his programme for ecclesiastical unity, he let it be known that he would demolish a certain Arian chapel within the city. When the apprehensive Arians decided to burn down

³⁸ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis, Le Livre d'Héraclide*, 91.

³⁹ Socrates, *HE* 7. 29, GCS NS 1, p. 377 ll. 22-4. δός μοι, φησίν, ὦ βασιλεῦ, καθαρὰν τὴν γῆν τῶν αἵρετικῶν, κἀγὼ σοι τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀντιδώσω· συγκαθελέ μοι τοὺς αἵρετικούς, κἀγὼ συγκαθελῶ σοι τοὺς Πέρσας.

⁴⁰ See generally *CTh* (30 May 428), 16. 5. 65, in which Theodosius legislates against a long list of heretics, including Arians, Macedonians, Apollinarians, Novatians, Sabbatians, Eunomians, Valentinians, Montanists, Priscillianists, Phrygians, Marcianists, Borborians, Messalians, Euchites, Donatists, Audians, Hydroparastatae, Tascodrogitae, Photinians, Paulians, Marcellians, and Manicheans. See C. Luibheid, 'Theodosius II and Heresy', *JEH* 16 (1965), 13-38.

the chapel out of sheer desperation, Nestorius promptly acquired the epithet 'incendiary' (πυρκαϊά).⁴¹

Nestorius also quarrelled with Novatians, Quartodecimans, and Macedonians, especially after the Macedonians assassinated their orthodox bishop, Anthony of Germa, in a desperate act to end his persecution of their sect. Nestorius punished the Macedonians by convincing the emperor to close the Macedonian churches within Constantinople and beyond.⁴² This undoubtedly incensed the monastic community against Nestorius, for the Macedonians had a long history of alliance with the monks of Constantinople. Not a marginalized Christian sect, the Macedonians were well established within the city. Macedonius himself, a dissenter from the *homoousian* creed, instigated a monastic political alliance c.350 when he incorporated into his own sect several orders of monks residing in the Imperial City so that they would assist him in persecuting Paul, bishop of Constantinople.⁴³ A certain Marathonius, ordained bishop of Nicomedia by Macedonius, had helped the Macedonian sect to infiltrate the monastic establishments, for he was known as a zealous guardian (σπουδαῖος ἐπίτροπος) of the poor from monasteries inhabited by both men and women.⁴⁴ When Nestorius harassed the Macedonian sect, therefore, and succeeded in closing their churches, he may well have angered several monastic establishments settled in the Imperial City. Even Nestorius himself admitted that his virulent campaign against heresy provoked the wrath of many.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Socrates, *HE* 7. 29, GCS NS 1, p. 378 ll. 1–16. Eunomians had existed peacefully in the city for years.

⁴² *Ibid.* 7. 31, GCS NS 1, p. 379 ll. 9–24.

⁴³ On Macedonius' monastic alliance see Sozomen, *HE* 4. 2, GCS NS 4, p. 141 ll. 2–6.

⁴⁴ Sozomen, *HE* 4. 20, GCS NS 4, p. 170 ll. 3–6.

⁴⁵ *Epistula Nestorii ad Iohannem antiochenum*. Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 183 ll. 26–30: 'Omnem rem facilius contra me ab hominibus putabam moveri posse potius quam calumniam veluti de pietate fidei recta non saperem, qui usque hactenus propter pugnam, quam contra universos haereticos habeo, multa millia hostilitatum contra me delector insurgere.' 'I was thinking that it is possible for people easily to move everything against me, and more so to commit the slander that I don't know the right things concerning the piety of the faith—I myself, who until now, have attracted the raising of a multitude of hostilities against me on account of all the battles I am waging against all the heretics.'

The staunch anti-monastic policies of John Chrysostom, a fellow Antiochene, were also evident in Nestorius' early dealings with the monastic community. Critical of urban monks who insinuated themselves into local houses and loitered about the streets, Nestorius apparently excommunicated several monks early in his episcopacy.⁴⁶ John Chrysostom had also instituted similar legislation, for he had openly criticized monks who left the quiet and solitude of their monastic dwellings for participation in city life. He thereby fell into disrepute with clergy and monks alike. In retaliation, many of John's detractors charged that he ate only in private, refusing all invitations to meals.⁴⁷ Known as a harsh and arrogant man, John's ensuing problems with the monastic establishment would cause him grave difficulties in the anti-Origenist proceedings to come. That Nestorius followed John's precedent concerning city-dwelling monks meant trouble for him as well, for several monks of Constantinople, including the archimandrite Basil, soon complained of Nestorius' harsh treatment of the monasteries.⁴⁸

Furthermore, Nestorius' reputation for abusing and tyrannizing the monastic establishment may have incited the renowned monk Hypatius of Rouphinianai (d. 466) against him. The *Vita* of Hypatius, attributed to his disciple Callinicos from the monastery of Rouphinianai near Chalcedon, depicts Hypatius as an orthodox monk who predicted that Nestorius' reign would be short and tumultuous. As Nestorius first came near the Imperial City, Hypatius allegedly saw in a vision that the secular authorities would install Nestorius on the imperial throne. Hypatius also heard a prophetic voice, which he interpreted as telling him that Nestorius would divide the orthodox faith. The truth of this prophecy emerged little by little, as Nestorius began delivering sermons filled with abominations against the divine Lordship of Christ.⁴⁹ Nestorius' 'unorthodox' views merited an unambigu-

⁴⁶ *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, trans. Nau, 363, *Lettre, écrite de Constantinople à Cosme d'Antioche, sur la déposition et les miracles de Nestorius*, app. I, pp. 361-6; Introduction, p. vi.

⁴⁷ Sozomen, *HE* 8. 9, GCS NS 4, p. 362 ll. 7-20.

⁴⁸ Mansi, iv. 1104.

⁴⁹ Callinicos, *Vita sancti Hypatii* (BHG 760) (CPG 6042), *Callinicos. Vie d'Hypatios*, ed. and trans. G. J. M. Bartelink, SC 177 (Paris, 1971), 208, 210, 212.

ous response from the monastic community, and Hypatius eagerly provided it by removing Nestorius' name from the diptychs.⁵⁰ During this time, in fact, the diptychs gradually emerged as the touchstone of orthodoxy, rendering Hypatius' bold act ripe with significance, especially before a Christian community ready to interpret such acts.⁵¹ Cyril's correspondence with Atticus of Constantinople confirms that inclusion in the diptychs was a matter of some importance, for Cyril promised to reinstate John Chrysostom's name on the diptychs of the dead in order to atone for the vindictive anti-Origenist campaign of Theophilus.⁵² When Hypatius removed Nestorius' name from the diptychs in the Church of the Apostles, therefore, the ecclesiastical political implications were clear: Hypatius, the very model of an orthodox monk, had the power and authority needed to pronounce judgement upon the patriarch of the Imperial City. Even though the emperor himself had appointed Nestorius, Hypatius could nevertheless punish and condemn him for impugning the divinity of the Lord.

Hypatius' retributive actions were not without controversy, for even his own *Vita* reports that Hypatius' bishop Eulalius threatened to punish him. Nestorius, using his considerable power base within the city, urged the bishop to take only disciplinary action against Hypatius. According to the *Vita*, bishop Eulalius dutifully intervened, demanding that the monk promptly reinstate Nestorius on the diptychs. As the guardian of orthodoxy, however, Hypatius had other plans, and he refused to comply with Eulalius' demands. His actions were vindicated later, in 431, when the Council of Ephesus deposed Nestorius.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 212. Γνοὺς δὲ ὁ Ὑπάτιος ὅτι παρ' ὃ δεῖ ἐφρόνησεν ὁ Νεστόριος, εὐθέως ἐν τῷ ἀποστολείῳ περιεῖλεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ὁ Ὑπάτιος τοῦ μὴ ἀναφέρεισθαι ἐν τῇ προσφορᾷ. 'When Hypatius realized that Nestorius held views contrary to what had been established, immediately Hypatius removed his name from the church of the apostles so that it would not be pronounced at the offering.' See *ODB* s. v., 637, *diptychs (liturgical)*: The diptychs contained 'lists of names of the living and the dead proclaimed aloud by the deacon during the Eucharist'. 'The church of Constantinople had two separate lists, that of the dead being further subdivided into a list of laymen and a list of clergy, with bishops of Constantinople listed according to the order of their succession.'

⁵¹ *Callinicos. Vie d'Hypatius*, ed. Bartelink, 213 n. 2, discussing E. Bishop, *The Diptychs*, Texts and Studies, 8/1 (Cambridge, 1909), App. III, 104.

⁵² Nicephoros Callistos Xanthopoulos, *HE* 14. 26-7, PG 146. 1137-49.

The conciliar decree that was read publicly before all the clergy and people confirmed that Nestorius' statements against the Lord rendered him unworthy of the office of bishop, and therefore patently unfit for inclusion in the diptychs.

This well-wrought tale, filled with prophecies, visions, and voices, all focusing on the monk Hypatius, illustrates the relative power and prestige of the monastic community. Beneath the prophetic voices, however, stands the unadorned political agenda of the monastic establishment. Hypatius successfully condemned a powerful heretical bishop who had been installed by imperial authorities and supported by ecclesiastical officials. The tale attributes the most effective exercise of ecclesiastical power to the monks themselves, although the urban lay and secular officials wielded much of the authority.

It is worth remarking that only Hypatius predicted the demise of bishop Nestorius. Long after Nestorius was banished from the Imperial City, Hypatius continued to safeguard the conciliar decrees of Ephesus. When several dignitaries, clergy, and ascetics asked him whether Nestorius could resume his episcopal duties, Hypatius answered that Nestorius' doctrine was the harbinger of the anti-Christ, for there was only one power, one divinity, and one kingdom of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.⁵³ While the *Vita* depicts the local notables as favouring Nestorius' return, it portrays the 'lowly' monk Hypatius as the undisputed guardian of Cyrillian orthodoxy who prevented other monks from adopting Nestorius' doctrine of the dual nature of Christ. This was, indeed, a heresy of the bishops and urban elite, and Hypatius had taken it upon himself to combat it until he utterly and completely demolished it.

CYRIL AND NESTORIUS CONFRONT THE IMPERIAL COURT

As controversy stirred, Cyril also attempted to form political alliances with the imperial court in Constantinople. Both Cyril and Nestorius sought the emperor's favour, although each was in a distinctive position with respect to the imperial authority.

⁵³ Callinicus, *Vita sancti Hypatii*, 232, 234.

Cyril's relationship with the imperial court was probably influenced by his legacy from his uncle. More than twenty years earlier, Theophilus had played havoc with the ecclesiastical politics of Constantinople by orchestrating John Chrysostom's deposition and subsequent exile when Arcadius was emperor. Appointed by Arcadius with the consent of the clergy and laity, John had been recruited from Antioch to serve as bishop of the Imperial City. Several prelates were present at his ordination, including Theophilus. His preference for Isidore, the same presbyter whom he later ejected from his own church in Alexandria, reflected the close political alliance between them when the emperor Theodosius had prepared to attack the usurper Maximus.⁵⁴ Theophilus had entrusted Isidore with gifts and letters for the emperor but also for the tyrant, and Isidore was to deliver them only to the side that emerged victorious from the war. When the duplicitous plot was discovered, Isidore fled to Alexandria, fearing that Theodosius, as victor, would arrest him.

Sozomen and Socrates report that Theophilus, in gratitude for this display of loyalty, tried to appoint Isidore to the see of Constantinople, but eventually agreed to the ordination of John, possibly under pressure from the eunuch Eutropius, who supposedly threatened to formally charge Theophilus with the many crimes alleged against him unless he consented to John's ordination. With the approval of the imperial court and the forced consent of Theophilus, John was then appointed bishop of Constantinople. But Theophilus had wrongfully meddled in the ecclesiastical politics of the Imperial City, and his actions produced a complex political situation for Cyril. As the nephew and protégé of Theophilus, Cyril was probably present when the Synod of the Oak deposed John, and so he inherited the mistrust with which the imperial court and see had come to view his uncle.

The comparison was not lost on the Antiochene party at Ephesus. They complained that Cyril indulged a personal grudge against Nestorius, just as Theophilus had vindictively attacked John Chrysostom.⁵⁵ And just as John was appointed by

⁵⁴ Socrates, *HE* VI.2, GCS NS I, p. 312 l. 14 to 313 l. 11. Sozomen, *HE* 8. 2, GCS NS 4, p. 352 ll. 8–27.

⁵⁵ Mansi, *Synodicon Adversus Tragoediam Irenaei*, v. 758.

the emperor Arcadius, so was his fellow Antiochene Nestorius a personal choice of Arcadius' son, Theodosius II. Upon his ordination to the see of Constantinople, therefore, Nestorius received full support from Theodosius, who undoubtedly sought to avoid the horrific situation that had occurred during his father's reign with respect to John. If we also bear in mind Cyril's controversy with Orestes early in his own episcopacy, we see that, at the very start of the Nestorian controversy, Cyril found himself in a delicate situation with respect to the imperial authority.

In attempting to forge a political alliance with the emperor, Cyril and Nestorius both encountered the legacy of early Byzantine political thought as well. The early Byzantines inherited pagan notions of kingship that understood the emperor to be an image of God.⁵⁶ Drawing elements from Roman imperialism, exemplified by the *basileus* (emperor) of the Augustan age, whose imitation of the gods ushered in the *pax romana*, Christians envisioned the emperor as reflecting the heavenly realm, but with earthly powers that extended throughout the inhabited world.⁵⁷ Origen even claimed that a unified empire under the reign of Augustus had produced the necessary geopolitical conditions for ushering in Christ's reign, by having made possible the apostolic mission of gathering converts from all the nations.⁵⁸ For Eusebius of Caesarea (d. 339 or 340), however, Jesus' appearance on earth during this age of Augustus had even more profound theological significance: the establishment of peace in the empire under Augustus was forever linked with the Incarnation of Christ, thus demonstrating the superiority of the Christian religion.⁵⁹

Christian monarchical theory was, therefore, a synthesis of

⁵⁶ G. H. Williams, 'Christology and Church-State Relations in the Fourth Century', *Church History* 20 (1951), 7.

⁵⁷ See W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972), 54-5.

⁵⁸ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 2. 30 (CPG 1476) *Origène. Contre Celse*, ed. H. Borret, i. Bks. I and II. *Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes*, SC 132 (Paris, 1967), 361. Cited by Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 55.

⁵⁹ See Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 13. Eusebius, *Theophania*, 3. 2. *Eusebius Werke*, iii. 2. *Die Theophanie: die griechischen Bruchstücke und Übersetzung der syrischen Überlieferungen*, ed. H. Gressmann and A. Laminski, GCS 2. 2 (Leipzig, 1992), 127-8.

pagan notions of divine kingship, Roman imperialism, and pagan middle-Platonism. By the fourth century, this combination of beliefs was apparent in the Christian imperial theology of the emperor Constantine.⁶⁰ During the Donatist controversy, Constantine was concerned that a divided church would incite the wrath of God not only against the human race but also against Constantine himself, 'to whose care He has by His celestial will committed the government of all earthly things'. In the belief, shared nearly universally, that his reign was sanctioned by God, Constantine saw that the success of his earthly rule depended upon a good relationship with the 'Highest Divinity'.⁶¹ His monarchy was, therefore, the expression of religious devotion and statesmanship combined in one. 'By this sign, you will conquer' meant for Constantine that conversion to the Christian faith and veneration of its deity would virtually ensure his victory in the earthly realm.⁶² Constantine's biographer and panegyrist Eusebius endowed the emperor with a royal authority emanating from above, which meant that Constantine was the earthly reflection of the pre-existent Only Begotten Word, the high priest of God.⁶³ Just as the Saviour, who is also the Word, conquered the invisible enemies that surreptitiously invaded the heavenly realms, so did the emperor Constantine vanquish the earthly and the visible foes of the empire and of the Christian faith.⁶⁴ Eusebius thus envisioned an emperor guided by the

⁶⁰ Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 55.

⁶¹ Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, 94, citing Constantine's letter to Domitius Celsus, the vicar of Africa, in 316: Optatus Milevitanus, CSEL 26, App. 7.

⁶² Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, 1. 28 (BHGA 361x) (CPG 3496), PG 20. 944; *Eusebius Werke*, i. 1, *Über das Leben des Kaisers Konstantin*, ed. F. Winkelmann, GCS (Berlin, 1975), 30. On Constantine's conversion, see H. Drake, *Constantine and the Bishops* (Baltimore, 2000), 187–91.

⁶³ Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini* 1. 6 (BHGA 361z) (CPG 3498), PG 20. 1324A–B; *Eusebius Werke*, i. *Über das Leben Constantins. Constantins Rede an die heilige Versammlung. Tricennatsrede an Konstantin*, ed. I. A. Heikel, GCS 7 (Leipzig, 1902), 198. See generally, T. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 253–5.

⁶⁴ Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini*, 2. 3, PG 20. 1325A–B. *Eusebius Werke*, i. 199 ll. 16–19. ὁ δὲ τούτου φίλος ἄνωθεν παρ' αὐτοῦ τοῖς κατ' ἐχθρῶν κοσμούμενος τροπαίους τοὺς ἐμφανεῖς τῆς ἀληθείας ἐχθροὺς νόμῳ πολέμου χειρούμενος σωφρονίζει. '[S]o this his friend, graced by his heavenly favour with victory over all his foes, subdues and chastens the open adversaries of the truth in accordance with the

ideal, the Platonic form of the Good, one who obediently governed his earthly rule according to the divine model, and in the process, 'provide[d] an example of divine monarchic sovereignty'.⁶⁵ A monarchical theory indebted to middle-Platonism, Eusebius' notion of empire rendered Constantine's earthly reign an ideal image of the heavenly kingdom.

Eusebius' portrayal of Constantine was grounded in his conception of the Word as a mediator that separated the created order from the supreme deity. This hierarchical understanding of the pre-existent Word implied a Christ who emanated downwards from a deity, wholly other in substance from humankind. Eusebius compared Constantine to this subordinate Word, whose position in the hierarchical plan stood apart from God as it guided the universe. A human emperor could partake in Christ the Word, thought Eusebius, only if he were fully subordinate to the deity and wrought from the less-exalted understanding of Christ inherent in this middle-Platonic scheme. This understanding of monarchic rule becomes plausible only in the context of a semi-Arian Christology, in which the Word is subordinate to, and therefore not identical with, God. And that juxtaposition remained throughout the century as Arian emperors continued to imbue their reigns with Eusebius' lofty notions of sovereignty emanating from God.⁶⁶

usages of war.' *The Oration of Eusebius Pamphilus, In Praise of the Emperor Constantine*, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, trans. E. C. Richardson (Michigan, 1991), i. 583.

⁶⁵ Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini*, 3. 5, PG 20. 1329B. *Eusebius Werke*, i. 201 ll. 19–21. *κάπειτα τῆς οὐρανόου βασιλείας εἰκόνι κεκοσμημένος, ἄνω βλέπων κατὰ τὴν ἀρχέτυπον ἰδέαν τοῦς κάτω διακυβερνῶν ἰθύνει, μονάρχου δυναστείας μιμήματι κραταιούμενος*. 'Lastly, invested as he is with a semblance of heavenly sovereignty, he directs his gaze above, and frames his earthly government according to the pattern of that Divine original, feeling strength in its conformity to the monarchy of God.' *Oration of Eusebius Pamphilus*, 584. See also *De laudibus Constantini*, 1. 1, PG 20. 1324C. *Eusebius Werke*, i. 199 ll. 1–3. See Drake, *Constantine and the Bishops*, 384–92, for the view that Eusebius in his *De laudibus* and *Vita Constantini* struggled 'to isolate the nature of the "good king" from its hellenistic context'.

⁶⁶ See G. H. Williams, 'Christology and Church-State Relations in the Fourth Century', *Church History* 20 (1951), 3–33, which argues that the Arians, with their low Christology, found in their emperor a demigod like Christ. They were thus more willing than the Nicenes to view the emperor, rather than the historical tradition of Christ, as the living law. Concerned with soteriology, the Nicenes held fast to the historic Logos incarnate.

Such a close connection between the imperial earthly reign and the ideal heavenly realm meant that God bestowed Constantine with all the virtues necessary for a true philosophizing. The full panoply of virtues—moderation, goodness, justice, courage, and piety—ensured that Constantine's reign of the earthly realm reflected all the perfection of the heavenly kingdom above. Given that divine mandate, Constantine's sovereignty was inextricably intertwined with the fate of the church. Eusebius portrayed him as a general bishop (κοινὸς ἐπίσκοπος) appointed by God to oversee all matters external to the church, i.e. everything beyond its internal administration.⁶⁷

Although Eusebius' theological monarchy made the emperor into God's mediator on earth, the earthly counterpart to his pre-existent Word, the Western bishop, Ambrose of Milan, attacked these imperial incursions into ecclesiastical affairs. When the young Arian emperor Valentinian II and his mother Justina sent armed men to take possession of a basilica near the city walls, Ambrose refused to obey the imperial command. He was demonstrating the power of bishops to curb the heretical inclinations of the imperial court.⁶⁸ Ambrose soon exercised his ecclesiastical power in the East as well. Following a riot in the city of Thessaloniki in which several local magistrates were injured, Theodosius I massacred thousands of innocent people.⁶⁹ Ambrose chastised the emperor. Theodoret presents the image of a penitent Theodosius deferential to episcopal authority and clearly respecting the proper boundaries between ecclesiastical and imperial rule.

⁶⁷ Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, 1. 44; 4. 24. *Eusebius Werke*, i. 1. 38, 128. Constantine allegedly said, Ἄλλ' ὑμεῖς μὲν τῶν εἴσω τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν ἔκτος ὑπὸ θεοῦ καθεστάμενος, ἐπίσκοπος ἂν εἴην. 'But you are among those [who rule over affairs] inside the church, while I am a bishop appointed by God over that which is outside.' See Drake, *Constantine and the Bishops*, 226–7; C. Rapp, 'Imperial Ideology in the Making: Eusebius of Caesarea on Constantine as "Bishop",' *JTS* 49 (1998), 685–95. On the *Vita* see generally, T. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 265–71.

⁶⁸ Ambrose attempted to carve out a separate sphere for ecclesiastical authority, and so declared, 'the palaces belong to the emperor, the churches to the bishop'. Ambrose, *Epistula* 76 (20) (CPL 160), *Sancti Ambrosii Opera*, ed. M. Zelzer, CSEL 82 (Vienna, 1982), 108–25, esp. 118–19. On Ambrose's criticism of the imperial religion, see also Socrates, *HE* 5. 11, GCS NS 1, pp. 285–6; Theodoret, *HE* 5. 13, GCS NS 5, pp. 303–4.

⁶⁹ Theodoret, *HE* 5. 17–18, GCS NS 5, p. 306 ll. 22 to 310 l. 15.

Likewise, Athanasius, in his *Apologia* to the emperor Constantius, urged the emperor to defer to episcopal authority and relinquish his Arian beliefs, for if the emperor were to return to orthodox religion his long and successful reign would be virtually ensured.⁷⁰ As one modern scholar observes, however, Athanasius' attempt to command the emperor was not a precedent openly cited. Not even Cyril's successor Dioscorus tried to counter the incursions of the emperor Marcian into ecclesiastical affairs at the Council of Chalcedon.⁷¹

A tension existed, therefore, between the Arianizing emperors of the fourth century and the elevated monarchical theology that they favoured, and the orthodox ecclesiastical establishment that sought to preserve the correct confession of faith from the often heretical inclinations of the imperial court. It was a delicate balance between the orthodox mission of the ecclesiastical establishment to preserve right doctrine, and the imperial prerogatives of the emperor to assert his almost Godlike status, if only in human form. Something of a compromise presented itself in the guise of imperial theology.⁷² Emperor and bishops alike wished to safeguard orthodox doctrine from heretical misinterpretation. If there is one God, one Saviour, One Word, so is there one sovereign law (*νόμος βασιλικός*) that administers the entire heavenly kingdom.⁷³ That law must be carefully preserved for the empire to remain secure. That basic assumption was never questioned, even while bishops challenged the right of emperors to exercise unlimited control over doctrinal affairs. More often than not, a bishop's challenge to imperial authority depended on that very theological assumption, for when Athanasius rebuked Constantius' pro-Arian court, he said that only doctrinal truth

⁷⁰ Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 57. See Athanasius, *Apologia ad Constantium*. (CPG 2129) *Athanase d'Alexandrie. Apologie à l'empereur Constance. Apologie pour sa fuite*, ed. and trans. J. M. Szymusiak, SC 56 (Paris, 1958), 174.

⁷¹ Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 57.

⁷² Emperors and bishops agreed that only correct doctrine would keep the empire secure from enemy incursions. Although both had starkly different visions of the boundaries of their authority and power, they agreed that a unified orthodox church implied a unified empire, safe from enemy attack.

⁷³ Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini*, 3. 6, PG 20. 1332A; *Eusebius Werke*, i. 201 ll. 27–31.

would defend the emperor's reign.⁷⁴ The question of who had the authority to interpret this sovereign law became a matter of dispute, as bishop and emperor alike vied to secure their position as guardian of the orthodox faith and, by extension, of the empire itself. The ramifications of this complex ecclesiastical political scenario would extend into Cyril's and Nestorius' dealings with the court of Theodosius II.

Cyril's imperial theology emerges in his address to the emperor Theodosius. Like Eusebius' *Oration* to Constantine, Cyril portrayed the emperor as a reflection of the glory of God. The emperor, none the less, remained subject to God, for the sovereign rule of the emperor was closely linked to his correct expression of piety.⁷⁵ Cyril warned that rulers who neglected the proper faith were likely to perish, much as a certain Persian successfully vanquished the Assyrians only after he renounced his own blasphemy against God.⁷⁶ Right doctrine, therefore, was essential to preserving an emperor's sovereign rule, and Cyril's treatise aimed to extricate orthodox doctrine from the vagaries of theological speculation and place it into the service of the empire. That is why Cyril carefully explained his single-nature Christology to the emperor: the mind perceives a difference between the two natures, for the deity and the humanity are certainly not the same, although they subsist in a single reality.⁷⁷ By this statement, Cyril responded to the charges of Apollinarianism that had been raised against him because of his earlier statements in favour of a single-nature Christ.⁷⁸ Cyril's Christology was now

⁷⁴ Athanasius, *Apologia ad Constantium* (CPG 2129), *Athanase d'Alexandrie*, ed. Szymusiak, 88–132.

⁷⁵ *Cyriilli oratio ad Theodosium imp.* (CPG 5218), *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 42 l. 13 to 43 l. 9, esp. 43 l. 7.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 43 l. 25 to 44 l. 11.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 52 ll. 14–18; 57 l. 29 to 58 l. 3: ἰστέον δ' ὄν ὅτι θεωρεῖ μέν τινα φύσεων διαφορὰν ὁ νοῦς (ταυτὸν γὰρ οὐτι πον θεότης τε καὶ ἀνθρωπότης), εἰσδέξεται δὲ ὁμοῦ ταῖς περὶ τούτων ἐννοίαις καὶ τὴν ἀμφοῖν εἰς ἐνότητα συνδρομῆν. 'It is necessary to know that the mind contemplates a certain difference [between] the natures (for deity is surely not the same as humanity) but, likewise, that [the mind] admits, into its conception of such matters, both as a unified union', *ibid.* 58 ll. 8–11.

⁷⁸ The Apollinarians were accused of commingling the divine and human essences of Christ. They believed that the divine Logos replaced a human soul in Christ. For basic bibliography, see E. Mühlberg, *Apollinarianism von Laodicea* (Göttingen, 1969); C. E. Raven, *Apollinarianism* (Cambridge, 1923); A. Tuilier,

unambiguous. He had made it clear that the Only-Begotten Word had become a complete human being, endowed with a rational soul.⁷⁹

The figure of Nestorius, though never mentioned by name, also occupied Cyril's attention. To warn the emperor of a divisive heresy that separated the humanity and divinity of Christ,⁸⁰ Cyril reminded him that Jude had predicted that false teachers would appear at the end of time, and that they would create divisions within the church.⁸¹ The ecclesiastical political implications seemed clear. Just as the unnamed Nestorius claimed that there was division within the person of Christ, so could that division insinuate itself into the social fabric of the church. And a church so divided would threaten the stability of the emperor's reign. Athanasius had similarly invoked the metaphor of a unified Christ when he compared Christ's body, undivided at death, to a unified, orthodox church free from schism.⁸²

Cyril also sent theological treatises to the imperial women, including one set for the emperor's wife Eudocia and his sister Pulcheria, and another for the princesses Arcadia and Marina. Perhaps perceiving a rift in the royal family, Cyril composed separate treatises for the imperial women and offspring. Written in a style of argumentation rather different from the complex theological arguments in his address to Theodosius, Cyril's treatises for the women of the royal family consisted in large portions of biblical quotations selected to demonstrate the singular nature of Christ, the Word. To convince the imperial women of this assertion, Cyril included a *florilegium* (collection) of quotations, which included statements by bishops throughout

'Le Sens de l'Apollinarisme dans les controverses théologiques du IV^e siècle', *SP* 13 (1975), 295–305.

⁷⁹ *Cyrelli oratio ad Theodosium imp*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 54 ll. 25–30.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 45 l. 26 to 46 l. 10. Cyril offered quotations from Nestorius, including: *Ὁὐ σὰρξ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος, ἀλλὰ ἄνθρωπον ἀνελήφως*. 'The Word of God is not flesh, but has assumed a human being.' See Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 217–18.

⁸¹ *Cyrelli oratio ad Theodosium imp*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 57 ll. 21–9. Of course, Cyril meant to suggest that Jude presaged Nestorius' doctrine, which wrongly divided the natures of Christ.

⁸² Athanasius, *Oratio de incarnatione Verbi*, 24. 4 (*CPG* 2091), Ch. Kannengiesser (ed.), *Sur l'incarnation du Verbe*, *SC* 199 (Paris, 1973), 354.

the various dioceses.⁸³ He drew a close connection between correct belief in a singular Christ and the fortunes of the imperial women: to divide the unity into two Sons and two Christs portended great danger, for Christ would reward the women of the imperial court with good fortune *only* if they subscribed to Cyril's view of orthodoxy.⁸⁴

To respond to the christological treatises, Theodosius wrote a *Sacra*, an imperial letter dated 19 November 430 addressed to Cyril and the metropolitan bishops. Repeating much of the imperial theology Cyril expressed in the treatise, Theodosius' letter revealed a sense of urgency stemming from the threat he perceived to ecclesiastical unity. Since the condition of the state depends on piety towards God, remarked Theodosius, that condition must be free from strife, factions, and trouble. The state must in every way be acceptable to God.⁸⁵ Appointed by God to govern the empire, Theodosius envisioned himself as the mediator between providence and humankind. His duty was to ensure the correct piety of his subjects and to serve providence for the betterment of the state. With this straightforward assertion of his divinely ordained sovereign rule, Theodosius convened a synod of bishops to resolve the theological controversy spreading throughout the empire. More than a matter of ecclesiastical division, the potential conflict was thought to disrupt the very foundations of Theodosius' imperial reign, which rested on divine sanction.

Theodosius wrote a separate letter to Cyril, using a very different tone. He chastised Cyril for sowing discord within the imperial family by sending one treatise to him, the emperor, and

⁸³ *Cyrelli oratio ad Arcadium et Marinam augustas* (CPG 5219), ACO I. I. 5, pp. 62–118, pp. 66–70.

⁸⁴ *Cyrelli oratio ad Pulcheriam et Eudociam augustas* (CPG 5220), ACO I. I. 5, pp. 26–61, p. 61 ll. 22–4 ll. 28–9. ἀσεβές δὲ λίαν τὸ διορίζειν εἰς δύο υἱοὺς καὶ Χριστοὺς δύο μετὰ τὴν ἀδιάσπαστον ἔνωσιν . . . εὐρῶν γὰρ οὕτω Χριστὸς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν τὴν πίστιν ἀκλῆν καὶ ἀβέβηλον, στεφανώσει πλουσίως τοὺς ἄνωθεν ἀγαθοῖς καὶ παμμακαρίας ἀποφανεῖ. 'It is very impious to divide into two sons and two Christs after the inseparable union . . . for if Christ thus finds that your faith is steadfast and pure, he will honour you abundantly with good things from above, and you will be fully blessed.'

⁸⁵ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad singulos metropolitans* (19 Nou. 430). (CPG 8651), ACO I. I. 1, p. 114 l. 29 to 115 l. 14.

another to the empresses.⁸⁶ In Theodosius' view, Cyril had thereby unwittingly revealed his hidden intent to create strife and division within the church, a plan that would have threatened whatever 'peace' existed within the imperial church and state. Cyril's deviation from ecclesiastical procedure also troubled the emperor. The formation of orthodox doctrine was closely linked with the decrees of the holy fathers and councils, and that doctrinal legacy was never to become the exclusive domain of one man, remarked Theodosius. Only through proper ecclesiastical investigation, and not through the 'arrogant disputes of words', could that legacy be revealed. Placing great weight on the authority of doctrinal decisions reached by a council of bishops, Theodosius thereby asserted that religion required general consent rather than forced command. The doctrinal statements Cyril had made in the treatises addressed to the imperial family had overstepped the boundaries appropriate to a single bishop, because doctrinal disputes were to be investigated only before an entire council of bishops. Cyril had defied the emperor's notion of general consent in matters of doctrinal importance, and it was feared that such a threat to basic conciliar procedure might divide the churches. Furthermore, that the church and state were united implied that it was the *emperor's* duty to uphold the ecclesiastical procedures necessary for examining matters pertaining to the promulgation of orthodox doctrine, thought Theodosius.

Cyril's prior experience with Theodosius may well have prejudiced the emperor against him. Nestorius reports in his *Book* that enemies of Cyril had brought serious charges against him before the emperor, who held an informal hearing at which Nestorius—an imperial appointee—served as judge.⁸⁷ Together they listened to the 'scum of Alexandria' (*αἱ κοπρίαι τῆς πόλεως*), the convicted criminals who were Cyril's accusers. Cyril identified them in a letter to the members of his staff in Constantinople as Chairemon, Sophronas, the monk Victor, and Flavian's slave. One had been convicted of ill-treating the blind

⁸⁶ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex.* (CPG 8652), ACO I. I. 1, p. 73 l. 22 to 74 l. 3. Cyril sent a treatise to Pulcheria and Eudocia, and yet another to the junior Augustae.

⁸⁷ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (Syriac); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, trans. Nau, 92–3. Cyril and Nestorius both allude to the charges brought against Cyril before the emperor, but do not elaborate on the content of those charges.

and poor, another of threatening his mother with a sword, and another of stealing gold.⁸⁸ Cyril must have been furious that the bishop of Constantinople together with the emperor had even listened to such persons, and perhaps for that reason reacted so strongly against Nestorius throughout the controversy. That partly explains why Cyril was not content merely to win the christological argument, but, as we shall see, set out to paint his opponent to be a heretic of such immense proportions that he, Nestorius, would be condemned to live out the remainder of his life in exile. One contemporary, Isidore Pelusiota (d. 450), reports that the Council of Ephesus had been ridiculed even in ancient times for having served merely as a forum in which Cyril nursed his personal grudge against Nestorius.⁸⁹ The criticism may have been justified. More than a year later, Cyril was still troubled enough by the incident that he felt compelled to assure the emperor that one of his accusers, Victor, had sworn at Ephesus that he had fabricated the charges against his bishop.⁹⁰

Nestorius, too, found himself in trouble with the imperial family on several occasions. Once he refused to permit the empress Pulcheria to dine in the episcopal palace after the Sunday service, as had been her custom during Sisinius' episcopacy. Another time he allegedly defaced her portrait hanging above the altar in church.⁹¹ And during an Easter celebration, Nestorius refused the empress access to the sanctuary—even though the privilege had been freely extended to her while Sisinius held the office—thereby preventing her from receiving communion alongside her brother Theodosius. When Nestorius learned from the archdeacon Peter that she intended to enter the sanctuary, he ran to the door and denied her entry.⁹² Pulcheria demanded access, exclaiming, 'Let me enter as I customarily do,' to which Nestorius allegedly responded, 'Only priests walk

⁸⁸ *Epistula ii Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium* (26 Jan.–24 Febr. 430) (CPG 5304), ACO I. I. 1, p. 25 l. 24 to 26 l. 8. *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad apocrisarios CPoli constitutos* (CPG 5309), ACO I. I. 1, p. 111 ll. 21–30.

⁸⁹ See Ch. 1 n. 30.

⁹⁰ *Cyril of Alexandria. Select Letters*, ed. and trans. L. Wickham (Oxford, 1983), p. xxv. *Cyrilli apologeticus ad Theodosium imperatorem* (CPG 8790), ACO I. I. 3, p. 90 ll. 7–19.

⁹¹ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (Syriac); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, trans. Nau, App. I, p. 363.

⁹² *Ibid.* 364.

here.' Pulcheria, believing herself to be the earthly counterpart of the Virgin Mary, enquired, 'Have I not given birth to God?' and Nestorius retorted, 'You, you have given birth to Satan!' and chased her from the sanctuary door. Although the Syrian version reports that Theodosius vowed to exact vengeance on Nestorius for his treatment of Pulcheria,⁹³ most sources indicate that Theodosius favoured Nestorius throughout the early stages of the controversy, and only later did he prefer the Cyrillian party. If Theodosius supported Nestorius although Pulcheria detested him, then perhaps Cyril's strategy was meant to exploit an existing rift within the royal family.⁹⁴ That could account for the emperor's cold rebuke of Cyril for having sent separate treatises to him, the emperor, and to the imperial women.

A complex set of political events, therefore, shaped the imperial court's response to both parties of the Nestorian dispute. Cyril's legacy from Theophilus' aggressive ecclesiastical policies with respect to the Imperial City, combined with the slanderous accusations against Cyril, tarnished his reputation so far as Theodosius was concerned. Moreover, Nestorius' contemptuous statements to the empress Pulcheria, whom he later declared to be a woman corrupted by men, and thus unworthy of comparison to the bride of Christ,⁹⁵ must have reminded the emperor of John Chrysostom, whose rebukes of the empress Eudoxia undoubtedly contributed to his demise.⁹⁶

⁹³ See generally, G. Y. Ibrahim, 'Nestorius dans la tradition syrienne orthodoxe', *Istina* 43 (1998), 166–78.

⁹⁴ For the view that Nestorius objected to Pulcheria's assuming the role of a divinized empress because it paved the way for the emperor being compared to Christ the Son, see K. Cooper, 'Contesting the Nativity: Wives, Virgins, and Pulcheria's *imitatio Mariae*', *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies* 19 (1998), 31–43.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 89.

⁹⁶ Nestorius' being compared to John Chrysostom completed the analogy of Cyril's being compared to Theophilus. On the political reasons for Nestorius' downfall, see J. A. McGuckin, 'Nestorius and the Political Factions of Fifth-Century Byzantium: Factors in his Personal Downfall', in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 78/3 (1996), 7–22, in which the author argues that Theodosius selected Nestorius as patriarch because he believed Nestorius would further his own interests by weakening the power of the monks over church politics and by distancing Pulcheria from imperial politics. *Ibid.* 8. When Nestorius arrived in Constantinople, he acted against the Arians, aristocratic women, and Pulcheria, and instituted reforms aimed at the theatrical life

It must be remembered, however, that during this outbreak of ecclesiastical strife Theodosius was acting in accordance with the tradition of late antique and early Byzantine political theory when he asserted his duty to be that of preserving orthodox doctrine. He was explicit about the idea in his letters to Cyril. It was his basis for challenging Cyril's manoeuvre to control doctrine, for, in Theodosius' view, doctrine was a matter of state security. Only a full council of bishops had the authority to determine the relationship of doctrine to the prior decrees and councils set forth in the traditions of the orthodox fathers. The copiously documented treatises Cyril sent to the imperial court, and particularly to the imperial family, showed that Cyril intended to pre-empt that authority.

CYRIL AND NESTORIUS APPROACH THE POPE

Pope Caelestine in Rome expressed a similar imperial theology when he wrote to the emperor that matters of religion determine the well-being of the empire, and that peace in the churches counts more than the security of the provinces.⁹⁷ But Caelestine's view was shaped by very different notions of the relationship between imperial and ecclesiastical authority. It reflected the West's strong sense of continuity with its apostolic past. Enconced on the throne of Saint Peter, the bishop of Rome considered himself the appointed successor in a line of church leadership that extended all the way back to the founder of the episcopal and apostolic tradition.⁹⁸ It was to Peter that Christ had said, 'upon this rock I shall build my Church'. Augustine understood this to mean that Peter represented the entirety of the church.⁹⁹ And establishing an unbroken line of succession to Christ's 'first apostle' was meant to ensure that the papal

of the city and at the monasteries, all of which contributed to alienate him from powerful sectors of the city. *Ibid.* 20.

⁹⁷ *Epistula papae Caelestini ad Theodosium imp.* (CPG 8714), ACO I. 2, pp. 25–6 (Epistle 19. 2).

⁹⁸ Innocentius I, *Epistula* 1. 2. 2 (Epistulae S. Innocentio I Attributae) (CPL 1641), PL 20. 631B–C.

⁹⁹ Augustine, *Epistula* 53. 2 (CPL 262), A. Goldbacher (ed.), *S. Aureli Augustini Operum Sectio II*, CSEL 34 (Vienna, 1895), 153–4.

leadership of Rome was free from the incursions of schismatic sects, such as the Donatists, and from any other heretics who might attempt to usurp the authority of the apostolic see. Each successive orthodox appointment was thought to reproduce the doctrinal purity of the church's founder.¹⁰⁰ Augustine's conception of church and state arose from this assertion of apostolic succession as reaching all the way back to Christ's mandate for Peter. 'Not even the gates of hell shall prevail upon this church' implied that imperial intervention in ecclesiastical affairs was appropriate only when heretics sought to disturb the divinely sanctioned peace of the church.¹⁰¹

A different conception prevailed in the East. The intervention of the Eastern emperors into ecclesiastical affairs left a bad impression in the West, for the West believed that the emperor's role was simply to ensure unity in the churches, while protecting the church against the infiltration of heretics. Pope Innocent surely commented upon the injustices committed by Arcadius and Eudoxia against John Chrysostom when he wrote, 'Who can bear these outrages committed by those who should above all be zealous for the quiet of peace and harmony? Instead of that, innocent bishops have been deposed from the place of honour in their own churches.'¹⁰² Pope Innocent expressed his outrage when he said that John's deposition without a proper hearing violated the basic tenets of ecclesiastical due process. That infraction of every well-settled notion of episcopal prerogative developed over the past century, remarked Innocent, was only compounded when the Eastern imperial powers installed another bishop to fill the episcopal seat.¹⁰³ According to Western conceptions of ecclesiastical protocol, the political manipula-

¹⁰⁰ Augustine, *Epistula* 53. 2, CSEL 34, pp. 153-4.

¹⁰¹ Augustine, *Contra epistulam Parmeniani*, 1. 9. 15 (CPL 331), CSEL 51, *Sancti Aureli Augustini Scripta contra Donatistas*, ed. M. Petschenig (Vienna, 1908), 35-6; PL 43. 44.

¹⁰² Sozomen, *HE* 8. 26, GCS NS 4, p. 386 ll. 2-6. *τίς γὰρ ἐνέγκαι δυνήσῃται τὰ ἐξαμαρτανόμενα ὑπ' ἐκείνων, οὐστὺνας ἐχρήν μάλιστα τοῦ γαληνοῦ τῆς εἰρήνης καὶ αὐτῆς σπουδαστὰς εἶναι τῆς ὁμονοίας; νῦν δὲ ἐνηλλαγμένω τρόπῳ ἀπὸ τῆς προεδρίας τῶν ἰδίων ἐκκλησιῶν ἐξωθοῦνται ἄθῳοι ἱερεῖς.* See also Innocentius I, *Epistula* 7. 2; PL 20. 503B; cited by H. Rahner, *Church and State in Early Christianity* (San Francisco, 1992), 142.

¹⁰³ Sozomen, *HE* 8. 26, GCS NS 4, p. 386 ll. 6-11. Palladius, *Dialogus de vita Iohannis Chrysostomi* 4; PG 47. 15.

tions of the Eastern imperial court and churches violated the assumption that the ordination of each bishop depended on something approaching divine sanction. Consoling John in exile, Innocent urged him to endure his afflictions as one of the Saints and to trust in his good conscience. The Western emperor Honorius shared Innocent's disgust, exhorting his brother Arcadius to leave ecclesiastical disputes to bishops, for Honorius believed that the bishops alone must interpret the faith, while the emperors must simply obey.¹⁰⁴

These long-standing ideals of Western ecclesiology, which account for the unique prestige of the bishop of Rome and for the Western conception of church–state relations, were the ecclesiastical/political backdrop for Cyril's interactions with pope Caelestine. To win Caelestine's support in the Nestorian affair, Cyril informed him that Nestorius had delivered several sermons before the community of Constantinople that were different from the well-established tradition of faith passed on through the orthodox fathers.¹⁰⁵ He also said that Nestorius had earlier preached a homily in commemoration of the Virgin Mary, in which Nestorius stated his view that Jesus was not divine by acknowledging that he did not wish to adore a God who was born, died, and buried. In fact, Nestorius had said no such thing. His homily on the Virgin was indeed a celebration of Christ's humanity—that he who was born, passed through increments of time, and was carried in the womb, consisted wholly of human nature. But Nestorius believed that Christ's human nature was united to God. He was unwilling to designate Mary *Theotokos* because that implied that the deity, rather than the humanity, had been conceived in her womb. It was one thing to say that God was united to the one born of Mary, and quite another to say that the deity needed months for birth, for, as Nestorius put it, 'God the Word is the creator of time, and is not made in time.'¹⁰⁶ This was the Antiochene position with respect

¹⁰⁴ Honorius, *Epistula* 38. 4, CSEL 35, *Collectio Avellana*, ed. O. Guenther (Vienna, 1895), 86 ll. 3–12.

¹⁰⁵ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Caelestinum per Posidonium* (mid-430) (CPG 5310), *ACO* I. I. 5, p. 10 ll. 28–34.

¹⁰⁶ *Nestorii homilia in commemoratione s. Mariae* (CPG 5716), *ACO* I. 5. p. 38 ll. 6–9: 'aliud est autem dicere quia nato de Maria coniunctus erat deus ille qui est verbum patris, quod est liquidissimum ac firmum atque inreprehensibile gentilibus, et aliud quia ipsa deitas indiguit nativitate mensibus decurrente.

to the dual nature of Christ and it troubled Cyril. To persuade the pope that Nestorius' teachings were blasphemous, Cyril attached a short treatise containing excerpts from the writings and sermons of Nestorius, originally composed in Greek, that several persons in Alexandria had translated into Latin.¹⁰⁷ Removed from their context, these 'sayings of Nestorius' included a number of difficult statements concerning the Virgin Mary, i.e. that God the Word was not begotten from Mary,¹⁰⁸ nor from the Holy Spirit, but only from the Father Himself.¹⁰⁹

Intending that Caelestine should find these statements strange, Cyril nevertheless stopped short of openly condemning his adversary before the pope. Rather, Cyril's approach was subtle, and for that reason, insidious. He said that he had eagerly sought to reinstate Nestorius into the orthodox church until Nestorius' actions made that impossible. During a liturgy performed at the church of Constantinople, related Cyril, a certain Dorotheus exclaimed in the presence of Nestorius, 'If any man says that Mary was the Mother of God, let him be accursed.' Outraged at this statement against the Virgin Mary, many of the congregation walked out of the church, while the local monasteries and senators refused any further communion with their bishop.¹¹⁰ Cyril thereupon abandoned all hope for reconciliation. The pope was to conclude that Nestorius had precipitated a genuine ecclesiastical crisis that required his advice.

Cyril's request for the pope's intervention into the affairs at Constantinople was undoubtedly well received. The Council of

verbum enim deus temporum est opifex, non in tempore fabricatus.' 'It is one thing to say that God was united to the one born from Mary, this [God] who is the Word of the father, which is most clear and certain and irreprehensible by the pagans, and it is another thing [to say] that the deity is in need of months for [its] birth. For God the Word is the creator of time, and is not made in time.'

¹⁰⁷ *Capitula ex Nestorio Excerpta a Cyrillo, Collectio Vaticana*, 145, ACO I. I.

6, pp. 3-13.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 4 ll. 37-8. Δεῖ δὲ ἡμᾶς . . . καὶ τὴν κατὰ Νίκαιαν σύνοδον μαθεῖν οὐδαμοῦ τολῶσαν εἰπεῖν ὅτι θεὸς λόγος ἐγεννήθη ἐκ Μαρίας. 'We must understand that the synod of Nicaea in no way dares to say that God the Word was begotten from Mary.'

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 5 ll. 6-9. οὐκ εἶπον ὅτι καὶ γεννηθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου. 'I do not say that [the Word] was begotten from the Holy Spirit.'

¹¹⁰ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Caelestinum per Posidonium* (mid-430) (CPG 5310), ACO I. I. 5, p. 11 ll. 6-15.

Constantinople in 381 had declared that the Patriarch of the church of the Imperial City was second in rank only to the pope in Rome.¹¹¹ Against the protests of pope Damasus, Theodosius the Great had successfully imbued the Imperial City with all the prestige and rank appropriate to the new Rome. Cyril's willing submission to the authority of the Roman see gave pope Caelestine the opportunity to ensure that Rome still retained its primacy over the bishop of Constantinople, even though his proximity to the imperial court rendered him a potentially powerful force in ecclesiastical politics.

To secure papal support for his views, Cyril told Caelestine that several of the sermons in which Nestorius opposed the epithet *Theotokos* for Mary had infiltrated the monasteries of Egypt, causing endless doctrinal confusion for the monks. By emphasizing the discord that Nestorius' teachings had provoked within the churches of Egypt, Cyril avoided the more complex theological distinctions that Nestorius would later make in his letter to the pope.¹¹² Since ecclesiastical unity was the necessary precondition for security in the empire, Nestorius' divisive sermons threatened the stability of the state, warned Cyril. Pope Caelestine, moved by Cyril's pleas, promptly intervened, proclaiming Cyril the good shepherd (*ποιμὴν ἀγαθός*), and Nestorius an evil mercenary (*κακὸς μισθωτός*) who maliciously sundered his own flock.¹¹³

At about the same time, Nestorius was also writing letters, in Greek, to the pope at Rome. But by the time Caelestine received Nestorius' letters and had them translated into Latin, the pope's metaphor that told against Nestorius was already in place. Unaware of the hostility with which his words would be read, Nestorius' letter to the pope spoke of certain unnamed persons who recalled the 'putrid illness' of Apollinarius and Arius. These heretics were said to have improperly commingled the two

¹¹¹ Canons, *Fonti I. I.*, Constantinople I, canon 2, ed. Joannou, 47–8.

¹¹² See also H. J. Vogt, 'Papst Cölestin und Nestorius', in G. Schwaiger (ed.), *Konzil und Papst* (Munich, 1975), 86, 97, 101, in which Vogt argues that Cyril emphasized soteriology in his letters to the pope, and that his theological discussion was simpler than that of Nestorius. Both factors evidently played well to the pope.

¹¹³ *Epistula Caelestini papae ad Cyrillum Alex.* (10 Aug. 430) (CPG 8638), ACO I. I. 1, p. 75 ll. 23–6.

natures of Christ; to have wrongly asserted that Christ assumed his beginnings of origin with the *Christotokos* (Christ-bearing) Virgin; and to have dared to make her a Goddess with the heretical appellation *Theotokos*, a designation never mentioned by the fathers at Nicaea.¹¹⁴ Unlike Cyril, Nestorius highlighted the christological implications of the *Theotokos* controversy. But the theological distinctions were probably difficult for pope Caelestine to fully comprehend. Readily comprehensible to the pope, however, was the fact that Nestorius had welcomed Pelagian heretics from the West when they arrived in Constantinople seeking aid and solace from the imperial court and bishop.¹¹⁵ By this action, Nestorius was flouting canonical law.¹¹⁶

When the pope failed to respond, Nestorius composed a second letter, exhorting him to explain the situation concerning

¹¹⁴ *Epistula i Nestorii ad Caelestinum papam* (CPG 5665), Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 166–7. ACO I. 2, pp. 12–14, p. 13 ll. 7–14: ‘est enim aegritudo non parva, sed affinis putredini Apollinaris et Arii, dominicam enim in homine visionem ad cuiusdam contemperationis confusionem passim commiscens, adeo ut et quidam apud nos clericorum . . . tamquam haeretici aegrotent et aperte blasphement deum verbum patri *omoousion*, tamquam originis initium de Christotoco virgine sumpsisset et cum templo suo aedificatus esset et carni consepultus, carnemque dicant post resurrectionem non mansisse carnem, sed in naturam transisse deitatis.’ ‘For the illness is not negligible, but has affinities with the putrid [illness] of Apollinaris and Arius, for it so commingles the Lordly union in the man in the confusion of his ‘contemporatio’ that certain clerics among us . . . [are sick] like the heretics and openly blaspheme God the Word—who is homoousios with the father, and so too did Christ assume the beginning of his origin from the Christokos Virgin and was built with his temple and buried with his flesh—and they say that the flesh did not remain flesh after the resurrection, but changed into the nature of divinity.’

¹¹⁵ When Leo the Great was a deacon of the Roman church he commissioned John Cassian to write a treatise against Nestorius. In it, Cassian presented Nestorius’ theological views as being similar to those of Pelagius and his doctrine of divine grace, which the church of Rome had condemned. *De Incarnatione. Jean Cassien: Traité de l’incarnation contre Nestorius*, ed. M.-A. Vannier, *Sagesses chrétiennes* (Paris, 1999). On the works of Nestorius that John Cassian knew, see *ibid.* 52–4. See generally, E. Amann, ‘L’Affaire Nestorius vue de Rome’, *RevSR* 23 (1949), 5–37, 207–44; *ibid.* 24 (1950), 28–52, 235–65.

¹¹⁶ Nestorius violates canonical law by receiving heretics. Canons, *Fonti*, I. I, Nicaea, canon 5, ed. Joannou, 27–8. The Pelagians were a rigorist sect who believed that Christians who followed Christ’s example were capable of avoiding all sin. See generally, R. H. Weaver, *Divine Grace and Human Agency: A Study of the Semi-Pelagian Controversy* (Georgia, 1996).

the Pelagians, whose frequent lamentations concerning their dismissal from the catholic church of Rome were said to disturb the emperor himself.¹¹⁷ And Nestorius mentioned once again the unnamed heretics whom he accused of reinstating the beliefs of Apollinarius and Arius, thereby commingling the deity of the Only Begotten with the passions of the human body, and transmitting the immutability of deity to the mutable nature of the flesh.¹¹⁸ This unfortunate juxtaposition of the Pelagian problem with the Cyrillian one in both his letters to the pope ultimately sealed Nestorius' fate. As the pope saw it, Nestorius' defiance of canon law by receiving Pelagian heretics exiled from the West raised grave doubts about his allegations against the Cyrillian party, the Arian and Apollinarian heretics his letter did not name.

Nestorius soon received an ominous letter from the pope, who threatened him with exclusion from communion with the Catholic church if he did not correct his heretical doctrine, return to the path of Christ, and preach what Cyril preached.¹¹⁹ Pope Caelestine recalled the recent times when East and West together had successfully waged war against the heretics, including the orthodox bishops Atticus and Sisinius of Constantinople, whose steadfast piety prevented heretics from ever establishing themselves within the Imperial City. With the ordination of Nestorius, however, pope Caelestine believed that his greatest fears had been realized. Nestorius' book of sermons revealed a doctrine of God the Word that differed in every point from the universal faith, said the pope. And since he firmly believed in the well-settled principle of doctrinal interpretation that no ecclesiastical interpreter may ever make additions or subtractions to the

¹¹⁷ *Epistula ii Nestorii ad Caelestinum papam* (CPG 5667), Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 170.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* 170 l. 28 to 171 l. 17. Although Cyril did, in fact, rely on several Apollinarian treatises circulating under the name of Athanasius, Nestorius goes too far when he accuses Cyril of Apollinarianism. For basic bibliography see P. Galtier, 'Saint Cyrille et Apollinaire', *Gregorianum* 37 (1956), 584–609; H. de Riedmatten, 'La Christologie d'Apollinaire de Laodicée', *SP* 2 (1957), 208–34; H. A. Wolfson, 'Philosophical Implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism', *DOP* 12 (1958), 3–29.

¹¹⁹ *Epistula Caelestini papae ad Nestorium* (judgement of Roman synod) (10 Aug. 430. Nestorio tradita est 30 Nov. 430) (CPG 8639). *Versio graeca*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 82 ll. 19–21.

apostolic teaching, Nestorius' doctrine was intolerable.¹²⁰ From the Western perspective of the pope, Nestorius had betrayed the basic imperative of adhering to the traditions of the fathers when he insisted upon his Antiochene Christology of the dual nature of Christ.

Nestorius' willingness to charge Cyril and others with heresy betrayed, in Caelestine's view, his apparent disregard for ecclesiastical unity. As the pope put it, when Nestorius abandoned the responsibilities of pastoral care, he sundered his flock before wolves.¹²¹ By this metaphor, Caelestine implied that Nestorius' strange doctrinal assertions contravened his duty of pastoral care, for those doctrines divided his congregation and threatened to disrupt ecclesiastical unity on a grand scale. The problem was thought to be serious enough to justify the pope's assuming responsibility for Nestorius' 'abandoned flock' in Constantinople. In a letter addressed to the clergy and people of Constantinople, the pope consoled those whom Nestorius had wrongfully exiled from the church, presenting the example (*ὑπόδειγμα*) of Athanasius, whose long suffering at the hands of Arian persecutors finally resulted in his reinstatement as bishop.¹²² This comparison was ripe with meaning, for the type 'Athanasius and the Arians' had a ready counterpart in Cyril's battle against the Nestorian 'heresy'. Nestorius was now and forever linked with the Arians. Oddly enough, it was Nestorius who had first accused *Cyril* of Arianism in his correspondence with pope Caelestine. But Nestorius' accusation had received little credence from the pope, and that is partly why Cyril had no

¹²⁰ *Versio graeca, ACO I. I. 1, p. 79 ll. 23-4.* τὰ γὰρ μεστῶς καὶ φανερώς παραδοθέντα ἡμῖν παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὔτε προσθήκην οὔτε μείωσιν ἐπιδέχεται. 'For the [teachings] that have been transmitted to us fully and clearly by the apostles admit neither addition nor subtraction.'

¹²¹ *Ibid. ACO I. I. 1, p. 80 ll. 19-30.*

¹²² *Epistula Caelestini papae ad clerum populumque CPolitanum* (10 Aug. 430). (CPG 8640), *Versio graeca, ACO I. I. 1, p. 88 ll. 19-31.* ἔχετε ὑμεῖς, ὅσοι τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐκβέβλησθε, σχεδὸν τῶν ἡμετέρων καιρῶν ὑπόδειγμα τὸ τοῦ τῆς μακαρίας μνήμης Ἀθανασίου τοῦ σοφωτάτου ἱερέως τῆς Ἀλεξανδρέων ἐκκλησίας. . . ἐκβάλλεται Ἀρείου διώκοντος, ἀλλὰ ἀνακλητέος τοῦ κυρίου προπέμποντος. 'You yourselves, who have been cast out of the church, have an example that is near to our time, that of Athanasius of blessed memory, the wisest bishop of the Alexandrian church. . . . He was cast out persecuted by Arius, but he whom the Lord escorts must be called back [into the church].' *Ibid.* 88 ll. 20-2, 24.

trouble turning this accusation on its head, thereby emerging himself as the new Athanasius, the fighter of Arianism *par excellence*.

The divisiveness that Caelestine perceived in the teachings of Nestorius was all the more reprehensible to the pope because it originated from the bishop of Constantinople, an episcopate whose prestige emanated from the emperor and drew worshippers from around the world. Sensitive to the ecclesiastical hierarchy reconstituted at the Council of Constantinople in 381, Caelestine noted that the patriarchate of Constantinople received its eminent status from its proximity to the imperial court, thus confirming Constantinople's second place in the hierarchy after the see of Rome. The primacy of Rome, however, was derived not exclusively from imperial earthly rule but from the divine mandate inherent in the tradition of apostolic succession. The divisiveness Nestorius was provoking from within the ranks of the ecclesiastical establishment of the Imperial City implied to the pope that Nestorius was no better than the wolf who, taking the place of the shepherd, enters the flock from within. Nestorius was that evil wolf whose deceptive infiltration into the powerful bishopric of the Imperial City led to civil war within the ranks of the ecclesiastical establishment.¹²³

In the presence of pope Caelestine, who did not conceal his disdain, Nestorius was condemned on 10 August, in the year 430, at a session held in Rome. His writings had been read into the record, and the synod judged them to be heretical. Cyril clearly welcomed his new-found support from the West. His letter to John of Antioch written soon thereafter said that all those in communion with the West must obey the judgement of Rome.¹²⁴ Fully cognizant of Rome's canonical primacy over the bishopric of Constantinople, Cyril's strategy had been to gain the pope's support in this controversy. That ecclesiastical alliance must have disturbed the imperial court in Constantinople.

¹²³ Ibid. *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 90 ll. 17–21. Pope Caelestine complained that Nestorius had insidiously attacked the church from within.

¹²⁴ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Iohannem Antiochenum* (CPG 5313), *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 92 l. 20 to 93 l. 2.

The Reception of Nicaea

In the years prior to the meeting of the council (427–31), Cyril argued against his opponents by placing the *Theotokos* debate squarely within the theological boundaries that had already been defined by Athanasius and the fathers at the Council of Nicaea in their celebrated fight against Arianism. The Arians they had opposed subscribed to the view that Christ was unlike God because he had succumbed to the ravages of human flesh, such as hunger, physical suffering, and death. Against these claims, Athanasius and the fathers at Nicaea had argued that Jesus was God by nature. For Cyril, the title *Theotokos* for Mary was to confirm in one significant word all the Trinitarian concerns debated at Nicaea: if Jesus is God, then Mary was and must be designated as the ‘Mother of God’, *Theotokos*. That term encompassed the theology of Nicaea in two ways: it implicitly affirmed the divinity of Christ, and it encapsulated the theological truths of the divine economy (*οἰκονομία*), including the Fall, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection. With the simplicity appropriate to a creed, Cyril’s theological argument instructed the congregations and monasteries of Egypt on proper belief and worship.

Although Cyril’s opponents complained that the epithet *Theotokos* had not been used by the fathers at Nicaea, he believed that the theological implications of the term made it acceptable as a designation for the Virgin in spite of its absence from prior conciliar proceedings. He so decided on the basis of his method of interpreting Christian texts, which considered not only the immediate textual setting in which the term appeared but also its broader theological context, which Cyril understood to encompass the entire history of orthodox theological speculation. An important part of that orthodox theology was the Symbol of

Faith promulgated at Nicaea. Cyril was not alone in holding such a view. Both sides considered the Symbol of Faith to be the quintessential statement of Nicene orthodoxy throughout the Nestorian affair. Each claimed that its 'orthodox' theological views upheld that Symbol and countered the 'heretical' teachings of the other.¹

This broader theological context into which Cyril cast the *Theotokos* debate in order to instruct the monks of Egypt also shaped Cyril's later christological debate with Nestorius. To make Nestorius appear to be a heretic of the magnitude of Arius, Cyril placed the christological teachings of Nestorius within the context of the anti-Arian discourse that he had inherited from Athanasius. That anti-Arian discourse from a century before thus provided him with a ready supply of arguments for the theological treatises that he wrote against Nestorius. Cyril's borrowing from Athanasius also influenced his method of interpreting biblical and other Christian texts, the antecedents for which reached as far back as the Roman rhetorician Quintilian and the church father Irenaeus. Evidence of Jesus' weakness adduced from scriptural texts had formed the basis for a good portion of the Arians' claims. To remove these biblical texts from the interpretative setting imposed on them by the Arians, Cyril, like Athanasius, based his reading of Scripture on what he construed to be morally superior claims: Christians maintain the theological truths of the divine mystery by subscribing to basic precepts that every scriptural text consistently expressed and that Nestorius' diphysite (dual-nature) interpretation was thought heretically to contravene.

THE ANTECEDENTS FOR CYRIL'S INTERPRETATIVE METHOD

Cyril's letter to the monks of Egypt reveals his strategy of argumentation in the *Theotokos* debate to be the logical consequence of a deliberate interpretative method, with antecedents in the church father Irenaeus and in Greek and Latin theories of

¹ See generally, H. J. Sieben, *Die Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche* (Paderborn 979), 231-50.

rhetoric.² His method of interpretation was to evaluate any difficult doctrines against the soteriological framework supplied by the narrative of Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection. Cyril thus told his monks that the term *Theotokos* as applied to Mary was consistent with this overarching Christian narrative, which was implied by the divine economy (*οἰκονομία*).³

Irenaeus of Lyons, writing in the second century, produced the first coherent statement defining that larger narrative. He called it 'the Rule of Faith' (*fidei regula*), a standard that served as the touchstone of orthodoxy against the heretical views that the Gnostics taught.⁴ To avoid such views, Irenaeus recommended that every Christian subscribe to the Rule of Faith, for 'faith is produced by truth, [and] faith truly rests upon reality'.⁵ Unlike the 'heretical' Gnostics, 'orthodox' Christians were to enjoy the ontological certainty of their Christian beliefs. The credal formulations of Irenaeus' community at Lyons affirmed those beliefs: Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection were acknowledged by Christians at the time of baptism, which formed the seal of immortality (*σφραγίς*, 'sigillum aeternae vitae').⁶ Irenaeus' statement of orthodox belief summarized the basic knowledge necessary for Christians to achieve salvation and to protect against the competing doctrinal claims of their Gnostic adversaries.

Irenaeus also proposed a threefold article of faith that supplemented and extended this basic Rule. A faith that is firmly grounded in reality, its ontological status beyond reproach, requires Christians to assent to three basic theological views:

² *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*, ACO I. I. 1, pp. 10–23.

³ On the 'overarching narrative' in Irenaeus and its importance for patristic exegesis, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 18; idem, *The Art of Performance. Towards a Theology of Holy Scripture* (London, 1990), ch. 3.

⁴ Irenaeus, *Demonstratio praedicationis apostolicae (Epideixis)* (Armenian). (CPG 1307), A. Rousseau (ed.), *Démonstration de la prédication apostolique. Introduction, traduction et notes*, SC 406 (Paris, 1995), 86–8. On the Rule of Faith in Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian, see E. F. Osborn, 'Reason and the Rule of Faith in the Second Century AD', in R. Williams (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick* (Cambridge, 1989), 40–61.

⁵ Irenaeus, *Demonstratio praedicationis apostolicae, Démonstration de la prédication apostolique*, 86 ('fidem autem veritas adquirere facit, nam fides super vere existentes stat res').

⁶ Ibid. 88.

that God the Father was the uncreated, singular, invisible maker of all; that the Word of God, through whom all things were made, became man to abolish death (*ad destruendam mortem*); and that the Holy Spirit was poured (*effusus est*) upon humanity, renewing man to God.⁷ These articles of faith promised Christians' rebirth and eternal life.⁸ Subscribing to all and only those statements would enable Christians to be baptized into Irenaeus' community at Lyons. Whoever denied these precepts was thought to deceive themselves in a fundamental sense, for they failed to perceive the correct nature of reality. Irenaeus did not relegate matters of doctrine to the vaguaries of theological speculation, for such ideas constituted the reality in which each person dwelt. Gnostic believers were therefore considered to be mistaken at every conceivable level of knowledge. When Gnostics entered Lyons, with their exaggerated claims of *gnosis*, Irenaeus' community thus redefined its ontological conceptions, including the nature of reality and truth. They decided that interpreting the doctrinal assertions of their adversary required them to evaluate not only the textual context for this competing theological view, but its relationship to the broader narrative of Christian redemption.

Athanasius similarly interpreted the *fidei regula* in his controversy with the Arians. He believed that the true meaning of scriptural passages that had been (mis)interpreted by the Arians was revealed not only by analysing their literary context, but by examining 'the scope of that faith which Christians hold, and using it as a rule . . . for the reading of inspired Scripture'.⁹ To the

⁷ Ibid. 92.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Athanasius, *Orationes contra Arianos* iii, 3. 28, PG 26. 384c–385a; Athanasius: *Die Dritte Rede Gegen die Arianer*, ii. Kapitel 26–58, ed. E. P. Meijering, 48–9. On the dating, genesis, and structure of the orations, see Ch. Kannengiesser, 'Athanasius of Alexandria: *Three Orations against the Arians*. A Reappraisal', *SP* 17/3 (1982), 981–95; idem, 'Die Sonderstellung der dritten Arianerrede des Athanasius', *ZKG* 106/1 (1995), 18–55; authenticity questioned in idem, 'Athanasius' So-Called *Third Oration against the Arians*', *SP* 26 (1993), 375–88. See also E. P. Meijering, 'Zur Echtheit der dritten Rede des Athanasius gegen die Arianer (*Contra Arianus III, 1*)', *VC* 50/4 (1996), 364–86. For convenience, I shall frequently translate the Greek word σκοπός with the English 'scope', by which I mean to convey 'meaning', 'significance', 'purpose', or intent' of Scripture, any of which Athanasius and Cyril may have meant depending upon the context in which they used the term. On Athanasius' use of

Arians who relied on the passages from Scripture saying that Jesus 'was made' or 'became' a man in order to support their view that Jesus was an ordinary creature, Athanasius replied that Christian truth taught that Jesus was the Son, Word, and Wisdom.¹⁰ That truth, the *fidei regula* he inherited from Irenaeus, took precedence over any biblical passages that the Arians had construed to the contrary. It was the touchstone for interpreting all such 'heretical' claims.

Christians were not the first to resolve problems of textual interpretation by considering them in relation to a larger philosophical context. The Latin rhetorician Quintilian, whose *Institutio Oratoria* was composed during the late first century AD, devised guidelines for presenting legal cases, including advice on interpreting laws to one's advantage. Unlike Irenaeus, whose interpretative method was based on the truth of Christ's redemptive act, Quintilian's methods did not lay claim to any particular truth, but instead provided orators with the skills necessary to argue convincingly for either side in a legal dispute. As Quintilian put it, sometimes laws are obscure and difficult to interpret, while at other times the letter of the law is detrimental to one's legal case. In either event, Quintilian provides three methods for circumventing the letter of the law: first, the rhetorician may redefine a pivotal term to render the clause inapplicable to his client; second, he may enquire into the law's general intent to determine whether a client's actions were in accordance with the law's purpose; third, he may reconsider the meaning of a particular word or phrase until the term in question accords with the legislator's intent.¹¹ Quintilian's notion of legislative intent bears some resemblance to Irenaeus' *fidei regula*, for both situate the text within a broader interpretative context. Irenaeus defeated the arguments of the Gnostic heretics by urging

skopos as a method of interpretation, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 37–40; J. D. Ernest, 'Athanasius of Alexandria: The *Scope* of Scripture in Polemical and Pastoral Context', *VC* 47 (1993), 341–62: 'Whatever Scripture says about Christ is meant to fit in with the history of the incarnation of the Word of God for the sake of human salvation', *ibid.* 350.

¹⁰ *Orationes contra Arianos* iii, 2. 5, PG 26. 156c. See also *ibid.* 2. 44, PG 26. 240c–241a–b.

¹¹ Quintilian, 7. 6. 5–8, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, ed. M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1970), 407–8.

Christians to interpret the biblical text in relation to Christ's redemptive act. And Quintilian encouraged the orator to place a complicated law within its larger legislative context in order to ensure its proper interpretation. They both thereby extended the context of interpretation beyond the printed text.

Quintilian's view of reading further extended those interpretative boundaries. Since he believed that reading shaped moral character, the orator must be instructed in the art of reading good literature.¹² An ideal curriculum should include not only examples of eloquence but also the literature of tragedy, heroic verse, and even certain lyric poetry that was steeped in the moral conventions of the day.¹³ Becoming familiar with this wealth of appropriate literature, the fledgling rhetor could bring excellence to his moral character while he was also learning vocabulary, figures, and literary methods.¹⁴ Morally excellent literature was, however, never to be slavishly copied, for talent (*ingenium*), invention (*inventio*), force (*vis*), and facility (*facilitas*) are the 'greatest qualities of the orator' (*quae in oratore maxima sunt*).¹⁵

¹² Reading well was not the only requirement for an excellent orator. On the importance of *exercitatio* in training the *consummatus orator*, see L. Calboli Montefusco, 'Quintilian and the Function of the Oratorical *exercitatio*', *Latomus* 55/3 (1996), 615–25. The first sophists had already defined *ars*, *natura*, and *exercitatio* as necessary for education. *Ibid.* 615 n. 1. The author argues that this triad 'appears in the *Institutio Oratoria* as a binomial opposition of natural gifts, on the one hand, and precepts, on the other, which, when well practised, increase the results of a simply natural eloquence'. *Ibid.* 616. For a discussion of the role of *natura* in achieving excellence, see E. Fantham, 'The Concept of Nature and Human Nature in Quintilian's Psychology and Theory of Instruction', *Rhetorica* 13/2 (1995), 125–36, in which the author argues that nature enables human beings to achieve *mens optima* through their gift for learning. For Quintilian, not just human nature, but *rerum natura* offers the possibility for perfection. *Ibid.* 136.

¹³ Quintilian, 1. 8. 5–6, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 55. On education in Quintilian, see generally, T. Vilgamaa, 'From Grammar to Rhetoric. First Exercises in Composition According to Quintilian, *Inst.* I.9', *Arctos* 22 (1988), 179–201. On the relationship of the *progymnasmata* to rhetorical theory, see generally, I. H. Henderson, 'Quintilian and the *Progymnasmata*', *Antike und Abendland: Beiträge zum Verständnis der Griechen und Römer und ihre Nachlebens* 37 (Berlin, 1991), 82–99.

¹⁴ Quintilian, 10. 2. 1, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 593–4.

¹⁵ See generally, P. H. Schrijvers, 'Invention, imagination et théorie des émotions chez Cicéron et Quintilien', B. Vickers (ed.), *Rhetoric Revalued. Papers from the International Society for the History of Rhetoric* (New York,

They were thought to defy imitation (*imitabilia non sunt*) and remain independent of art (*arte non traditur*).¹⁶ Since each rhetorical composition ideally drew upon a canon of literature deemed morally excellent, that canon provided the broader context for any questions of interpretation that might arise.¹⁷ The work being read was therefore to be understood in relation to this prescribed literary canon, and to the presumed moral excellence of its author. Questions of ambiguity, often grammatical in nature, were to be resolved with reference to the author's intent, and to the equity of the particular case: 'In cases of ambiguity the only questions which confront us will be, sometimes which of the two interpretations is most natural, and always which interpretation is most equitable, and what was the intention of the person who wrote or uttered the words.'¹⁸ Authorial intent and notions of justice or equity supplied the broader context necessary for a correct literary interpretation.

Adequate attention to elements of style and organization also contributed to proper interpretation. Quintilian believed that the teacher of language and literature (*grammaticus*), who instructed students in two departments, namely the art of speaking well (*methodice*), and the interpretation of authors (*historice*), should impress upon his students several stylistic features found in exemplary literary compositions.¹⁹ These included the proper

1982), 47–57. On the importance of *imitatio* for education, see Calboli Montefusco, 'Quintilian and the Function . . .', 621. By *imitatio* Quintilian does not mean simply copying. Ibid. 622.

¹⁶ Quintilian, 10. 2. 12, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 595. While imitating is considered to be good, in Quintilian's view, to be inimitable is even better: B. Cassin, 'Philosophia enim simulari potest, eloquentia non potest, ou: le masque et l'effet', *Rhetorica* 13/2 (1995), 106.

¹⁷ Reading was a leisurely activity. Unlike oral delivery, it allowed the reader to review passages a number of times, reconsidering what may have proved difficult at first reading. Quintilian, 10. 1. 19–20, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 571. Being able to reread is to engage in an act of restrained *imitatio*, idem, 10. 2. 14–16, ibid. 596.

¹⁸ Idem, 7. 9. 15, ibid. 414. *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, trans. H. E. Butler (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), iii. 161.

¹⁹ Of course, the *consummatus orator* needed to speak well. Quintilian understood 'bene dicere' in Stoic terms, and expressed it using Aristotelian vocabulary: C. Natali, 'Ars et actus: il fine dell'arte retorica secondo Quintiliano', *Rhetorica* 13/2 (1995), 161–78.

arrangement (*oeconomia*) of subject matter, and the proper treatment (*decorum*) of the various characters and elements that comprise a literary work.²⁰ A term borrowed from the Greek word *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία), i.e. the management of domestic affairs, the Latin *oeconomia* covered the full range of elements that comprised literary style and their judicious arrangement.²¹ Under the rubric of *oeconomia* fell the task of literary organization. The able rhetor was to arrange his argument into a seamless unity, so that apparently disparate facts might join together into 'an intimate bond of union' (*societas*).²² These elements were not merely to be arranged (*dispositio*), but rather their coherence with one another was to be identified that the work may 'form a body, and not simply limbs' (*corpus sit, non membra*).²³ Continuity was the overarching aim in literary organization, which meant that each and every part formed an indissoluble link within the whole.

The second department of learning (*methodice*) focused on the stylistic principle of *decorum* and required the rhetor to compose material appropriate to the literary subject.²⁴ In the Greek rhetorical tradition, this principle meant that literary style must be appropriate to the matter at hand, so that weighty events should not be treated lightly, nor trifling events with dignity.²⁵ Cicero defined *decorum* as the ability of the rhetor to adapt

²⁰ Quintilian, 1. 8. 17, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 57.

²¹ Quintilian, 3. 3. 9, *ibid.* 135. Quintilian explains the derivation of the word *oeconomia*: 'Hermagoras iudicium, partitionem, ordinem, quaeque sunt elocutionis, subiicit oeconomiae, quae Graece appellata ex cura rerum domesticarum et hic per abusionem posita nomine Latino caret.' 'Hermagoras places *judgement, division, order* and everything relating to *expression* under the heading of *economy*, a Greek word meaning the management of domestic affairs which is applied metaphorically to oratory and has no Latin equivalent.' *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, trans. H. E. Butler, LCL (London, 1921), i. 387. Cited by K. Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and its Humanist Reception* (New Haven, 1997), 27, discussed on 30.

²² Quintilian, 7. 10. 17, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 418. See Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 29.

²³ Quintilian, 7. 10. 16, *ibid.* 417. See Eden, *ibid.* 28, 29, 30. On the importance of *narratio* for arrangement, see J. D. O'Banion, 'Narration and Argumentation. Quintilian on *narratio* as the Heart of Rhetorical Thinking', *Rhetorica* 5 (1987), 325–51.

²⁴ Quintilian, 1. 8. 17, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 57.

²⁵ *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, 3. 7, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford, 1959), 155.

himself to particular persons and occasions.²⁶ This definition asserts that form and content are closely related and that unity reproduces the seamless organization of subject matter demanded by the principle of *oeconomia*. These principles of literary composition, in which form implied content and the constituent parts were linked within a coherent whole, also had implications for interpretation. Quintilian's notions of *oeconomia* and *decorum* implied that the astute reader should understand the literary text as a unified composition wholly shaped by the cultural presuppositions of its author.

Consistent with this interpretative directive, Plutarch, writing in the late first and early second centuries, advised the reader to extract from myths 'what is fitting (*τὸ πρόσφορον*) in each legend according to its verisimilitude (*κατὰ τὴν ὁμοίωσιν*)'.²⁷ This meant that the interpreter should retain from myth only those moral and ethical principles consonant with conceptions of morality and truth then current.²⁸ Just as the organizational principle of *oeconomia* viewed a text as an interconnected web of parts to whole, the stylistic notion of *decorum* (*τὸ πρέπον*) imbued that text with the cultural understanding of what is appropriate to a particular case or circumstance. For both Plutarch and Quintilian, the process of interpretation depended upon the text's relationship to larger cultural assumptions. Even in matters of style, as in Quintilian's notion of *decorum*, ancient literary theory did not seem to have considered the written text as sufficient by itself to provide the framework for interpreting it properly. Irenaeus and Athanasius carried this notion to its logical conclusion, by proposing an interpretative strategy that placed the written words of Scripture within the broader theological context of Christ's redemptive narrative.

Like Irenaeus and Athanasius before him, Cyril's method of interpretation was to evaluate the disputed elements of Christian doctrine by placing them within the larger narrative history of

²⁶ Cicero, *Orator*, 20. 70-1 (*πρέπον* appellant hoc Graeci, nos dicamus sane 'decorum'.) 'The Greeks call this "what is fitting" and we say "decorum"'; 35. 123. *M. Tulli Ciceronis Orator*, ed. O. Jahn (Berlin, 1964), 73-4, 112-13.

²⁷ Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 374E, *Plutarque Œuvres Morales*, v. II. *Isis et Osiris*, ed. Ch. Froidefond (Paris, 1988), 229.

²⁸ D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley, 1992), 59.

the Fall, the Incarnation, and the Resurrection. Especially in the early stages of the *Theotokos* controversy, Cyril aimed to abort the burgeoning theological dispute by showing the error of his opponent's arguments when viewed within the broader interpretative framework established by the fathers at Nicaea. Athanasius and his supporters had also reconstituted the proceedings at Nicaea in this way to suit their larger ecclesiastical ends. An encyclical letter written on Athanasius' behalf asserted that his adversaries, the Eusebians, had attempted to set aside the 'true Council of Nicaea' (ἡ τῷ ὄντι σύνοδος) in favour of their own synod, the Council of Tyre, which had condemned Athanasius in 335.²⁹ In the light of Athanasius' deposition at Tyre, his supporters were determined to reinstate Nicaea as the one true council: since an ecumenical gathering of bishops at Nicaea had unequivocally condemned the Arian party, the primacy of Nicaea over the later proceedings at Tyre was not to be questioned. The bishops who supported Athanasius further claimed that the Eusebians had usurped the name 'council' to lend legitimacy to their synod, which had deposed Athanasius, for 'They who use the name 'synod' are not persuaded by a synod as great as this. Thus, they do not pay heed to councils, but only pretend to do so in order that they may remove the orthodox and annul the decrees of the true and great council against the Arians . . .'³⁰ Athanasius and his supporters thus developed a theory of councils by presenting the proceedings of the Council of Nicaea as true and legitimate and those at Tyre as illegitimate. It was thought to consist merely of Athanasius' enemies, who exercised their zeal at Tyre against him in order to support their Arian views.³¹

The impartiality and legitimacy of the proceedings at Tyre were questioned at another level as well, for Athanasius complained that the assembly was presided over by state, rather

²⁹ Athanasius, *Apologia Contra Arianos*, 7 (CPG 2123), Opitz, ii. 3. 93 ll. 21-3.

³⁰ Ibid. Opitz, ii. 3. 93 ll. 23-5. καὶ σύνοδον ὀνομάζουσι οἱ συνόδῳ τηλικαύτη μὴ πειθόμενοι. οὕτως οὐ συνόδου πεφροντίκασιν, ἀλλὰ σχηματίζονται φροντίζειν, ἵνα ἀνελόντες τοὺς ὀρθοδόξους τὰ δόξαντα τῇ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ μεγάλῃ συνόδῳ κατὰ τῶν Ἀρειανῶν λύσωσιν . . .

³¹ Ibid. Opitz, ii. 3. 94 ll. 5-6. On Eusebius' narrative of the Council of Tyre, see B. H. Warmington, 'Eusebius of Caesarea and Some Early Opponents of Athanasius', *SP* 32 (1997), 59-64.

than ecclesiastical, authority: 'How can they dare to call that a council, at which a *comes* presided, which a *speculator* attended, and where a *commentaresius* instead of the deacons of the church introduced us; only the *comes* uttered a sound, and all present were silent, or rather obeyed him . . . ?'³² Athanasius' notion of Nicaea as the one and true council, because it was held under the auspices of ecclesiastical authority, implied that the later synod at Tyre was nothing more than an illegitimate exercise of secular power. With the *comes* presiding, royal soldiers standing guard, and imperial letters compelling attendance of whatever persons the Eusebians chose, Athanasius claimed that the secular imperial powers exerted too much authority over the 'so-called' council at Tyre.³³ According to Athanasius and his followers, this secular presence defied the very nature of conciliar decision-making, which should have rested solely upon the judgement of bishops. Further, by succumbing to imperial authority in the proceedings at Tyre but rejecting the emperor's judgement that Meletians had slandered Athanasius, the Eusebians were said to have acted inconsistently in relation to imperial authority.³⁴

For Athanasius, this deviation from proper conciliar procedure rendered the decision at Tyre illegitimate and subject to reconsideration. The Eusebian party disagreed. When a certain Julius in his letter to the Eusebians demanded a synod at Rome, the Eusebians said that any re-examination of a conciliar decree was contrary to standard conciliar procedure, since every conciliar decree was exempt from re-examination.³⁵ Julius responded that the bishops at Nicaea had held that the decisions of one council could be examined by another, even though nothing in the extant canons corroborates this claim.³⁶ The Eusebian party, in Julian's view, had deviated from proper procedure not only when they refused to submit their decrees to re-examination but even more significantly when they received Arian heretics into

³² Athanasius, *ibid.* Opitz, ii. 3. 94 ll. 11–13. πῶς δὲ σύνοδον ὀνομάζειν τομῶσιν, ἧς κόμησιν προκλήθητο καὶ παρῆν σπεκουλάτωρ καὶ κομενταρήσιος ἡμᾶς εἰσήγεν ἀντὶ διακόνων τῆς ἐκκλησίας; ἐκεῖνος ἐφθέγγετο καὶ οἱ παρόντες εἰσιώπων, μᾶλλον δὲ ὑπήκουον τῷ κόμητι . . .

³³ *Ibid.* Opitz, ii. 3. 95 ll. 26–9. None the less, Athanasius never questioned the right of emperors to convoke church councils.

³⁴ *Ibid.* Opitz, ii. 3. 95 l. 33 to 96 l. 2.

³⁵ *Ibid.* Opitz, ii. 3. 103 ll. 19–23.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 103 ll. 23–7.

communion, in complete defiance of the Nicene decrees. Even the Eusebians themselves claimed that the decisions of every council enjoyed equal authority.³⁷

In this dispute between Athanasius and the post-Nicene Arians, matters of doctrine received little attention while problems of conciliar theory came to the fore: the authority of the state in council proceedings; the hierarchical relationship between the various councils; and the standards for determining the legitimacy and authority of conciliar decisions. Since these problems were addressed in the ongoing controversy between Athanasius and the Eusebians, the competing conciliar theories that emerged reflected each party's ecclesiastical and political purposes. And since Athanasius eventually prevailed, the conciliar theory of Nicaea that he devised became the accepted view. Nicaea was now understood to be the one true ecumenical council because its decisions were said to have been reached by an impartial gathering of bishops free from the exercise of imperial power.

Once Athanasius established Nicaea as the one 'great and ecumenical council', it was not difficult to assert that the Symbol of Faith, which that council produced, represented the true confession.³⁸ Even so, the Eusebians attacked the Symbol for its unscriptural phrases, including 'from the essence of God' (ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ θεοῦ) and 'one in essence' (ὁμοούσιον). The Eusebians argued that the absence of these phrases from the scriptural text made them inappropriate for designating the Trinitarian relationship between Christ and God.³⁹ For Athanasius, however, it was the broader anti-Arian context in which the Nicene terms appeared that was significant. Borrowing from secular Roman literature such concepts as authorial intent and context, Athanasius stated that seemingly strange phrases become acceptable expressions of Christian devotion when they reflected a broader religious intent (εὐσεβὲς τὸ φρόνημα) and a desire to express religious piety (εὐσεβῶς βούλεται σημαίνειν).⁴⁰ But

³⁷ Athanasius, *Apologia Contra Arianos*, 23 (CPG 2123), Opitz, ii. 3. 104 l. 30 to 105 l. 4.

³⁸ *Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae* 5 (CPG 2092), PG 25. 552c–553a.

³⁹ *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, 19 (CPG 2120), Opitz, ii. I. 16 ll. 4–8. For a discussion of the text, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 30–6.

⁴⁰ *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, 18, Opitz, ii. I. 15 ll. 25–30.

irreligiousness (*ἀσέβεια*) remained utterly forbidden, even when presented under the guise of subtle phrases (*ποικίλα ῥήματα*) and plausible sophisms (*πιθανὰ σοφίσματα*).⁴¹ If the Nicene definition of faith was a complete and accurate representation of the truth, then, in Athanasius' view, the Eusebian party had been deceived by irreligion.

Athanasius believed that the Eusebians had fallen prey to textual literalism by not having properly examined the broader conciliar context and authorial intent when they criticized the decrees of the Council of Nicaea for failing to conform to Scripture.⁴² The council decided to use the phrase 'from the essence of God' (*ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ θεοῦ*) as a proper expression of Christ's sonship, although they had originally preferred the phrase, 'from God' (*ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ*), said Athanasius.⁴³ Fearing that the Eusebians would manipulate the text, the council added the term 'essence' (*οὐσία*) in order to say unambiguously that Christ alone comes from God, and is not, in any sense, common or equal to the creatures. To prevent any further dissimulation from the Eusebians, the council added the phrase, 'one in essence' (*ὁμοούσιον*) to signify that the Son was from the Father and of His essence, rather than merely being like the Father, in the way that human beings are like God in being imbued with virtue.⁴⁴

An argument based solely on the biblical text would have been insufficient to counter the Arians' charges. That is why Athanasius evoked the broader conciliar intent as the appropriate context for understanding the phrases. Since the opponents of Arianism believed that biblical literalism was the root of many of the interpretative problems raised by the pro-Arian, Eusebian party, Athanasius needed to state his view of language carefully in order to contravene their literary methods. Language itself had become suspect, warned Athanasius, as Arians had cleverly laid claim to the biblical text, extricating words from their con-

⁴¹ *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, 18, Opitz, ii. I. 15 ll. 27–8.

⁴² On the meaning of 'literal' in patristic texts, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 187–9.

⁴³ *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, 19, Opitz, ii. I. 16 ll. 4–8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* ii. I. 17 ll. 5–11. Athanasius explained that the words that the fathers at Nicaea had used, such as *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ θεοῦ* ('from the essence of God') and *ὁμοούσιον* ('same essence') protected against the 'heretical' words the Arians had used, such as *κτίσμα* ('creature'), *ποίημα* ('created'), *γενητόν* ('created'), and *τρεπτόν* ('mutable'). *Ibid.* ii. I. 17 ll. 23–5.

text in Scripture, even ‘speaking the phrases of orthodoxy’ (τὰ ῥήματα τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας), in order to win converts to their theological views.⁴⁵ Urging caution before such linguistic feats, Athanasius claimed that the Arians did not speak with the right spirit (intent) (οὐ γὰρ ὀρθῆ διανοίᾳ λαλοῦσιν).⁴⁶ Truth did not reside in language itself, which was capable of deceiving, Athanasius remarked, but in the virtuous disposition of the interpreter, who should exhibit the appropriate religious ‘spirit’ or ‘intent’ (διάνοια) before his interpretation of Scripture could be legitimate.⁴⁷ The changing opinions of his adversaries were thought to have more in common with the quarrelsome Greeks, with their predilection for disputation, than with pious Christians, who were said to confess exactly the same faith as their fathers had before them.⁴⁸ Quintilian had similarly believed that the excellent orator invariably argued for the side of justice because he himself displayed all the virtues of a just man, while the man who lacked virtue argued for whichever side a situation required.

Athanasius’ claims of doctrinal uniformity were a ploy that served his larger political ends. His purpose was to defend the anti-Arian decrees of Nicaea against the competing claims of the Eusebian party at Tyre. But his political goals were also intimately bound to his interpretative assumptions, which had consequences for understanding Christian texts. Both the Greek pagans and the Christian heretics were said to lack a central core of truth from which a consistent body of doctrine, free from the petty controversies common to the heretics, could be gleaned. A

⁴⁵ Athanasius, *Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae*, 8, PG 25. 536B. For the view that the Arian controversy was a conflict of hermeneutics, and that the Arian interpretative method was influenced by Platonism, see Ch. Kannegiesser, ‘Holy Scripture and Hellenistic Hermeneutics in Alexandrian Christology: The Arian Crisis’, in *Arius and Athanasius: Two Alexandrian Theologians*, Variorum, 1 (Hampshire, 1991).

⁴⁶ *Epistula ad episcopos aegypti et Libyae*, 8, PG 25. 536B. *διάνοια* means ‘intent’, ‘understanding’, and refers to the sense or meaning of a word or passage. Although *διάνοια* often refers to the mind of Scripture, here it refers to the intention of the interpreter. See Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 29–45.

⁴⁷ *Epistula ad episcopos aegypti et Libyae*, 8, PG 25. 557A. Athanasius claimed that the character (τρόπος) of apostolic men rendered them incapable of deceit (ἄδολος).

⁴⁸ *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, 4, Opitz, 3 l. 25 to 4 l. 10.

proper religious mind, well tuned to the Christians' core of truth, was considered to be central to the formation of orthodox doctrine. It served as the safeguard against heretical wanderings and as the broader corrective for improper textual interpretation. While distinguishing the 'proper' from the 'improper' religious mind might sound hopelessly subjective to modern ears, Athanasius clearly did not shrink from the task: the irreligious Arians interpreted Scripture dangerously and wrongheadedly, while the religious bishops at the council used non-scriptural phrases that were, none the less, filled with pious intent. Faithful Christians were to be vigilant in order to avoid the snares of unscrupulous preachers, 'for it is not words, but the intention and a life of piety that guarantees the faithful [Christian]'. Athanasius said.⁴⁹ The intent of the speaker, or rather how that intent was perceived by the party with authority, determined whether the words spoken were an orthodox expression of the faith.

CYRIL'S METHOD OF INTERPRETATION AND ARGUMENTATION

Proper interpretation of Scripture also largely defined Cyril's confrontation with Nestorius. In his five books against Nestorius, *Libri V contra Nestorium* written c.430, Cyril urged the reader to sift through the various christological doctrines, rejecting whatever is counterfeit.⁵⁰ To distinguish heretical from orthodox writings, Cyril proposed that every doctrine be judged in the light of the Scriptures. Doctrinal teachings that were found to be consistent with the meaning or intent (*σκοπός*) of the biblical text were to be deemed orthodox, while those that used a language different from Scripture were to be cast away as dangerous examples of heresy and deceit.⁵¹ Hardly impartial,

⁴⁹ *Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae*, 9, PG 25. 557c. οὐ γὰρ ἡ λέξις, ἀλλ' ἡ διάνοια καὶ ἡ μετ' εὐσεβείας ἀγωγή συνίστησι τὸν πιστόν. This was not all that different from Quintilian's view of the excellent orator. The quality of his character determined whether the words were used justly.

⁵⁰ *Cyrilli libri V contra Nestorium* (CPG 5217), ACO I. I. 6, p. 13 ll. 21–7.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* ll. 37–42. Although Cyril argued against what he considered to be the biblical literalism of his opponents, he was in no way prepared to sacrifice Scripture to them. He therefore followed the interpretative method of

Cyril's interpretative strategy, which he set forth in the first of his five books against Nestorius, followed that of Athanasius. It examined the entire sense (*σκοπός*) of the scriptural text in order to free it from the interpretations of the Arians, who had claimed that the Word of God was somehow less than the Father who begot him.⁵² Cyril also noted that a book of sermons, filled with a multitude of blasphemies, had come to his attention, and that he planned to address them in order to preserve the doctrines of truth.⁵³ He was referring to a collection of sermons written by Nestorius, copies of which had entered the monasteries of Egypt. By this juxtaposition, Cyril thereby made Nestorius' sermons seem to be related to the Arian doctrine.

After Cyril wrote the five books, he wrote a third letter to Nestorius some time after the synod met at Rome in August 430. He demanded that Nestorius assent to the formula of belief included in his letter, claiming that the formula was defined by the decrees of the Nicene Symbol of Faith. With the full sanction of the Alexandrian synod, Nestorius, who had been criticized harshly for disrupting the ecclesiastical peace, was asked to dissociate himself completely from his former doctrine. Although Nestorius had already expressed (in his letter to pope Caecelstine) his complete assent to the proceedings at Nicaea, Cyril claimed that Nestorius' verbal assent to the creed was both an insufficient and inadequate expression of faith that rested on false understanding.⁵⁴ Cyril believed that the Symbol of Nicaea would lead anyone to subscribe to his singular vision of Christ, the Word, united hypostatically with flesh, and to reject Nestorius' dual-nature Christology as a heretical misinterpretation of the creed. 'We believe in One God, . . . , and in One Lord Jesus Christ.' Cyril insisted.⁵⁵ In the same letter Cyril declared that the various sayings of Christ, including those appropriate to the manhood and to the Godhead, were all assertions made by one single

Athanasius and said that the meaning of the text (Athanasius' 'scope of sacred Scripture') must be considered in its entirety. Furthermore, individual phrases should not be removed from their narrative context.

⁵² Ibid. 14 ll. 8–11.

⁵³ Ibid. 14 ll. 28–30.

⁵⁴ *Epistula iii (synodica) Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium* (CPG 5317), *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 34 ll. 14–20.

⁵⁵ See McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 267 n. 3.

subject or *prosopon*, and should not be assigned to two separate entities (hypostases). He was arguing against Nestorius' claim that the biblical sayings attributed to Christ be distributed between Christ's human and divine natures in order to safeguard the divinity of Christ, which was not to be affected by the human sufferings attributed to Jesus. Relying on the biblical text, 'I and the Father are One' (John 10:30), Cyril asserted that Christ is one with the Father in essence, that he became man, endowed with a rational soul, and uttered phrases consonant with his human limitations, such as, 'Now you seek to destroy me; a man who has told you the truth.' (John 8:40).⁵⁶

This was a return to themes Cyril had already explored in the anti-Arian treatises of his early episcopacy. In his *Thesaurus*, Cyril had defended the consubstantiality of the Father and Son by refuting Arian assertions that the two formed only a voluntary union and not a unity of nature.⁵⁷ Following Athanasius' argument in his *Contra Arianos III*, Cyril explicated the same scriptural quotation, 'I and the Father are One (John 10: 30),' that he borrowed from Athanasius' discourse against the Arians and that he used in his third letter to Nestorius.

That Nestorius' Christology bore no real resemblance to the Arianism that Athanasius was determined to defeat mattered little for Cyril's plan to defeat Nestorianism. The Trinitarian concerns of the fourth century and the christological concerns of the fifth were different theological problems. When Cyril placed them within the same interpretative sphere, he virtually assured that Nestorius would be associated with the subordinationist heresy of Arianism from the century before. Under Cyril's hand, the separation between Father and Son, which had been urged by the Arian heretics and thoroughly argued against by Athanasius and Cyril, became a fitting metaphor for the separation between the divine and human natures of Christ that Nestorius believed in. It did not matter to Cyril that, even from Nestorius' point of view, one of these theological problems had nothing to do with the other.

This clever method of arguing, well begun in the early stage of controversy, was more treacherous for Nestorius than com-

⁵⁶ *Epistula iii (synodica) Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium*, ACO I. I. 1, p. 38.

⁵⁷ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 12 (CPG 5215), PG 75. 188A, and Cyril's refutation, 188B-189A.

paring him directly to Arius. The Arians had interpreted Scripture literally to support their theological view that the passages describing Christ's human nature, especially that Christ suffered, proved that Christ was not like God. Athanasius responded that the infirmities of Christ were proper only to his human flesh. Paraphrasing Athanasius, Cyril in his *Thesaurus* claimed that the Arian heretics were wrong to ascribe human suffering to the Word, because it was the flesh that suffered and died, and not the Word proper. The Word is by nature impassive (*ἀπαθής*) and immortal, Cyril said.⁵⁸ Nestorius and the Antiochenes resolved the problem of the suffering of Christ not with the cautious phraseology of Athanasius but with their dual-nature Christology. Any biblical texts ascribing emotions to Christ's humanity were to be attributed to the human nature alone, which was linked to the divinity through a single *prosopon*.⁵⁹ But Cyril's arguments implied that when Nestorius assigned the biblical sayings between the two natures of Christ, he would be bound to conclude, along with the Arians, that Christ was *not* like God. Far from having made this heretical assertion, Nestorius was himself troubled by the possibility that the Word had suffered. That is why he attributed these sayings only to Christ's human nature. And that is how Nestorius opened the door for Cyril to accuse him of the Arian heresy.

Athanasius had earlier addressed the Arians' way of interpreting Scripture by applying the Christian Rule of Faith, similar to the one that Irenaeus had devised. For Athanasius, this rule or scope (*σκοπός*) of the Christian faith supplied the context for interpreting sacred texts. The context or scope of Scripture is that Christ, the Father's Word, radiance, and wisdom, is both God and Son; he took flesh from the Virgin Mary, *Theotokos*, and was made man, said Athanasius.⁶⁰ These simple truths were thought to be the foundation of orthodox piety that protected the Scriptures from being misinterpreted by the Arians who, igno-

⁵⁸ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, PG 75. 396C-D. 'For thus we say that he was crucified and died, the flesh having suffered this, not the Word in its own [nature]; for the Word is impassive and immortal.'

⁵⁹ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis*, *Le Livre d'Héraclide*, 223-4.

⁶⁰ *Orationes contra Arianos iii*, 3. 28-9 (CPG 2093), PG 26. 385 A-B; *Athanasius: Die Dritte Rede Gegen die Arianer*, ii. Kapitel 26-58, ed. Meijering, 49-52.

rant of this larger interpretative context (*σκοπός*), had wandered from the truth.

Cyril addressed the Nestorian problem in a similar manner by saying that he had received orthodox teachings on the singular nature of Christ from the holy apostles, and from 'all the God-inspired Scriptures'. Much like that of Athanasius, his own Christology was said to be derived from a broad interpretation of the scope of the Christian faith, the principle by which he interpreted Scripture, while Nestorius, like the Arians before him, was thought to have interpreted the Bible literally and therefore incorrectly. Cyril's unwavering confidence in such principles led him to conclude that his vision of Christ and his vision of Christ alone would suffice to refute Nestorius' dual-nature interpretation. That Nestorius himself had adduced a number of passages from Scripture to support his dual-nature Christology did not stop Cyril from holding such views.⁶¹

Cyril's anti-Arian legacy was prominent in his treatment of one christological problem in particular, that of Christ's apparent increase in moral stature and wisdom. That problem exemplifies how closely Cyril followed Athanasius and subsequently used the same discourse against Nestorius. The Antiochenes had developed their own method of addressing the problem. It was based on their distinctive anthropology, which held that rationality and mutability are co-ordinate properties in human beings, and that the exercise of free will depends on this capacity for change. Nestorius' dual-nature Christology depended upon this view when it supported a vision of mankind in complete communion with God.⁶² This did not make human beings divine in the Alexandrian sense, however. To the Antiochenes, redemption came about by following Christ's example as perfect man, who, in his complete human perfection, saved the faithful Christian.⁶³ This distinctive soteriological scheme meant that Nestorius' most essential concern was safeguarding Christ's

⁶¹ See R. L. Wilken, 'St. Cyril of Alexandria: Biblical Expositor', *Coptic Church Review* 19 (1998), 40: 'Cyril thought that Nestorius' exegesis confounded the biblical account of Christ. For Cyril it is essential that the interpretation of the Bible be consistent, and it can only be consistent if one reads the Bible in light of its overall *scopus*.'

⁶² Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, 126.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 127. See Theodore of Mopsuestia, *De incarnatione* (frags), 7. 2 (CPG

human integrity.⁶⁴ Adamant that Christ's manhood be understood as consisting in a *prosopon* (person), Nestorius believed that Christ was fully man by nature, 'that one not suppose that he is called God because the [Incarnation] destroyed the [two] natures and their respective properties'.⁶⁵ Insisting on the full humanity of Christ, Nestorius claimed that Christ trusted in God and was made High Priest.⁶⁶ Thus did Nestorius' Christology lead to his claim that Christ gradually increased in wisdom. Like Gregory of Nazianzus before him, Nestorius believed that 'the one who begins and gradually advances to perfection is not God, although he is so called because of the manifestation which took place little by little'.⁶⁷ In other words, this gradual advance of Christ took place not with respect to the divinity but to the humanity or flesh, which remained separate from the properties of divinity. A soteriological scheme decidedly ethical in its orientation, the divinity and humanity of Christ were fully separate entities (*οὐσίαι*), connected only by a single *prosopon*.

This virtually insurmountable chasm between God and man must have shocked Cyril, whose Alexandrian legacy envisioned a soteriology dependent on mankind's close link to divinity. The Alexandrian connection between mankind and divinity that was Cyril's heritage was made possible through the Incarnation, and its implications were finally realized in the ultimate divinization and redemption of humanity.⁶⁸ Examining Nestorius' claims

3856), H. B. Swete, *Theodori episcopi Mopsuesteni in epistulas B. Pauli commentarii II* (Cambridge, 1882, 1969), 290, 312. See M. Richard, 'La Tradition des fragments du traité *περὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως* de Théodore de Mopsueste', *Muséon* 56 (1943), 55–75.

⁶⁴ See B. Dupuy, 'La Christologie de Nestorius', *Istina* 40/1 (1995), 56–64: Nestorius takes very seriously the humanity of the *Logos* because he wants to avoid attributing mutability to the *Logos*, which could imply that God was mutable as well. Ibid. 59. On Nestorius' understanding of 'hypostasis' see ibid. 62: 'Lorsque Nestorius parle d'hypostase, il suit un ancien usage qui désigne la nature comme réalité et non comme essence ou comme conception de l'intellect.'

⁶⁵ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis, Le Livre d'Héraclide*, 224.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 219.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 224.

⁶⁸ See generally J. Leemans, '“God became human in order that humans might become God,” A Reflection on the Soteriological Doctrine of Divinization', in *The Myriad Christ* (Leuven, 2000), 207–16.

that Christ had grown in moral stature, Cyril responded in a way that placed Nestorius dangerously close to the Arian heretics: ‘But *you* [Nestorius] say this, I suppose, that being God almighty, he himself became High Priest. Yet, indeed, he was emptied and humbled himself, descending into the inferior. How, then, did he advance in dignity when he became High Priest?’⁶⁹ The Arians too had claimed that Christ was an exalted man, promoted from his inherently lower status. Attacking these Arian notions of promotion and advancement, Athanasius had declared decades earlier that Christ, existing fully as God (*θεὸς ὑπάρχων*), took the form of a servant (*τὴν δούλου μορφήν ἔλαβε*), and humbled himself, without any reward for virtue (*μισθὸς τῆς ἀρετῆς*).⁷⁰ Cyril had already used Athanasius’ argument in his *Thesaurus*: ‘What accession of honour has there been to him who is in the form of God, though he put on the form of a slave. . . . How does promotion come to one who descended? What improvement accrues to one who comes into inferior beings from superior ones?’⁷¹

But this argument applied to Nestorius only tangentially. Though the Arians wished to assert the lowly status of Christ, consistent with their subordinationist understanding of the Trinity based on Origenism and middle-Platonism, Nestorius sought to preserve the uniquely Antiochene notion of redemption that preserved Christ’s human integrity fully intact while simultaneously safeguarding Christ’s divinity. The arguments Nestorius presented for Christ’s actual increase in moral stature were an unfortunate coincidence of language with that of the Arians. His Christology could not have been further from Arian concerns. Determined to maintain Christ’s divinity, immutable and untouched by the sufferings of flesh, Nestorius insisted on attributing Christ’s passions, sufferings, and increase in stature

⁶⁹ *Cyriilli libri V contra Nestorium* (CPG 5217), *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 69 ll. 19–21. ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνο, οἶμαι, φῆς ὅτι θεὸς παντοκράτωρ ὑπάρχων ὁ αὐτὸς γέγονεν ἀρχιερεὺς. κекένωται δὴ οὖν καὶ τεταπείνωκεν ἑαυτὸν καθεὶς ἐν μείοσι. πῶς οὖν ἔτι προέκομφεν εἰς ἀξίωμα γεγονῶς ἱερέως;

⁷⁰ *Orationes contra Arianos* iii. 1. 40 (CPG 2093), PG 26. 93 C–D.

⁷¹ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 20, PG 75. 328D, 329A. Καὶ ποία γέγονε προσθήκη τιμῆς τῷ ἐν μορφῇ μὲν ὑπάρχοντι θεοῦ, ἐνδυσσαμένῳ δὲ τὴν τοῦ δούλου μορφήν; Πῶς ὁ κατελθὼν γέγονεν ἄνω; Ποίαν ἔχει βελτίωσιν ὁ ἐν ἐλάττωσι γεγονῶς ἐξ ἀμεινόνων;

only to his human nature, a nature linked to his divinity by a single *prosopon*. Cyril could nevertheless repeat arguments from his *Thesaurus* to counter Nestorius' claims: 'For we do not say that the Word of God advanced and hastened toward dignity, if he has been deemed our High Priest, but that he descended here too into emptiness.'⁷²

Though Cyril used assertions Nestorius had made about Christ, and had pointed out their similarity to assertions the Arians had made, there is no evidence that Nestorius ever subscribed to the Arian conception that Christ advanced in wisdom. Of course, Cyril had little trouble responding to his own straw man: 'We believe,' wrote Cyril, 'that out of the very belly and womb of the Virgin, Emmanuel being God, proceeded forth Man, completely full of the wisdom and grace that are naturally inherent in him.'⁷³ The biblical text of Luke 2: 52 presented Cyril with something of a challenge, for it clearly stated that Jesus advanced in stature, wisdom, and grace. It is the same text to which the Arians had, a century before, attached their understanding of Christ as being subordinate to God. Cyril could say only that Christ's advance and increase were merely apparent: he had made his wisdom and grace manifest only in direct proportion to his growth in bodily stature, occurring incrementally.⁷⁴ In his Festal letter for the year 430, Cyril had similarly said that Jesus' progress in stature, wisdom, and grace did not render the Word of God wise by accession, for the Word was merely *said* to increase in Wisdom, in order that the Word may exhibit the properties appropriate to its human nature.⁷⁵

Cyril had already used this argument in his *Thesaurus* when he said that Christ admitted progress and increase so that Christians, too, may advance in wisdom. Everything that Christ did, according to Cyril, was for the sake of faithful Christians, whose inherent sinfulness after the transgression of Adam

⁷² *Cyriilli libri V contra Nestorium*, ACO I. I. 6, p. 69 ll. 40–2. οὐ δὲ προκόψαι φαιμέν καὶ εἰς ἀξίωμα δραμεῖν τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγον, εἰ κεχηρημάτικη ἡμῶν ἀρχιερέως, καθικέσθαι δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ διὰ τούτου πρὸς κένωσιν.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 70 ll. 9–11. πεπιστεύκαμεν γὰρ ἐκ νηδύος αὐτῆς καὶ μήτρας τῆς παρθενικῆς θεὸν ὄντα τὸν Ἐμμανουὴλ ἄνθρωπον προελθεῖν, πλήρη που πάντως σοφίας καὶ χάριτος τῆς ἐνούσης αὐτῷ φυσικῶς.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 70 ll. 24–5. Christ is merely said to have advanced (*προκόπτειν* ἂν λέγοιτο) in stature and wisdom, and in proportion to his human body.

⁷⁵ *Epistula paschalis* 17 (CPG 5240), PG 77. 781A.

required Christ's complete identity with human nature. Cyril construed this identity differently than the Antiochenes did. Christ only *seemed* to increase in wisdom and stature, and that only by virtue of his human flesh. In contrast, the Antiochenes believed that the identity between Christ and human beings was perfectly executed by means of Christ's complete human integrity. For Cyril and his Alexandrian predecessors, Christ merely adopted that identity for the sake of redemption: 'And just as for our sake he humbled himself, so too for our sake he admits advancement, in order that we again in him might advance in wisdom, we who long ago were made beasts because of sin; we might advance in grace too, we who long ago have been hated because of the transgression in Adam.'⁷⁶ Following Irenaeus' notion of recapitulation, Cyril understood the relationship between Christ and Adam as perfectly inverse, Christ as the second Adam freely and generously correcting every transgression Adam committed at the Fall, so that pious Christians could finally attain redemption.

Athanasius had already considered the same problem in his *Contra Arianos*. If the Son is Wisdom, asked Athanasius, how can Wisdom admit further advance (*προκόπτειν*)? The Arians had claimed for their purposes the Lukan text (2: 52), which meant that Athanasius needed to provide a broader context in which to interpret it properly. He placed the passage within the framework of the Christian narrative, which consisted of the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the *Eschaton*, in order that Christ's redemptive act be preserved. Athanasius concluded that once the Son of God became incarnate, he humbled himself in order to bring about increasing perfection in others. Since growth and progress are attributes of mankind, Athanasius believed that it was only in his human form that the Son advanced, for as the Godhead revealed itself to humans, so did the Son's grace increase more and more, from his experience in the Temple as a child, to his questions about the law, and to the disciples' gradual acceptance of him as the true Son of God.⁷⁷ The Son's increase in

⁷⁶ *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali trinitate*, 28, PG 75. 425D. Καὶ ὡσπερ δι' ἡμᾶς ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόν, οὕτω καὶ δι' ἡμᾶς ἐπιδέχεται τὸ προκόπτειν, ἵνα πάλιν ἡμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ προκόπτωμεν ἐν σοφίᾳ, οἱ πάλαι διὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀποκτηνωθέντες· προκόψωμεν δὲ καὶ ἐν χάριτι οἱ πάλαι μεμισημένοι διὰ τὴν ἐν Ἀδὰμ παράβασιν.

⁷⁷ *Orationes contra Arianos iii*, 3. 52, PG 26. 432B–433B; *Athanasius: Die*

wisdom was not an aberration to be explained away, nor an attribute defining his inferior status, but a function of the Incarnation, the very basis for humanity's redemption and deification.

Through this explication of Scripture, Athanasius recontextualized a biblical passage that his Arian opponents had construed otherwise. If their literal reading of Scripture made this passage support their views, then Athanasius' interpretative method restored its meaning as consistent with Nicene orthodoxy. For Athanasius, the Arians' way of misconstruing Scripture called to mind the way in which the Jews had intentionally misunderstood Christ. Their 'false beliefs' had ascribed an increase of wisdom to Wisdom itself. They had failed to understand that it was the attribute of an imperfect and human Son, the Son's humanity, that increased in wisdom, and not Wisdom itself. Athanasius' comparison served his polemical purpose, for most Christians would agree that Jewish interpretation of the Christian experience was unacceptable. If Arian interpretation were made to sound anything like that of the Jews, then their interpretative methods, along with their Christology, could be readily dismissed as heretical.

For Athanasius, and for Cyril in his *Thesaurus*, the 'heretical' interpretations of the Arians and Jews were a foil against which they could place the proper reading of the passage. That Christ increased in wisdom signalled the very deification of grace imparted to man—a kind of metaphor for mankind's own obliteration of sin. Wisdom did not increase in stature, said Cyril and Athanasius, only the body did, while the Godhead became gradually manifest in the body. Progress did not take place in the Word, external to the flesh, as the heretics claimed. Advance was a property of the flesh, and that flesh eventually became the body of Wisdom. It was not Wisdom that advanced with respect to

Dritte Rede Gegen die Arianer, ii. *Kapitel 26–58*, ed. Meijering, 225–39. This was similar to Nestorius' way of construing the text, for Athanasius took seriously the humanity of Christ, attributing to it Jesus' increase in wisdom. Cyril had dealt with the passage by promoting what one might consider to be a quasi-Docetic view. See generally, A. Louth, 'Athanasius' Understanding of the Humanity of Christ', *SP* 16/2 (1989), 309–18; K. Anatolios, 'The Soteriological Significance of Christ's Humanity in St. Athanasius', *Theological Quarterly* 40/4 (1996), 265–86.

itself, but the manhood that advanced in it, transcending human nature by degrees on its road to deification. Just as the Son suffered in the flesh, hungered in the flesh, and tired in the flesh, said Cyril, the Son readily advanced in the flesh, but not in the Word. In the process, he became the very body of Wisdom. By applying the *fidei regula*, the Christian narrative of the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the deification of humankind, this interpretation of Scripture restored the soteriological meaning of a passage that the Arians had adduced to show that the Son, having gradually progressed in Wisdom, was simply an ordinary man.

Borrowing these same anti-Arian, anti-Jewish assertions, Cyril made Nestorius' doctrines appear to denigrate the divinity of Christ, for Cyril claimed that Nestorius denied that Christ is God by nature, and that he is the singular Son of God.⁷⁸ Cyril implied that this deviation from orthodox belief made Nestorius an advocate for the Jews' ignorance, because his Christology offended the doctrines of the church and disregarded the divine mystery.⁷⁹ Cyril's 'divine mystery' (*ὁ τοῦ μυστηρίου λόγος*) shared much in common with Athanasius' overarching narrative story, which included the entire sense (*σκοπος*) of the Christian faith: 'We believe that the Word from God the Father united himself to the body, born through the Holy Virgin, with a rational soul . . . and rendered it life-giving, being as God life by Nature, that making us partakers of himself, alike spiritually and bodily, he may make us better than what is corruptible, and he may abolish through himself the law of sin which is in the members of the flesh . . .'⁸⁰ Nestorius' doctrines were thought to contradict these simple truths that ensured humanity's redemption in a manner that would be consonant with the Alexandrian soteriological scheme.

Cyril repeated and incorporated the christological implications of his arguments against Nestorius in his treatise written

⁷⁸ *Cyrolli libri V contra Nestorium*, ACO I. I. 6, p. 91 ll. 29–31.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 92 ll. 29–30.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 87 ll. 17–22. πιστεύομεν γὰρ ὡς τῷ τεχθέντι διὰ τῆς ἀγίας παρθένου σώματι ψυχὴν ἔχοντι λογικὴν ἐνώσας ἑαυτὸν ὁ ἐκ θεοῦ πατρὸς λόγος . . . ζωοποιὸν ἀπέφηνεν αὐτό, ζωὴ κατὰ φύσιν ὑπάρχων ὡς θεός, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἑαυτοῦ μετόχους ἀποτελῶν πνευματικῶς τε ἅμα καὶ σωματικῶς καὶ φθορᾶς ἀποφύγη κρείττονας καὶ τῆς ἀμαρτίας τὸν νόμον τὸν ἐν τοῖς μέλεσι τῆς σαρκὸς καταργήσῃ δι' ἑαυτοῦ.

for the empresses Eudocia and Pulcheria. To them he wrote that the Word remained God even when seen in the flesh. The apparent incongruity between the divinity of the Word, and the Word advancing in favour with God and men, presented no doctrinal difficulties for Cyril. Willing to make the frailties of the flesh his own, the Word hungered, thirsted, and found himself 'wearied with the journey'.⁸¹ How should the faithful Christian understand such human failings? Cyril believed that the mystery of the *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία, economy) having taken place in human flesh sufficed to account for the paradox of a suffering, seemingly human, yet fully divine, Word. It was, after all, the Arians who refused this paradox of a suffering Christ. They were the ones who accumulated a host of scriptural texts as evidence of Christ's less-than-divine status. By borrowing Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse, Cyril made Nestorius' reluctance to admit a suffering deity sound ominously similar to the Arians' doctrinal views. Cyril's relationship to and interpretation of his Alexandrian past thus enabled him to make Nestorius appear to be a heretic with christological views similar to those of Arius from the century before.

⁸¹ *Cyrilli oratio ad Pulcheriam et Eudociam augustas* (CPG 5220), ACO I. I. 5, p. 33 l. 23 to 34 l. 2.

The Meeting of the Council

EPHESUS AS AN ECCLESIASTICAL FORUM

The imperial *Sacra* (letter) of Theodosius II (and the Western emperor Valentinian III), which was addressed to Cyril and all the metropolitan bishops, convoked an ecumenical council of bishops to resolve the theological controversy between the sees of Alexandria and the Imperial City.¹ Theodosius ordered all invited bishops to arrive punctually so that the council would begin on Pentecost, 7 June 431.² Each metropolitan was to bring along several provincial bishops.

Nestorius and his sixteen bishops were among the first to arrive, reaching Ephesus soon after the celebration of Easter.³ Shortly before the appointed day of Pentecost, Cyril and his party of fifty bishops arrived at the city in good spirits. They had crossed the vast sea with only light winds without fear or danger; they had stopped briefly in Rhodes; and then they had continued

¹ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad singulos metropolitans* (19 Nou. 430) (CPG 8651), *ACO* I. I. 1, pp. 114–16. For basic bibliography, see A. Alès, *Le Dogme de l'Éphèse* (Paris, 1931); T. Camelot, *Éphèse et Chalcédoine* (Paris, 1962); R. Devreesse, 'Les Actes du concile d'Éphèse', *RSPT* 18 (1929), 223–42, 408–31; A. de Halleux, 'La Première Session du concile d'Éphèse (22 juin 431)', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 69 (1993), 48–87; C. J. Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, iii. *A. D. 431–451* (Edinburgh, 1883); K. Holum, 'The Controversy Over the Mother of God,' in *Theodosian Emperresses* (Berkeley, 1982), 147–74; McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 53–107; L. I. Scipioni, *Nestorio e il concilio de Efeso* (Milan, 1974); E. Schwartz, *Cyril und der Mönch Viktor* (Vienna, 1928).

² *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex.*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 115 ll. 19–26. See A. M. Crabbe, 'The Invitation List to the Council of Ephesus and Metropolitan Hierarchy in the Fifth Century', *JTS* NS 32/2 (1981), 369–400.

³ Socrates, *HE* 7. 34, *GCS* NS 1, p. 382 ll. 21–3.

on to their final destination without incident.⁴ Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, arrived five days after Pentecost, accompanied by his supporting bishops. And Memnon, bishop of Ephesus, gathered forty bishops from his own diocese, along with twelve from Pamphylia.⁵

Nestorius and his supporters were plainly eager to settle their differences with Cyril, for they were among the few invited bishops to arrive promptly, in strict obedience to the emperor's decree. Having been appointed by the emperor, Nestorius had initially held the emperor's favour. He probably hoped that his advantage would translate into victory at this ecumenical gathering of bishops that the very same imperial authority had convened. Nestorius knew that Cyril's relationship with the imperial family was strained, first, because Cyril had been linked with Theophilus' overtly political campaign against John Chrysostom, and second, because he had written one treatise for the emperor and another for the empresses, thus angering the emperor, who immediately accused the patriarch of attempting to sow discord within the imperial family.

Nestorius nevertheless found himself in a precarious position. Deposed by the synods of Rome and Alexandria, he faced an ambiguous situation before the ecumenical proceedings even began. Cyril and the pope believed that Rome's and Alexandria's depositions of Nestorius already constituted an official condemnation. Theodosius evidently disagreed, for his imperial *Sacra* asserted that the ecumenical synod would redress any violations of canon law, nullify all private gatherings held prior to the council, and decide all matters of doctrine by a common vote of bishops.⁶ Without mentioning the Alexandrian and

⁴ *Epistula Cyrilli ad clerum populumque Alexandrinum* (CPG 5320), ACO I. I. 1, p. 116 ll. 13–16. See also *Epistula secunda Cyrilli ad eosdem* (CPG 5321), ACO I. I. 1, p. 117.

⁵ Socrates, *HE* 7. 34, GCS NS 1, p. 382 ll. 25–6; Mansi, iv. 1381.

⁶ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad singulos metropolitans* (CPG 8651), ACO I. I. 1, p. 115 ll. 26–116 l. 5. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 68, correctly notes that two systems of law, that of imperial decree and canonical precedence, were in effect according to many present at the council. McGuckin's negative assessment of *comes* Candidianus too readily dismisses the *comes'* intent to comply with the emperor's wish to provide a full discussion of all disputed issues, *ibid.* 69. Theodosius had after all attempted to nullify the earlier synods at Rome and Alexandria by superseding them with an ecumenical gathering of bishops.

Roman synods by name, he implicitly discredited both synodal gatherings along with their decrees. A formal ecumenical council, rather than a private, local synod, was thought to be the appropriate forum in which to resolve theological disputes. After all, Byzantine imperial theology implied that divisions within the church could jeopardize the security of the state.

When Nestorius arrived in Ephesus shortly after Easter, several factors were already functioning to make the council of Ephesus a hostile forum for him. The place itself was one factor, according to the scholar K. Holum, because Nestorius' homilies against the title *Theotokos* for Mary infuriated the people of Ephesus. The city's devotion to Mary *Theotokos* may have stemmed from its former status as the ancient cultic centre for the virgin goddess Artemis.⁷ A second factor was that Cyril and Memnon were becoming fast friends, as party alliances formed during the early stages of the proceedings. The recent history of the Ephesian bishopric virtually ensured that would happen. When Theophilus had attacked John Chrysostom, he tried to discredit John's ordination of his former deacon Heraclides as the next bishop of Ephesus.⁸ Falsely claiming that Heraclides had viciously beaten some persons and dragged them through the streets of Ephesus, Theophilus hoped this fabricated evidence would lead to John Chrysostom's deposition,⁹ and would also remove Heraclides from the Ephesian see. Theophilus' criticism of Heraclides had probably encountered little resistance from the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Ephesus, because some parties had contended that Heraclides, although appointed bishop on John Chrysostom's recommendation, was unworthy of the office. Physical violence ensued and, to ensure the peaceful succession of that bishopric, John Chrysostom was compelled to remain within the city of Ephesus for some time.¹⁰ But that did not stop Heraclides from being deposed and sent into exile only three years after being ordained bishop of Ephesus. Theophilus'

Candidianus' claim that he wished to ensure that all present would conduct a proper conciliar discussion therefore seems sincere.

⁷ Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 153.

⁸ Sozomen, *HE* 8. 6, GCS NS 4, p. 358 ll. 8–15; Socrates, *HE* 6.11, GCS NS 1, p. 329 l. 17 to 330 l. 11.

⁹ Socrates, *HE* 6.17, GCS NS 1, p. 339 l. 19 to 340 l. 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* *HE* 6. 11, GCS NS 1, p. 329 l. 24 to 330 l. 4.

political plans met with further success when his own candidate for the Ephesian bishopric was thereupon installed.¹¹ The diocese of Ephesus was, therefore, well accustomed to the ecclesiastical political designs of the Alexandrian see, and may have been particularly inclined to form an alliance with the Alexandrian patriarch.

Nestorius' petulant personality also contributed to the hostility he found at Ephesus. Just prior to the council, Nestorius had claimed before a gathering of bishops that God was not an infant 2 or 3 months old.¹² By this statement, which infuriated some of the more literal-minded bishops, Nestorius meant to say that human suffering should not be attributed to Christ's divine nature, only to his human nature. The bishops however understood Nestorius to mean that God could not have appeared in human form. Cyril did not hesitate to take full advantage of Nestorius' remark, attributing to him the blasphemous statement that 'Jesus was not God'. This exaggerated slogan eventually became the rallying cry for the anti-Nestorian party.

Pope Caelestine was none the less reluctant to condemn Nestorius in spite of the Roman synod's having earlier deposed him. Caelestine urged Cyril to return Nestorius to the true faith, for 'God does not will the death of the sinner, but his conversion.'¹³ This was a marked change from Caelestine's early letters, which were filled with criticism and contempt. But in a letter written just prior to the council, Caelestine used a more conciliatory tone, for he evidently hoped that an ecumenical gathering of bishops would give Nestorius the opportunity to reconcile his theological differences and subscribe to the 'orthodox' views set forth by the synod of Rome.

Theodosius believed that Ephesus was a neutral and appropriate setting for resolving such differences. He had selected Ephesus because the Asian city was readily accessible by land and sea, and it was well stocked with necessary supplies.¹⁴

¹¹ de Halleux, 'La Première Session du concile d'Éphèse', 57.

¹² These comments were made at Ephesus before the official proceedings began. Socrates, *HE* 7. 34, GCS NS 1, p. 382 l. 29 to 383 l. 3; *Epistula Cyrilli ad Comarium et Potamonem episc. et Dalmatium archimandritam et Timotheum et Eulogium presb.* (CPG [8680] 5323), *ACO* I. I. 2, p. 66 ll. 28-30.

¹³ Hefele, *A History of the Councils*, 42; Mansi, iv .1292.

¹⁴ *Sacra directa per Iohannem comitem concilio*, *ACO* I. I. 3, p. 31 ll. 19-22.

Situated directly between Constantinople and Alexandria, Ephesus seemed to afford a neutral setting in which to hold the ecumenical proceedings.¹⁵ One modern scholar claims that Theodosius demonstrated his impartial stance when, unaware that Augustine of Hippo had died one year earlier, he invited him to attend the council,¹⁶ an invitation the anti-Nestorians of Constantinople probably favoured.¹⁷

THE CONCILIAR PROCESS

Matters of conciliar procedure were extremely important to Caelestine and Theodosius. Though Caelestine was unable to attend the council, he said in his letter to Theodosius that he wished to participate in the proceedings through his legates, bishops Arcadius and Projectus, and the presbyter Philip. They were authorized to give judgement on the final conciliar decision,¹⁸ but they were not permitted to participate in the decision-making process. Caelestine probably believed that the synod of Rome had already decided the doctrinal questions, making further debate unnecessary.¹⁹ Cyril undoubtedly held a similar view. Thus did Caelestine inform Theodosius that the papal legates firmly supported Cyril. By making such a claim, he meant to preserve the dignity and pre-eminence of the Roman see at a time when Constantinople, with its proximity to imperial power, enjoyed special prerogatives. Although Cyril was clearly to benefit from Caelestine's understanding of conciliar proce-

¹⁵ The Syrian tradition states that Nestorius himself selected Ephesus as the place for the council. There is, however, no corroborating evidence for this assertion. Barhadbesabba 'Arbaya, *Histoire ecclésiastique*, 22, PO 9, ed. F. Nau (Paris, 1913), 541, cited by de Halleux, 'La Première Session du concile d'Éphèse', 57.

¹⁶ *Sacra directa per Iohannem comitem concilio* (CPG 8723), ACO I. I. 3, p. 31 l. 3.

¹⁷ Augustine had fought against Leporius, who was the forerunner of Nestorius in the West. He had also fought against the Pelagians, the Western 'heretics' to whom John Cassian had assimilated Nestorius' Christology. See de Halleux, 'La Première Session du concile d'Éphèse', 56; Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (1975), 464-7.

¹⁸ Mansi, iv. 1291; see also F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy* (Washington, DC, 1966), 771.

¹⁹ T. G. Jalland, *The Life and Times of St. Leo the Great* (London, 1941), 258.

ture, the open support of the papal representatives even before synodal discussions began implied that the synod was not the impartial forum that Theodosius hoped it would be. Though the Roman delegation did not arrive until after the majority synod gave their sentence of deposition against Nestorius, Roman support for Cyril may have been one factor that eventually persuaded Theodosius against Nestorius in the post-conciliar discussions.

Just as pope Caelestine appointed several legates to act as papal representatives, Theodosius appointed his own imperial representative, Candidianus.²⁰ As captain of the imperial body-guard (*κόμης τῶν καθωσιωμένων δομεστίκων*), *comes* Candidianus was charged with maintaining peace and order throughout the synodal proceedings. He was also responsible for removing from the city any monks or laity who were found loitering about hoping to observe the council. These spectators were deemed so potentially disruptive to the smooth running of the council that Theodosius ordered them promptly removed from the city at any time disorder threatened during the gathering of bishops. Candidianus was excluded from all discussions pertaining to doctrine, which matters Theodosius delegated to the bishops alone, 'for it is not lawful that one who is not on the list of holy bishops should meddle in ecclesiastical questions'.²¹

Candidianus' complete exclusion from participation in matters of doctrine, his duties being limited to the police function, was not an innovation of Theodosius. Athanasius, in his history of the Arians, had gone so far as to suggest that the emperor Constantius summon a council entirely free from the presence of the emperor and any of his imperial representatives. A *comes* or magistrate, with his relationship to the imperial court, was thought to hinder a just examination of the doctrinal issues.²² Imperial involvement in doctrinal matters properly within the jurisdiction of the church had produced such enormous problems for Athanasius that he vilified Constantius with the epithet, 'Antichrist' (*ἀντίχριστος*), for 'he claims to himself the right to give judgement, which he refers to the court instead of

²⁰ *Sacra ad synodum per Candidianum* (CPG 8668), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 120–1.

²¹ Ibid. 120 ll. 14–15: ἀθέμιτον γὰρ τὸν μὴ τοῦ καταλόγου τῶν ὁσιωτάτων ἐπισκόπων τυγχάνοντα τοῖς ἐκκλησιαστικοῖς σκέμμασι ἐπιμίγνυσθαι.

²² Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum*, 36 (CPG 2127), Opitz, ii. 203 ll. 15–22.

the church; and he himself presides over these matters'.²³ Though adamant in his prohibition against imperial involvement in ecclesiastical affairs, Athanasius never questioned the right of emperors to convoke a council of bishops.²⁴ Imperial authority to convene an ecumenical gathering of bishops was, indeed, universally recognized during the reign of Constantine, whose letter summoning the first synod of bishops at Nicaea met with widespread compliance.²⁵ The second ecumenical council was similarly convoked by the emperor Theodosius the Great. Imperial prerogative to convoke such councils did not then imply, however, that the emperor presided over the bishops. Not until Zeno at the end of the fifth century, and Justinian in the sixth century, with his condemnation of the *Three Chapters* and other forays into theological speculation, did emperors freely engage in deciding matters of doctrine.²⁶ Although Constantine was a lay participant in discussions during the assembly at Nicaea, he was not considered a voting member of the synod.²⁷ Constantine's biographer Eusebius depicted Constantine as being deferential to episcopal authority, for he obediently stood and awaited the bishops' approval before taking his seat at the final gathering of the council. This portrayal of Constantine is all the more significant in light of the fact that Eusebius generally depicted Constantine in exalted terms, as the earthly representation of the divine Logos.²⁸

By the mid-fourth century, Athanasius' own seemingly end-

²³ Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum*, 76, Opitz, ii. 225 ll. 15–16. *καὶ γὰρ πάλιν ἀντὶ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν εἰς τὰ παλάτια πρὸς ἑαυτὸν τὰς κρίσεις προκαλεῖται. καὶ τούτων μὲν αὐτὸς ἐξάρχει.*

²⁴ Athanasius, *Apologia ad Constantium*, 4 (CPG 2129), *Athanasie d'Alexandrie*, ed. J. M. Szymusiak, 94 ll. 11–19.

²⁵ Socrates, *HE* I. 8, GCS NS I, p. 17 ll. 14–17; Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, 3. 6, I. 44, *Eusebius Werke*, I. I. 83 ll. 18–22; 38 l. 25 to 39 l. 8.

²⁶ F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, 825. In an attempt to reconcile the Chalcedonians with the Miaphysites, Justinian condemned the writings of Theodoret of Cyrillus that had criticized Cyril; the letter of bishop Ibas of Edessa to Maris the Persian, which had likewise criticized Cyril; and the person and writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who had been the teacher of Nestorius.

²⁷ T. D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993), 169.

²⁸ Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini* (BHGa 3612) PG 20. 1324A–B; *Eusebius Werke*, I. 198.

less problems with Constantius had left him little choice than to construct a theory of councils that rendered the emperor virtually powerless in the realm of doctrine, and that elevated the faith of Nicaea to the force of unimpeachable apostolic decree. '[I]f the emperor is really concerned about ecclesiastical peace,' declared Athanasius, '. . . then let an ecclesiastical council be called at a distance from the court, at which the emperor is not present, a count is not admitted, and a magistrate does not threaten [us] . . . but where only the fear of God and the apostolic rule suffices.'²⁹ Such exaggerated notions of episcopal authority held out the promise that the Nicene faith would be secured and the Arian heresy defeated. But Constantine had already established the propriety of imperial incursions into ecclesiastical matters, especially in the procedural initiatives that were designed to ensure safe and peaceful meetings of the council. When faced with the throng of contentious bishops assembled at Nicaea, Constantine urged them to end all dissension in order to reach the unanimous consent of a 'single mind'. Dissension in the church was worse than any other evil, Constantine thought.³⁰ That is why Constantine envisioned his role at Nicaea as the grand facilitator of harmony and peace within the church. He insisted that an accord be reached not by free debate and discussion but through the orderly presentation of a singular body of doctrine to which all parties could readily agree.

As the representative to Theodosius, Candidianus was similarly charged with maintaining discipline within the council proper. The *comes'* physical presence throughout the course of proceedings was meant to ensure that synodal members could engage in peaceful, orderly discussion. Theodosius believed that the proper administration of this imperially sanctioned police function also served the interests of church doctrine, i.e. that the assembled bishops would reach a fair and unanimous decision. Certain procedural mechanisms were at the disposal of Candidianus for protecting the integrity of the conciliar discussions: 'and that each one listening patiently to the speakers will appar-

²⁹ Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum*, 36, Opitz, 203 ll. 15–20. ἀλλ' εἴπερ ἄρα μέλει τῷ βασιλεῖ περὶ τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς εἰρήνης . . . γενέσθω λοιπὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὴ σύνοδος μακρὰν τοῦ παλατίου, ἐν ἣ βασιλεὺς οὐ πάρεσται, οὐ κόμης παραγίνεται, οὐ δικαστῆς ἀπειλεῖ, ἀλλὰ μόνον ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ φόβος ἀρκεῖ καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀποστόλων διάταξις.

³⁰ Sozomen, *HE* I. 19, GCS NS 4, p. 40 ll. 23–7.

ently agree or disagree, and, that everything will be examined according to proposition and refutation, to be decided without any disturbance, and that by a common vote of your Holiness, a non-partisan decision will be reached in a manner pleasing to all'.³¹ Candidianus was also to be responsible for prohibiting any synodal member from leaving the city, or from otherwise abandoning his conciliar duties before the close of proceedings.

A further provision, designed to prevent ancillary disputes from coming before the council, protected the members of the council from being named a party to civil litigation in any of the courts in Ephesus. The only permissible forum for civil charges was the supreme court of Constantinople.³² This must have been a relief to the scores of bishops from around the empire, for any outside bishop drawn into controversy with persons from the city of Ephesus would have found himself at a disadvantage before the provincial courts. Constantine had enacted a similar procedural decree when the council convened at Nicaea.³³ But there, the *conciliar bishops* had presented Constantine with complaints against their fellow bishops, hoping to litigate their grievances in front of the synodal assembly. Exasperated by the mounting pile of documents, Constantine ordered all of them to be burned, compelling the aggrieved parties to reconcile their other differences so that the doctrinal controversy before the council might receive their full attention.

THE DEPOSITION OF NESTORIUS

The hardships of travel for the Syrian bishops under the direction of John of Antioch produced a host of problems, the repercussions of which would affect the very foundations of the

³¹ *Sacra ad synodum per Candidianum* (CPG 8668), *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 120 ll. 22–5, ἀνεξικάκως δὲ τῶν λεγομένων ἕκαστον ἀκροώμενον προστιθέναι τὸ δοκοῦν ἢ ἀντιτιθέναι καὶ οὕτως πᾶσαν κατὰ πρότασίν τε καὶ λύσιν τὴν περὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς δόγματος ἔρευναν δίχα τινὸς ταραχῆς διακριθῆναι καὶ κοινῇ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀγιότητος ψήφῳ ἀστασιάστον τε καὶ τὸν πᾶσιν ἀρέσκοντα τύπον λαβεῖν. For a different view of the process of conciliar debate, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 70, in which McGuckin downplays the importance of debate in resolving doctrinal disputes in the early Byzantine church.

³² *Sacra ad synodum per Candidianum*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 121 ll. 9–16.

³³ Socrates, *HE*. I. 8, GCS NS I, p. 20 ll. 9–12; Sozomen, *HE* I. 17, GCS NS 4, p. 37 l. 8 to 40 l. 14.

conciliar process. Expecting to arrive by the appointed day of Pentecost, John and his entourage of bishops walked from Syria for thirty days without proper rest, an arduous journey that left several bishops ill and many horses dead. Knowing that John and his bishops were somewhere in the vicinity of Ephesus, Cyril and the rest of the metropolitan bishops awaited their arrival. Well past the designated date of Pentecost, the assembled bishops received the following message from John through two of his colleagues: 'If I am late, do what you have to do.'

On 22 June 431, without the presence of the Syrian bishops, Cyril and 154 bishops 'did what they had to do' and began the first session of the council. Held in the Church of St Mary, the council proceeded under the auspices of Theodosius II, consistent with the long tradition assigning sole authority to the emperor to convoke a conciliar gathering. From the very start, however, Cyril made known that pope Caelestine had appointed him as his local representative, a fact clearly recorded in the transcript to the conciliar acts.³⁴ Claiming both papal and imperial approval, therefore, Cyril initiated the opening ceremonies of the gathering of bishops, while John and the rest of the Syrian bishops were still nowhere in sight.

Peter, a priest of Alexandria, served as the secretary for the council. Appointed by Cyril, Peter produced a written version of the acts that was clearly partisan, for it was designed to present a record of events that would eventually withstand imperial scrutiny.³⁵ But, as the only extant account of conciliar proceedings at Ephesus, Peter's written transcripts, which were later transmitted by various manuscripts, remain the most significant historical source for reconstructing the events of the council.

Peter testified first before the assembled clergy and bishops. He told the synodal members that the matter they were assembled to discuss began when some of Nestorius' exegetical interpretations were brought from Constantinople to Alex-

³⁴ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I* (22 Iun. 431) (CPG 8675), *ACO I. I. 2*, p. 3. Κυρίλλου Ἀλεξανδρείας, διέποντος καὶ τὸν τόπον τοῦ ἀγνωτάτου καὶ ὀσιωτάτου ἀρχιεπισκόπου τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας Κελεστίνου. 'Cyril of Alexandria, acting as a representative for the most holy and pious archbishop of the church of Rome, Caelestine.'

³⁵ de Halleux, 'La première session du concile d'Éphèse', 50. See also McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 76.

andria. These interpretations were said to have disturbed those who read them to such an extent that confusion enveloped the churches of Alexandria and beyond.³⁶ When Cyril learned of the theological problems that troubled his congregation of churches, said Peter, he, Cyril, wrote two letters to bishop Nestorius advising and exhorting him to withdraw his views, but that Nestorius ignored them because he was unwilling to comply with the terms Cyril set forth. Once Cyril discovered that Nestorius had sent to Rome several of his letters and books of exegesis, Cyril promptly wrote to Posidonius, pope Caelestine's deacon, enclosing a letter to the pope and requesting that it be forwarded to him. Pope Caelestine responded appropriately with several letters, Peter remarked, one of which contained a judicial decree. Soon afterwards, the will (*νεῦμα*) of the emperor convened the present gathering of bishops to address the theological issues raised in this exchange of letters. Thus were the undisputed facts of the case presented within the broader ecclesiastical context of pope Caelestine's approval.

Building upon such claims of Roman support, Cyril then suggested that Nestorius had already been justly condemned by a papal decree issued on 10 August 430. Perhaps he had forgotten that Theodosius had attempted to nullify the pope's earlier judgement by declaring that the future synodal gathering would decide all contested matters of doctrine.³⁷ Chastising Cyril for his aggressive manipulation of ecclesiastical affairs, Theodosius had told Cyril to participate in the proceedings not by leading them but as one willing to learn from an ecumenical gathering of bishops whose collective expertise was commanded to determine exactly the one, true faith. Ignoring these imperial guidelines, Cyril had ensconced himself as president of the synodal assembly.³⁸ Wielding their papal decree, Cyril and Peter of Alexandria

³⁶ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 71. 34 to 81. 15.

³⁷ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad singulos metropolitans (CPG 8651), ACO I. I. 1*, p. 115 ll. 26–32.

³⁸ For the view that Cyril could legitimately claim the canonical right to serve as the president of the council, See McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 74. My account suggests, however, that Cyril's presidency, even if technically supported by canonical law, allowed Cyril to control the course of proceedings to such an extent as to render the council contrary to the spirit of Theodosius' imperial decrees.

therefore violated the process for conciliar decision-making that the emperor envisioned.

All the same, when Cyril and the rest of the synodal bishops officially read into the record the emperor's *Sacra* convening the assembly of bishops, they claimed to have received imperial endorsement of their proceedings.³⁹ A straightforward assertion of Theodosius' imperial theology, the *Sacra* affirmed the close relationship between the proper expression of piety and the prosperity of the state. An ecumenical gathering of bishops would produce the unanimity and concord necessary for peace, security, and an ecclesiastical establishment free from riots and seditions, said Theodosius.

The emperor had clearly mandated that the bishops arrive punctually, and yet the Antiochene delegation had failed to appear. Sixteen days had already passed since the date appointed by letter, and Cyril informed the assembled bishops that the council was tired of waiting. Many of the bishops had fallen ill, some had died, and the time had come for the disputed matters of faith to receive their proper consideration. That Cyril was aware of his procedural irregularity is apparent from his having offered a justification for it. Cyril then asked the *comes* Candidianus to read the second imperial *Sacra* to the council. He thereby committed an even more pernicious procedural violation.⁴⁰ The emperor had wished to resolve the escalating controversy by a common vote of bishops before doctrinal differences threatened the very foundations of the state. But Cyril's reading the *Sacra* into the conciliar record without the presence of the Antiochene bishops flouted imperial authority. It was a procedural anomaly of such striking proportions that the very status and legitimacy of the conciliar proceedings were ultimately called into question.

Cyril believed that the second imperial *Sacra* demanded the prompt and timely resolution of the disputed doctrine.⁴¹ But he was mistaken, for this *Sacra* was concerned with establishing procedural guidelines for maintaining proper order. It said nothing about convening the invited bishops in a timely

³⁹ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 8 ll. 21-3.*

⁴⁰ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad singulos metropolitas, ACO I. I. 1, p. 115 ll. 22-3; Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 8 l. 29 to 9 l. 5.*

⁴¹ *Sacra ad synodum per Candidianum (CPG 8668), ACO I. I. 1, p. 120-1. Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 9 ll. 2-5.*

fashion. All the same, Candidianus obediently read it into the record. In fact, its final paragraph, indicating that the imperial representative Irenaeus should accompany Nestorius to the council, expressed unambiguously the emperor's wish to resolve the ecclesiastical dispute with all parties present, especially his bishop Nestorius.⁴² Theodotus of Ancyra affirmed the emperor's wish, saying, 'Nestorius should take part in the proceedings so that the matters of piety be decided from a common resolve and agreement.'⁴³ None the less, Nestorius was notably absent from the conciliar proceedings.

He was in Ephesus, however. He had delivered some controversial sermons soon after his arrival, and they had angered several of the synodal bishops. To make matters even worse, he repeatedly refused invitations to appear before the majority council. Several bishops testified that they had three times summoned Nestorius to attend the council, thereby acting in strict accordance with ecclesiastical law. Theopemptus, bishop of Cabasa, reported that when, with a written message in hand, he and some of the conciliar bishops arrived at Nestorius' house to ask him to join the proceedings, a crowd of soldiers prevented them from entering. Yet Nestorius did write to the delegation that he would join the proceedings only after all the invited bishops had arrived.⁴⁴ That brief response was the only reply to their summonses that the majority synod ever received from the bishop of Constantinople. Although Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, was willing to give Nestorius a fourth chance to comply with their summons, he too was unsuccessful, for once again the soldiers prevented any communication with the sequestered bishop.⁴⁵ Nestorius' failure to comply with the conciliar summons offered the Cyrillian party such compelling evidence of the bishop's recalcitrant nature that they no longer considered it necessary to issue him any further invitations.

Once before, Cyril had participated in synodal proceedings without the accused party present. Theophilus, accompanied by

⁴² *Sacra ad synodum per Candidianum*. ACO I. I. 1, p. 121 ll. 12–16.

⁴³ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I*. ACO I. I. 2, p. 9 ll. 6–8. *νῦν μέντοι ἀκόλουθόν ἐστι τοῖς πραττομένοις συνέναι καὶ τὸν θεοφιλέστατον ἐπίσκοπον Νεστόριον, ὥστε τὰ τῆς εὐσεβείας στήναι ἐκ κοινῆς γνώμης καὶ συναρέσεως*. [lit.]: For now it follows that the most pious bishop Nestorius, etc. [as above]

⁴⁴ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 10 ll. 17–30.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 12 ll. 17–27.

Cyril, had similarly instituted synodal proceedings against John Chrysostom with the acquiescence of the emperor Arcadius. When Theophilus arrived at the appointed destination of Chalcedon in Bithynia, he received the co-operation and support of several bishops, including many of those deposed by Chrysostom in Ephesus during the ordination and installation of Heraclides.⁴⁶ Cyrinus, then bishop of Chalcedon, was also an ardent critic of Chrysostom, and disparagingly named him 'the impious' (*ἀσεβής*) 'the braggart' (*ἀλαζών*), and 'inexorable' (*ἀγόνατος*), thereby pleasing the bishops congregated in the city. When these enemies of Chrysostom gathered at Chalcedon, they crossed over to Constantinople, and Theophilus took up residence at one of the imperial mansions. Soon after, Chrysostom received a torrent of accusations that included several new, though unfounded, charges, Origenism not being among them. To settle these mounting grievances, the bishops convened at 'The Oak' (*Δρῦς*), one of the suburbs of Chalcedon, and immediately summoned Chrysostom to answer the charges brought against him. Unwilling to comply, Chrysostom claimed that only his enemies were congregated against him, and he requested that a general council evaluate the matter in a non-partisan forum. Four times the angry bishops repeated their citation, but Chrysostom always delivered the same response. The synodal assembly cited his procedural violation in failing to answer their summons when they deposed him from the bishopric of the Imperial City.⁴⁷ Cyril, who was probably present at these proceedings, learned the valuable lesson that procedural violations, including the failure to answer a summons, were sufficient to condemn and depose a political enemy.

Similarities abound in the events involving the two Antiochene bishops. Both Nestorius and Chrysostom were installed as bishop of the Imperial City by their respective emperors. And like Chrysostom, who had also occupied the episcopal throne of Constantinople, Nestorius adamantly refused to appear at a partisan gathering of bishops.

But there were also differences. Although Nestorius' refusal to answer the conciliar summons did not hinder Cyril's party from

⁴⁶ Socrates, *HE* 6. 15, GCS NS 1, p. 336 l. 19 to 337 l. 2.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 337 l. 2 to 338 l. 13; Sozomen, *HE* 8. 17, GCS NS 4, p. 371 l. 15 to 373 l. 5.

proceeding with a one-sided investigation into the doctrinal charges raised against him, Theophilus and his followers had failed to reach any synodal determination on the host of substantive charges raised against Chrysostom. They based their deposition of Chrysostom on his violation of conciliar procedure, which he committed by refusing three times to answer the synodal summons. Rather than render the substantive issues null and void, as Theophilus had done years earlier, Cyril examined the doctrinal issues raised against Nestorius. His investigation was undoubtedly made simpler by the absence of the defendant and his Antiochene colleagues.

Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, justified the council's *ex parte* examination of the substantive doctrine by taking refuge in a technicality of ecclesiastical law. Nestorius' failure to answer a synodal summons constituted bad faith, said Juvenal, since the corps of soldiers that surrounded his house had prevented the synodal bishops from dealing directly with him.⁴⁸ That said, Juvenal read into the conciliar record the Nicene Symbol of Faith, 'defined by the 318 holy fathers and bishops united at Nicaea'. The Nicene Symbol had already been established as the only true ecumenical statement of faith by Athanasius, as the Council of Constantinople confirmed in 381. According to Juvenal's theory of councils, the Nicene Symbol of Faith served as the touchstone of orthodoxy for the Cyrillian majority. The standard by which Nestorius' writings would be judged as being within or beyond the bounds of doctrinal legitimacy was therefore that of Nicaea. Once the entire Symbol of Faith was read into the record, Peter of Alexandria presented the second letter Cyril had written to Nestorius, which Acacius of Melitene promptly introduced into the synodal acts.⁴⁹ Cyril's lucid account of his teaching placed his Alexandrian Christology within the context of the Nicene Symbol of Faith. That the Word of God was 'incarnate' and 'became human' implied that the Word was united to flesh, which was endowed with a rational soul, having formed a true union, mysteriously and inconceivably, explained Cyril.⁵⁰ This brief exegesis of two definitive terms 'to

⁴⁸ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 12 ll. 17-27.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 13 ll. 8-25.

⁵⁰ *Epistula ii Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium (CPG 5304), ACO I. I. 1, p. 26 l. 23 to 27 l. 5.*

be incarnate' (σαρκωθῆναι) and 'to become human' (ἐνανθρωπήσαι) extracted from the Nicene creed was unanimously affirmed by each of the synodal members, who agreed that Cyril's Christology was consistent with the precepts defined at Nicaea.

Palladius of Amaseia then requested that Nestorius' response to Cyril be read into the record.⁵¹ Concerned mostly with preserving the immutable and impassive essence of God the Word, Nestorius' letter attempted to explicate and elucidate St Paul's vision of a Christ who somehow remained impassive in Godhead but passive in his bodily nature. Christ's dual nature accounted for these contradicting qualities according to Nestorius, as the words of sacred text demonstrated especially in the various titles for Christ that Paul had used. While the term 'Christ' embraced the conjunction of the natures, Nestorius claimed that each of Paul's other titles for Christ, including 'Lord', 'Jesus', 'Son', and 'Only Begotten', corresponded to only one of the two distinct natures conjoined in Christ.⁵² That is how Nestorius had explicated his Antiochene Christology, by which he attempted to demonstrate that the words of Scripture unambiguously supported this dual-nature vision of Christ. While Cyril adhered to the Symbol of Nicaea, placing his Christology within its synodal decrees, Nestorius preferred the context of Scripture. In the process, he may have secured his own demise.

After Palladius introduced Nestorius' letter, Cyril asked whether Nestorius' doctrine conformed to the Symbol of Faith set forth by the fathers at Nicaea.⁵³ As president of the council, Cyril was able to shape its views. He thus presented a theory of councils that he had developed from his repeated borrowing of Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse early in his episcopacy and throughout the exchange of treatises prior to the council: the assembled bishops need only consider whether the doctrine being examined was consistent with that of Nicaea. It was a theory whose precedent was the Second Ecumenical Council,

⁵¹ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 31 ll. 6–13.*

⁵² *Epistula ii Nestorii ad Cyrillum Alex. (Iunio 430) (CPG 5669), ACO I. I. 1, p. 29 l. 27 to 30 l. 14.*

⁵³ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 31 ll. 14–17. ἄρα φαίνεται καὶ αὐτῇ σύμφωνος εἶναι τῇ ὀρισθείσῃ πίστει ἐν τῇ συνόδῳ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων τῶν κατὰ καιροὺς συνειλεγμένων ἐν τῇ Νικαίῳ πόλει ἢ οὐ;* 'Does it seem that it [i.e. the letter] is consistent with the faith defined in the synod of the holy fathers that gathered formerly in the city of Nicaea, or not?'

held in Constantinople in 381. But that conciliar theory had nothing to do with Nestorius' argument. He had developed his Christology by arguing from Scripture, using very little of the language from Nicaea. His method of arguing was therefore at odds with this test for orthodoxy that the council proposed. When asked whether Nestorius' letter conformed to the Nicene Symbol of Faith, every one of the synodal members assembled at Ephesus, most of whom were partisans of Cyril, answered with a resounding 'no.' Nestorius' letter displayed a strange and innovative doctrine, different (*ἀλλότριος*) from that of the orthodox faith, said the council.⁵⁴ The bishops unanimously approved this assertion, as they all exclaimed that Nestorius and his writings were anathematized, along with anyone in communion with him.⁵⁵

At the request of Juvenal of Jerusalem, Peter read into the record pope Caelestine's letter to Nestorius, in which the pope had repeated the sentence of the Roman synod, urging Nestorius to desist from his wrongful doctrines and to follow the teachings of Cyril, or else suffer the dire consequences of deposition and excommunication.⁵⁶ Next Peter introduced Cyril's third letter to Nestorius, which incorporated the findings of the synod held in Alexandria, that had condemned Nestorius a second time for having preached his doctrines to the congregation of churches.⁵⁷ Filled with the language and discourse of Nicaea, Cyril's third letter also contained the twelve anathemas against Nestorius.⁵⁸ In them, Cyril stated his disagreement with Nestorius and the Antiochene school, including his view that the divine and human natures of Christ were truly united in a natural union (*ἐνωσις*

⁵⁴ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 31 ll. 18–20.

⁵⁵ Cyril immediately secured the signatures of 197 bishops. I explore how Cyril was able to persuade so many people, during the conciliar proceedings and later, to support his cause. See McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 88, who notes that the support for Cyril was extraordinary.

⁵⁶ *Epistula Caelestini papae ad Nestorium* (judgement of Roman synod) (10 Aug. 430. Nestorio tradita est 30 Nou. 430) (CPG [8639]), *ACO I. 2*, pp. 7–12; *Versio graeca, ACO I. I. 1*, pp. 77–83. *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 36 ll. 8–10.

⁵⁷ *Epistula iii (synodica) Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium* (CPG 5317), *ACO I. I. 1*, pp. 33–42. *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 36 ll. 22–5.

⁵⁸ See D. Bertrand, 'Der Anathematismus XII im Glauben des Cyrill von Alexandrien', *Theologische Quartalschrift* 4 (1908), 311–26; L. R. Wickham, 'Cyrill von Alexandrien', *ibid.* 264–71.

φυσικῆ), and that the scriptural sayings attributed to Jesus should not be divided between two persons. Although these anathemas were controversial for years to come because Cyril's opponents found in their repeated affirmation of a singular Christ teachings consistent with those of the Apollinarians, the synodal members gathered at Ephesus had no interest in subjecting Cyril's doctrine to such close scrutiny. They were satisfied merely to demonstrate that Cyril's third letter followed closely the sentence of deposition decreed by the pope. Once the synodal members determined that Nestorius had, in fact, received the letter from Cyril's representatives, only one question remained: did Nestorius comply with the demands stated in the letter? According to Theopemptus, bishop of Cabasa, when Nestorius received the document, he agreed to meet with Cyril's representatives the very next day. But when the bishops returned at the appointed time, Nestorius refused their entry, and displayed so little regard for the contents of Cyril's letter that he repeated in church the same doctrines that both synods of bishops assembled in Rome and in Alexandria had already condemned.⁵⁹

Fidus, bishop of Joppa, also claimed that Nestorius continued to preach his controversial doctrines. In the presence of Theodotus of Ancyra and Acacius of Melitene, Nestorius addressed several bishops on 20 June 431.⁶⁰ What Nestorius said in his letters, claimed bishop Theodotus, he repeated in his sermons preached to the bishops awaiting the meeting of the council, namely, that one should not speak of lactation or generation from a Virgin with respect to God. A more blatant contempt for Christ's divinity occurred, said bishop Theodotus, when Nestorius also declared that God was not an infant 2 or 3 months old.⁶¹ Acacius, bishop of Melitene, provided further testimony against Nestorius, even though he held himself to be a friend and supporter of Nestorius.⁶² When he had arrived in Ephesus, he freely conversed with Nestorius, who was in a quarrelsome mood. Acacius tried to extricate his colleague from the pernicious doctrines evident in his speech. Although Nestorius eventually

⁵⁹ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 37 ll. 8–22.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* ll. 23–7. Fidus of Joppa believed that Nestorius' doctrine was similar to that of the heretic Paul of Samosata. *Ibid.* 34 ll. 10–13.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 38 ll. 4–12.

⁶² *Ibid.* 13–30.

agreed to change his mind, by the time Acacius spoke with him ten or twelve days later, Nestorius had already opposed the 'doctrine of truth'. According to Acacius, Nestorius either denied that the deity of the Only Begotten had been incarnated, or he professed that the deity of the Father and Holy Spirit became flesh along with the Word. Acacius further testified that one of Nestorius' colleagues declared in another discussion that the Son who suffered the passion was different from God the Word, while another claimed that the Jews committed impiety not against the deity but only against the humanity of Christ. Disgusted by this blasphemy, Acacius departed from the gathering.

Peter of Alexandria then introduced into the record a *florilegium* of patristic sources that the Cyrillian party had compiled.⁶³ The works of Athanasius were well represented. Athanasius' letter to Epictetus inveighed against the heretics who claimed that the Word came into a holy man as into one of the prophets, that he did not become a man when he took the body from Mary, and that the Christ was one thing, the Word of God another.⁶⁴ The introduction of Athanasius' anti-heretical writings lent further legitimacy to the testimony against Nestorius. That Nestorius probably did not mean what Acacius claimed seemed scarcely relevant to the bishops, who seemed already to have decided that the Antiochene Christology of Christ's dual nature seriously compromised the integrity of the Incarnation. Athanasius himself had declared that the Word became man and appropriated the qualities of flesh in order to ensure the immortality of human beings. And throughout the monastic communities of Egypt this same soteriological vision had found unwavering acceptance.

Gregory of Nazianzus was also well represented in this collection of patristic excerpts. 'Whoever supposes Mary is not *Theotokos*', wrote Gregory, 'is separate from the Divinity.'⁶⁵ But

⁶³ The patristic *florilegium* included sources from the following: Peter, bishop and martyr; Athanasius of Alexandria; Julius, bishop of Rome (= Timotheus Apollinarista); Felix, bishop of Rome (= Fragmentum Apollinaristicum); Theophilus of Alexandria; Cyprian; Ambrose; Gregory of Nazianzus; Basil of Caesarea; Gregory of Nyssa.

⁶⁴ Athanasius, *Ad Epictetum*, 2. 7, cited in *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I.* 2, p. 40 ll. 15-31.

⁶⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, cited in *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I.* 2, p. 43 l. 18. *Ἐἴ τις οὐ θεοτόκον τὴν Μαρίαν ὑπολαμβάνει, χωρὶς ἐστὶ τῆς θεότητος.*

Gregory's teachings on the dual nature of Christ were less a condemnation of Nestorius than a potential resolution of the doctrinal problems. He had said that if someone speaks of two sons, one from God, the other from Mary, that person 'departs from the adoption promised to orthodox believers'.⁶⁶ Rejecting the notion of two sons, which Antiochene and Alexandrian Christology alike found problematical, Gregory affirmed the two natures in Christ, namely God and man, a distinction that was analogous in Gregory's view to that of body and soul.⁶⁷ Even though the atemporal was thought to be diametrically opposed to the temporal, and the invisible to the visible, Gregory believed that both natures of Christ were one in mixture (*ἐν τῇ συγκράσει*), for God was incarnate and man was deified. His dual-nature vision of Christ differed from that of Nestorius. It was none the less a potential middle ground upon which to conduct a reasoned debate, and it provided a glimmer of hope for a future reconciliation between the opposing parties.⁶⁸

The synodal members gathered at Ephesus, however, were more interested in an outright condemnation of Nestorius, absent though he was. And once excerpts from Nestorius' own writings were introduced into the record, such a condemnation would have even greater authority. Peter of Alexandria thereupon read into the proceedings a compendium of such excerpts that Peter called 'the blasphemies of Nestorius'.⁶⁹ Among them was Nestorius' fourth book on dogma, an exegetical elaboration, based on Scripture, of his dual-nature Christology. In it Nestorius said that whenever Scripture describes generation from the Virgin, it states that 'God sent his Son', not that 'God sent the Word', for Scripture uses the term that designates the duality of natures. Since the Son is both man and God, thought Nestorius, Scripture uses the phrase 'He sent His Son' to refer to the deity, adding the phrase 'born of a woman' to refer to his

⁶⁶ Idem, *ibid.* ll. 24–33. *τῆς υἰοθεσίας ἐκπέσοι τῆς ἐπηγγελμένης τοῖς ὀρθῶς πιστεύουσιν.*

⁶⁷ Idem, *ibid.* l. 26. *φύσεις μὲν γὰρ δύο θεὸς καὶ ἄνθρωπος, ἐπεὶ καὶ ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα· υἱοὶ δὲ οὐ δύο οὐδὲ θεοί.* 'For there are two natures, God and humanity, since there is both soul and body. But there are neither two sons nor two Gods.'

⁶⁸ Of course, Nestorius preferred to keep the conjunction of natures unmixed. See *ibid.* 48 l. 12. *Ἀσύγχυτον τοῖνυν τὴν τῶν φύσεων τηρῶμεν συνάφειαν* 'Therefore we keep the conjunction of natures unmixed.'

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 45 ll. 4–6.

humanity, thereby designating unambiguously the two natures implied by the term 'Son'. Thus the Christ-bearing Virgin bore the Son of God, namely, the Son whose dual nature allowed her to bear only the humanity of Christ. In Nestorius' view, that generation from the Virgin ultimately became Son of God by conjunction with the deity.⁷⁰ This way of interpreting Scripture enabled him to draw fine distinctions among the epithets for Christ. He apparently believed that each epithet, whether 'Christ', 'Lord', 'Only Begotten', or 'Son', demanded the careful exegesis he provided, because every scriptural word was thought to contain a fullness of meaning and signification.

Like Gregory of Nazianzus, Nestorius abhorred a 'two Sons' doctrine, a fact he made clear in his fourth book on dogma (included in the Nestorian *florilegium* introduced into the Acts) when he said, after the Incarnation, the Son who had been separated could not be called 'Son', 'lest we teach two Sons'.⁷¹ Before the Incarnation, however, God the Word was understood to be both Son and God, united with the Father; while after the Assumption into flesh, the humanity was not deemed 'Son', a designation reserved solely for the dual nature of Christ. Determined to preserve the immutability of the Godhead, along with the full humanity of Christ, Nestorius defended his two-nature doctrine by citing the authority of the scriptural text. He did not in any sense endorse the aberrant doctrine of 'two Sons'. At least, so Nestorius claimed when he wrote that the one, joined to him who was Son in principle, could not admit division because of the honour of Sonship.⁷² 'I say according to the honor of Sonship,' reiterated Nestorius, 'not according to the natures (κατὰ τὸ ἀξίωμα φημι τῆς υἰότητος, οὐ κατὰ τὰς φύσεις).'⁷³ Unwilling to recognize two Sons, Nestorius nevertheless maintained his dual-nature distinction. For him, the appellation 'Christ' designated the two natures, and for that reason was applicable to God

⁷⁰ Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 273 l. 18 to 274 l. 17. Cited in *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 45 ll. 9–21.

⁷¹ Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 275 ll. 1–11. Cited *ibid.* 48 ll. 4–10.

⁷² *Ibid.* ll. 7–9: ἀλλ' ἐπειδήπερ ἐκείνω συνήπται τῷ ἐν ἀρχῇ ὄντι υἱῷ τῷ πρὸς αὐτὸν συναφθέντι, οὐ δύναται κατὰ τὸ ἀξίωμα τῆς υἰότητος διαίρεσιν δέξασθαι . . . 'But since he was joined to that one who was son in principle, the one who had been joined to him, he was not able to admit division according to the honour of sonship . . .'

⁷³ *Ibid.* l. 9.

the Word, since the deity is continuously joined with the Christ. Indeed, the words 'Christ', 'Son', and 'Lord' each signified the two natures, at one time the deity, at another the humanity, and sometimes both at once, said Nestorius.⁷⁴

This theological discussion, however, did not persuade the bishops assembled at Ephesus. After Peter read the Nestorian *florilegium*, Flavian, bishop of Philippi, exclaimed that the words of Nestorius were terrible and blasphemous, and that each of them should be inserted into the Acts in order to secure his condemnation. But first Peter inserted into the proceedings a letter from Capreolus, bishop of Carthage, that his son the deacon Bessoulas had delivered. This letter would normally have been placed at the beginning of the Acts,⁷⁵ for Capreolus had been asked to attend the council to stand in the stead of Augustine, whose death Theodosius had been unaware of when he had sent out his invitations. Vandals had entered the province of Africa and produced such widespread destruction and desolation that the ensuing war in Africa prevented any contingent of African bishops from attending the council. That is why Theodosius' letter convening the council did not arrive until Easter, 19 April 431, too late, even under the best of circumstances, for the African bishops to attend a synodal gathering. Along with that excuse, Capreolus imparted this advice for the council, that any and all innovations of doctrine be carefully examined, and that the established faith of the holy fathers be dutifully maintained.⁷⁶ The synodal members exclaimed in unison, 'We all agree.'

Nestorius was then officially deposed, the council declaring that he disobeyed their summons and refused to receive the synodal bishops at the episcopal palace. The decision was based on evidence adduced from Nestorius' writings, letters, and sermons he had recently delivered in the city of Ephesus,

⁷⁴ Ibid. 51 ll. 18–22. τὸ γὰρ Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ κύριος, ἐπὶ τοῦ μονογενοῦς παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς λαμβανόμενον, τῶν φύσεων ἐστὶ τῶν δύο σημαντικὸν καὶ ποτὲ μὲν δηλοῦν τὴν θεότητα, ποτὲ δὲ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, ποτὲ δὲ ἀμφότερα . . . 'For 'Christ', 'Son', and 'Lord', which are assumed by Scripture for the only begotten, signify two natures, sometimes designating the deity, sometimes the humanity, and sometimes both . . .' See generally, E. Khalifé, 'La Personne et la doctrine de Nestorius jugées au concile d'Éphèse', *Istina* 43 (1998), 214–20.

⁷⁵ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 52 ll. 12–15.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 52–4.

through all of which the council had examined Nestorius' doctrine. They claimed that the ecclesiastical canons and the synodal decree of pope Caelestine in Rome had compelled them to reach their sentence of deposition. The sentence was immediately assented to by the 197 bishops gathered at this first session of the conciliar proceedings.⁷⁷ The authority of pope Caelestine was also invoked in sentencing Nestorius. Cyril had astutely courted the pope throughout the controversy in the firm belief that Roman support promised him the legitimacy he needed to defeat Nestorius. Even though Theodosius had discredited the authority of the Roman synod convened the summer before, Cyril was still determined to invoke that authority in this official condemnation of his rival. Rome had never recognized the canons promulgated at the Council of Constantinople in 381, which declared that the see of Constantinople, with its proximity to imperial power, was second only to that of Rome. In Caelestine's view, Alexandria thus retained a dignity equal to that of the imperial see. Merely by corresponding with the pope, Cyril implicitly invoked that dignity. Receiving support from Rome was meant to deliver to Cyril all the credentials necessary to win this battle against his adversary and to convince the emperor that Nestorius was indeed the insidious heretic that Cyril claimed.

To secure that victory, Cyril needed to show the emperor that the council members had adhered to certain procedural guidelines. Although he had arguably violated one of them by starting the council before the Antiochenes arrived, Cyril generally followed the procedures Constantine had informally set at the Council of Nicaea a century before. Following the senatorial model in some pertinent respects, according to the modern scholar Dvornik, Constantine had convoked the bishops just as he had the senators, for he 'presided at the sessions of the council as he presided over the Senate, and after making his *relatio* (report), called upon the members to state their points of

⁷⁷ See *Sententia contra Nestorium cum subscriptionibus*, *ibid.* 54 ll. 16–25. See also *Nestorii depositio ad eum missa a concilio* (CPG 8676), *ACO I. I. 2*, p. 64. *Versio latina*, *ACO I. 3*, p. 83. See de Halleux, 'Nestorius: Histoire et Doctrine', *Irenikon* 66/1 (1993), 38–51; *ibid.* 66/2 (1993), 163–77, for the view that Nestorius' 'heresy' had not been set forth in precise terms, and that the ecclesiastical procedure by which Nestorius was deposed was unjust.

view (*sententiam rogare*).⁷⁸ Emperors such as Constantine, already inured to the limitation of their power in the secular sphere because of their circumscribed function in the Senate, apparently accepted their narrower role in ecclesiastical affairs as well.⁷⁹ Constantine was, therefore, already prepared to exclude himself from the process of theological decision-making. And even though he was prepared to exercise his right to convoke the conciliar sessions, he never declared himself a voting member of the synod. Theodosius assumed an even more limited role than Constantine had. Absent from the council and removed from the substantive discussions, Theodosius served primarily as a facilitator for the conciliar proceedings. By paying careful attention to conciliar procedure, he hoped to guarantee a just and impartial determination of the doctrinal problems besetting the churches.

The several procedures that Cyril and his partisans followed were: having the imperial decree read convening the council, introducing the Symbol of Nicaea, and, establishing thereby the doctrinal standard for evaluating Nestorius' dogmatic claims. For their part, the bishops gathered for the council believed that the documents read into the record clearly demonstrated that Cyril followed the teachings of Nicaea and that Nestorius plainly opposed them. Again Dvornik notes that even the decrees of the Roman Senate had been confirmed by the emperors before becoming imperial law, and the decrees proposed by the Council of Ephesus were no different.⁸⁰ But Cyril and his followers believed that paying attention to procedure would convince the emperor that a fair conciliar trial had taken place, in spite of the procedural violation Cyril had committed at the start of the council. To that end, he produced a conciliar record that seemed to comply with the requirements of procedural exactitude necessary for the emperor to confirm the sentence of the council.

⁷⁸ Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, 641.

⁷⁹ F. Dvornik, 'The Authority of the State in the Oecumenical Councils', *The Christian East* 14 (1934), 104.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 106.

BOTH SIDES PRESENT THEIR CASE

Nestorius received notice of his deposition *in absentia* the following day, 23 June 431. How Nestorius reacted to the council's declaration that he was 'alien (*ἀλλότριος*) from every ecclesiastical dignity', because of his impious teachings and disobedience to the ecclesiastical canons, can only be surmised.⁸¹ As for the people of Ephesus, we know from Cyril's report to his congregation in Alexandria that when they heard of Nestorius' deposition, after a day-long vigil, they blessed the council and praised God for condemning this 'enemy of the orthodox faith'. And after the synodal members left the church, Cyril said that the people accompanied the conciliar bishops with torches, that women preceded them with incense until they reached their lodging, and that everyone generally rejoiced and illuminated the city.⁸² Such a jubilant response from the people of Ephesus must have convinced Cyril and his 'more than 200 bishops', that their sentence of deposition would meet with widespread approval. All the same, the conciliar letter to the clergy and people of Constantinople was decidedly more circumspect, as Cyril and the conciliar members attempted to justify Nestorius' deposition to the people of his diocese. The council charged that Nestorius' refusal to face his accusers amounted to an admission of guilt, while his failure to respond to the conciliar summons was a clear violation of ecclesiastical law. They claimed that Nestorius' absence from the proceedings posed no problem of conciliar procedure but merely confirmed the appropriateness of his condemnation.⁸³ To the presbyters and administrators of the church of Constantinople, Lamprotatus and Eucharius, the council wrote of the practical consequences of Nestorius' deposition. The synodal bishops urged them to attend to the affairs of the church in order to render an account to the next elected bishop.⁸⁴ Written the same day as Nestorius' notice of deposi-

⁸¹ *Nestorii depositio ad eum missa a concilio*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 64.

⁸² *Epistula Cyrilli ad clerum populumque Alexandrinum* (CPG 5324), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 117–18.

⁸³ *Epistula synodi ad clerum populumque (CPolitanum?)* (CPG 8678), ACO I. I. 2, p. 70.

⁸⁴ *Epistula synodi ad Lamprotatum et Eucharium presb. et oekonomos eccl. CPolitanæ ceterosque clericos ibidem* (CPG 8677), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 64–5.

tion, the letter said in plain terms that Nestorius was deposed because of his heretical doctrines and his disobedience to ecclesiastical law. The council asserted that the deposition had the force of ecclesiastical law because it was given by a council of bishops assembled under the auspices of imperial authority, thereby rendering their decision legitimate and consistent with conciliar process.

Cyril was very interested in persuading the archimandrite Dalmatius, along with several bishops and presbyters, that he had conducted the council according to the principles of fair and just conciliar procedure.⁸⁵ As the leader of a monastery numbering several hundred, Dalmatius was a powerful figure whose influence reached as far as the imperial family. Cyril courted his support. At stake for Cyril was justifying the procedural anomaly he had committed by his convening an ecumenical council without the presence of the opposing bishops. The circumstances were unusual enough that they demanded reasoned justification from Cyril. He thus wrote to Dalmatius that he, Cyril, had obeyed the imperial decree and arrived well before the appointed date, only to find that John of Antioch was still en route; that he waited sixteen days before receiving the message from several of John's colleagues, 'If I am late, do what you have to do'; and that Cyril therefore convened the council of bishops in the Church of St Mary on 22 June 431. He reported to Dalmatius all the rest of the pertinent events,⁸⁶ including the fact that Nestorius' own colleague, John of Antioch, had blamed Nestorius for introducing new dogmas into the church. Eager to defend his actions, Cyril insisted that John had urged him to begin the conciliar proceedings before his arrival, but then later condemned Cyril for following this command. John of Antioch had not attended the council, said Cyril, because he was reluctant to see his colleague deposed by a council of bishops.

⁸⁵ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Comarium et Potamonem episc. et Dalmatium archimandritam et Timotheum et Eulogium presb.* (CPG 5323), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 66–8.

⁸⁶ Cyril said that Nestorius had been summoned three times in accordance with ecclesiastical law but had refused to attend the council. The council convened none the less and produced a legal sentence of deposition against Nestorius after his writings had been read into the record and had been determined to be blasphemous. Cyril also said that Nestorius, in the presence of a group of bishops, had declared that Jesus was not God.

Cyril's version of the conciliar proceedings successfully made the voyage from Ephesus to the Imperial City, despite the later allegation that Nestorius and his party had conspired to prevent any news from travelling between the two cities.⁸⁷ When news of Nestorius' deposition reached Constantinople by means of Cyril's letter to Dalmatius, all the monks along with their archimandrites walked out of their monasteries, including Dalmatius himself, who had not left his monastery in forty-eight years. An important demonstration of monastic support for the council, the monks' emergence from their monastic seclusion was a clear statement that they wholeheartedly affirmed the deposition of their archbishop.

The monk Isaac had similarly re-entered the world in order to express his doctrinal sentiments against Arianism when he emerged from his solitary discipline to accost the emperor Valens, whose support for the Arian doctrine was well attested. Sozomen reports that, as Valens prepared to engage the enemy Goths, Isaac addressed the emperor and declared, 'Give back, emperor, to the orthodox, and to those who observe the tradition of those who participated in Nicaea . . . the churches you have taken from them, and you will win the war.'⁸⁸ Arrested for his frankness, Isaac was told that he would remain in chains until the emperor returned. Isaac replied, 'You will not return unless you restore the churches (*ἀλλ' οὐχ ὑποστρέψεις . . . μὴ ἀποδιδούς τὰς ἐκκλησίας*),' an admonition that, according to Sozomen, eventually came to pass, for the emperor Valens died during the battle of Adrianople with the Goths.⁸⁹

Isaac's spiritual disciple Dalmatius appears in the hagiographic literature as the true founder of that monastery sometime during 382–3.⁹⁰ The sources indicate that Dalmatius' emergence from monastic seclusion was a momentous event. He

⁸⁷ *Episcoporum CPoli consistentium commonitorium* (CPG 8681), *ACO* I. I. 2, pp. 65–6.

⁸⁸ Sozomen, *HE* 6. 40, GCS NS 4, p. 301 esp. ll. 2–5, 7–10 (*ἀπόδος . . . ὦ βασιλεῦ, τοῖς ὀρθῶς δοξάζουσι καὶ τὴν παράδοσιν φυλάττουσι τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ συνελθούτων τὰς ἀφαιρεθείσας ἐκκλησίας, καὶ νικήσεις τὸν πόλεμον.*); Theodoret, *HE* 4. 34, GCS NS 5, p. 272 ll. 6–18.

⁸⁹ See Dagron discussing the same in 'Les Moines et la ville', *TM* 4 (1970), 232.

⁹⁰ *Vita S. Isaacii*, *AASS*, May VII, 247–8; *Vita S. Dalmati*, *AASS*, August I, 218–24.

joined the other archimandrites and their monks, and paraded through the streets, singing psalms antiphonally. When they arrived at the palace, one account states that several archimandrites, presumably including Dalmatius, entered the palace at the emperor's command, while the monks and laity remained outside singing psalms.⁹¹ When they departed from the palace, everyone joined in praise of the emperor, and in castigation of Nestorius. Then they proceeded to the *martyrion* of St Mokios to hear Dalmatius read aloud the letter from Cyril.⁹² With Cyril's highly partisan account of the conciliar proceedings in hand, Dalmatius mounted the platform and spoke to the crowds. He announced that the emperor Theodosius, having read Cyril's letter, agreed with the procedure of the council and recognized its sovereign authority. To ensure that Theodosius would reach that conclusion, Dalmatius had informed the emperor that he knew about several instances of disparate treatment that had prejudiced Cyril's party, e.g. that although Theodosius had freely welcomed the Nestorian party's comments, the synodal bishops had been prevented by partisans of Nestorius from reporting conciliar events to the emperor. 'Whom do you want to hear,' asked Dalmatius of the emperor, 'six thousand bishops or one impious man?' Dalmatius then recounted to the emperor all the conciliar events that led to Nestorius' condemnation, finally telling him that he had recently received Cyril's synodal report.⁹³ Dalmatius believed that Theodosius was thereafter well disposed towards Cyril's version of the conciliar events, for, as Dalmatius put it, Theodosius now followed God and the council and not a blasphemous man.

The council was grateful that Dalmatius had intervened with the emperor, and they expressed that gratitude by letter.⁹⁴ According to the synod, Dalmatius had given the same 'orthodox' instructions to the archimandrites that he had given Theodosius. The archimandrites in turn imparted that teaching

⁹¹ *Episcoporum CPoli consistentium commonitorium* (CPG 8681), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 65–6.

⁹² *Epistula Cyrilli ad Comarium et Potamonem episc. et Dalmatium archimandritam et Timotheum et Eulogium presb.* (CPG 5323), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 66–8.

⁹³ *Apologia Dalmatii*. (CPG 5778), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 68–9.

⁹⁴ *Epistula Dalmatii ad synodum* (CPG 5776), ACO I. I. 7, p. x; *Epistula synodi ad Dalmatium* (CPG 8686), ACO I. I. 7, pp. x–xi.

from the synod to their monastic communities. Reporting one tradition that was later recounted in the *Vita* of Dalmatius, the council recalled that Dalmatius had prophesied the appearance of a dangerous heretic in Constantinople long before Nestorius had come to live in the Imperial City: 'Beware brothers, because an evil beast dwells in this city and deceives many with his teaching.'⁹⁵ As a vocal proponent of Cyril and the council, Dalmatius' well-circulated prophecy of an impending heresy and his dramatic departure from monastic solitude joined to persuade monks and emperors alike of the council's legitimacy.

Nestorius wrote in his *Bazaar* that Dalmatius, surrounded by monks in the midst of the city, had chanted the offices, and gathered everyone from the city to proceed to the emperor's palace in order to 'hinder his purpose'.⁹⁶ Nestorius thereby acknowledged the drama of the archimandrite's re-entry into the streets of Constantinople, if only to illustrate the demonstration's disruptive intent to hinder the movements of the emperor. The only extant source reporting the emperor's words, the *Bazaar* reproduces a speech the emperor himself delivered to the archimandrite Dalmatius.⁹⁷ From it we learn that the emperor was astonished that Dalmatius had departed from his monastery, for not even tumults in the city, nor his own ill health had aroused the devoted monk away from his solitary discipline. Having entered the city, Dalmatius explained to the emperor why he had gone out of the monastery then but not earlier: God had commanded him to tell the emperor that he had committed a transgression when he subverted the council's judgement by allowing Nestorius to present his case *ex parte*, for the emperor 'has assembled the council for judgement, and it has judged'. By thus reminding the emperor that Cyril's council had been convened under imperial authority, Dalmatius meant to persuade the emperor of the council's legitimacy. Although initially Nestorius had Theodosius' support, the emperor eventually agreed with Dalmatius, especially after the archimandrite

⁹⁵ *Epistula synodi ad Dalmatium*, ACO I. I. 7, p. xi ll. 6–7. προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι κακὸν θηρίον ἐπεδήμησεν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ καὶ πολλοὺς ἔχει βλάψαι τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ αὐτοῦ.

⁹⁶ Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (Syriac); *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, trans. Nau, 241.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 241–5.

promised to absolve the emperor of any responsibility for the deposition of Nestorius. Nestorius' account of Dalmatius at the imperial palace shows that he too believed that a council convened under imperial authority was imbued with the authority necessary to render a just determination of a party's guilt.

Though Dalmatius had done much to persuade the emperor in favour of the majority council, both sides of the controversy filed the customary reports (*relatio*) with the emperor, each to convince him of the legitimacy of its position. The majority party predictably tackled the most difficult aspect of their case, namely that they had convened the council before the arrival of the Antiochene bishops. Cyril and his party reported simply that John had asked the council to begin without his presence, an account of events that reflected the partisan nature of Cyril's report.⁹⁸

Nestorius and his followers presented an entirely different account. In his *ex parte* letter to the emperor, Nestorius said that since the council had been called under the auspices of imperial authority, he and several bishops preferred to await the arrival of all the invited bishops, especially John of Antioch, before commencing the council. Once he and his bishops realized that the Egyptian contingent was growing distraught at the extended delays, they promised to cede all authority in the matter to the emperor's representative, *comes* Candidianus, and to convene whenever the *comes* decreed. When the *comes* learned that John and his bishops were in the vicinity, Candidianus recommended that everyone patiently await their arrival. Cyril and Memnon's party disobeyed Candidianus' suggestion and assembled the bishops to begin. They thus 'tramp[ed] on ecclesiastical and imperial laws'.⁹⁹ With little attention paid either to the suggestions of Candidianus or to the letters of the emperor, Nestorius remarked, they convened the council entirely on their own authority. Furthermore, the Cyrillians were said to have used physical violence to enforce their illegitimate council: 'They

⁹⁸ *Relatio ad imperatores de depositione Nestorii* (CPG 8684), ACO I. I. 3, pp. 3–5. Cyril said that conditions in Ephesus were becoming difficult, and that several bishops had already died awaiting the arrival of the Antiochenes.

⁹⁹ *Epistula Nestorii ad Theodosium imperatorem* (CPG 5672), ACO I. I. 5, p. 14 ll. 7–13 esp. 9–10. τοὺς ἐκκλησιαστικούς καὶ τοὺς βασιλικούς θεσμούς πατήσαντες.

spread their factions into the marketplace and caused trouble in the city, publicly entering our houses, attacking and upsetting our assembly . . . Bishop Memnon was the leader of the faction, and he shut the doors of the church and the holy *Martyrion* and the holy *Apostolion* against us, so that, being pursued as we were, we would not be able to take refuge there. Yet, Memnon opened the Great Church for them, exhorting them to gather there, and threatening to kill us all.¹⁰⁰ Nestorius' version of the majority council thus presented the Cyrillian party as contravening imperial authority when they began the meeting without the presence of the Antiochene party. He was convinced that the majority council's sole intent was to impose, forcibly and unconscionably, their partisan views.

THE COUNTER-SYNOD OF THE ANTIOCHENES

The Eastern bishops remained dissatisfied that presenting the emperor with their version of conciliar events was the only procedure available to them. They decided to settle their differences with the majority by holding a counter-synod composed of all the bishops who had been excluded from the majority council. On 26 June 431 they convened. Following the procedural guidelines appropriate to the start of an ecumenical council, the *comes* Candidianus remitted the second imperial *Sacra* into the counter-synodal proceedings, just as the Cyrillian party had remitted the first imperial *Sacra* at the majority council.¹⁰¹ After complying with this important detail of conciliar procedure,

¹⁰⁰ *Epistula Nestorii ad Theodosium imperatorem* (CPG 5672), ACO I. I. 5, p. 14 ll. 17–23. τοὺς δὲ σὺν αὐτοῖς στασιώτας εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν διασπείραντες συγχύσεως τὴν πόλιν ἐπέπλησαν, τὰς οἰκίας ἡμῶν περιόντες δημοσίᾳ, . . . Μέμνονος τοῦ ἐπισκόπου ἐξάρχου τῆς στάσεως γενομένου καὶ τὰς μὲν ἀγίας ἐκκλησίας καὶ τὰ ἅγια μαρτύρια καὶ τὸ ἅγιον Ἀποστόλιον ἡμῖν ἀποκλείσαντος, ἵνα μηδὲ προσφυγεῖν ἐλαυνόμενοι δυνηθῶμεν, ἐκεῖνοις δὲ τὴν μεγάλην ἐκκλησίαν ἀνοίξαντος καὶ συνεδρεῖν ἐκεῖ παρασκευάσαντος καὶ πᾶσιν ἡμῖν θάνατον ἀπειλήσαντος. For a discussion of the violence committed by both sides of the controversy, see T. E. Gregory, *Vox Populi: Popular Opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies of the Fifth Century A.D.* (Columbus, 1979), ch. 4: 'Nestorius and the Council of Ephesus: Constantinople and Ephesus', esp. 100–8.

¹⁰¹ *Gesta a synodo Orientalium* (26 Iun. 431) (CPG 8691), ACO I. I. 5, p. 119, remitting into the record the imperial *Sacra ad synodum per Candidianum*, ACO I. I. 1, pp. 120–1.

Candidianus testified before the counter-synod that five days earlier he had discouraged Cyril, Memnon, and the assembled bishops from starting the council without the presence of the Eastern bishops, but that the Cyrillian bishops had been unwilling to follow his directive. They insisted that Candidianus read the imperial letters, saying that they simply wished to know what the letters contained. Concerned that disorder would ensue if he failed to comply with the wishes of the council, Candidianus reluctantly read the imperial letters. When the assembled bishops jubilantly applauded, Candidianus said that he 'counseled them not to do something rash' and urged them to obey the imperial letters. Instead, he found himself expelled from the proceedings along with the Nestorian bishops. He learned of Nestorius' deposition the next day, said Candidianus, and promptly dispatched notice of the deposition to the emperors, in strict accordance with the imperial decree.¹⁰² Candidianus thus claimed that he was ready to uphold the emperor's commands, but that the Cyrillian bishops disregarded the imperial letters.

John of Antioch thereupon asked Candidianus the definitive question with respect to conciliar procedure: did the assembled bishops conduct a thorough investigation attentive to canonical, ecclesiastical, and imperial laws, or did they simply condemn Nestorius by default (ἢ ἐρήμην κατεδίκασαν τὸν ἄνδρα;)?¹⁰³ Candidianus replied that the bishops reached an unjust decision without proper judgement, examination, or inquiry.¹⁰⁴ John then briefly reviewed the imperial letters, saying that, from the counter-synod's point of view, the emperor had convened the synod with genuine concern for ecclesiastical peace and for the sound immutability of the apostolic faith. The emperor had commanded that a full investigation take place at the same time and in a brotherly manner befitting priests, and that a proper examination be conducted according to the principles of

¹⁰² Ibid. *ACO* I. I. 5, p. 119 l. 29 to 120 l. 3; 120 ll. 16–25.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 120 ll. 26–9. See generally, B. Soro, 'La Condamnation de Nestorius au concile d'Éphèse', *Istina* 43 (1998), 179–213.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. ll. 30–2. Candidianus testified to the following: Ἰσασι πάντες οἱ συμπαρόντες μοι θεοσεβέστατοι ἐπίσκοποι ὡς χωρὶς τῶς κρίσεως καὶ ἐξετάσεως καὶ ζητήσεως τὰ παρ' αὐτῶν τετύπῳται. 'All the most pious bishops who were with me know that it was decreed by them without proper judgement, examination, or inquiry.'

investigation, applying the methods of proposition (*πρότασις*), refutation (*λύσις*), question (*πεύσις*), and response (*ἀπόκρισις*). Furthermore, the emperor meant for the opposing parties to resolve their differences free from disturbance and tangential litigation, said John, for he decreed that the council must not examine anything other than the doctrinal matters troubling the churches. But three weeks earlier, Cyril and Memnon had shut the churches, *martyria*, and *apostolion*,¹⁰⁵ thereby prohibiting the Eastern bishops from celebrating Pentecost. The Cyrillians had even gathered a crowd of peasants to cause trouble in the city, sending them and Egyptian clerics into the houses of the Eastern bishops to threaten them with bodily harm if they refused to join the majority synod. The disobedience to the imperial letters by Cyril and Memnon, and their disregard for ecclesiastical laws, were, in John's view, simply diversionary tactics to prevent Antiochene belief and dogma from being thoroughly and fairly investigated. John concluded his testimony with an indictment of Cyril's christological doctrines, declaring Cyril's *Twelve Chapters*, which elaborated upon the twelve anathemas that Cyril appended to his third letter to Nestorius, to be filled with the teachings of Arius, Apollinarius, and Eunomius. Because he believed that the *Chapters* were heretical, and that they 'trampled on the ecclesiastical laws and the pious laws of our most pious emperors',¹⁰⁶ John instated a sentence of deposition against Cyril and Memnon. Forty-three bishops assented to the deposition on 28 June 431, and the session of the counter-synod concluded. One hundred and ninety-seven bishops had assented to the deposition of Nestorius six days earlier.

It remained for the Eastern bishops to explain their counter-synod to the emperor. John of Antioch took on the task and recapitulated the findings of his bishops. Cyril, infected by the Arian, Apollinarian, and Eunomian heresies, was said to have disobeyed the imperial letters when he convened the council prior to John's arrival. John justified his late arrival in Ephesus by describing the long distance of the journey, the bad weather,

¹⁰⁵ These were shrines over the tombs of martyrs and apostles respectively.

¹⁰⁶ *Gesta a synodo Orientalium*, ACO I. I. 5, p. 120 ll. 33 to 122 l. 13. [πατη-
θήναι] τοὺς ἐκκλησιαστικοὺς θεσμοὺς καὶ τὰ εὐσεβῆ θεσπίσματα τῶν εὐσεβεστάτων
ἡμῶν βασιλέων.

and the bout of famine in Antioch.¹⁰⁷ But John's letter to the bishops whom the counter-synod had excommunicated was less deferential. He informed them that they had been properly excommunicated and would remain so, unless they obeyed the imperial letters and joined the Eastern synod peaceably and without causing trouble.¹⁰⁸ By having notified the opposing bishops of the conciliar findings against them, he thus presented himself to the emperor as the synodal president in every respect.

When Theodosius learned of the situation at Ephesus through his representative Candidianus, he was irate. His imperial decree had commanded an ecumenical gathering of bishops, yet a synod had convened without the presence of John of Antioch and his colleagues.¹⁰⁹ Theodosius was concerned about the lack of agreement among the assembled bishops, and noted that no discussion had taken place according to the guidelines set forth in his imperial letters. In the emperor's view there was little point in continuing the conciliar process without the proper investigation of and reflection on the doctrinal issues, and so he commanded that the synodal proceedings cease promptly. A proper synodal inquiry demanded that the bishops examine doctrine in an ecclesiastical forum approved by the emperor. Yet, the two opposing synods had formed partisan, prejudicial assemblies. Both were offensive to orthodoxy because an ecumenical council had not examined the doctrines. Nearly a century of conciliar theory supported Theodosius' statement. In response to the disorder that he perceived to have overtaken his synod, the emperor commanded that none of the assembled bishops leave Ephesus for any reason until an imperial official determined what, in fact, had occurred among the opposing bishops.

Fully aware of the emperor's wrath, Cyril attempted to reinstate his assembled bishops in imperial favour. The majority synod had gathered to examine the disputed dogma, and they had satisfactorily completed that task when they determined that Nestorius' doctrine was entirely different from the orthodox

¹⁰⁷ *Epistula eiusdem synodi ad Theodosium et Valentinianum imp. aug.* (CPG 6323), *ACO I. I.* 5, p. 124.

¹⁰⁸ *Epistula eiusdem synodi ad episcopos excommunicatos* (CPG 6354), *ACO I. I.* 5, p. 124.

¹⁰⁹ *Sacra ad synodum per Palladium magistrianum* (29 Jun. 431). (CPG 8696), *ACO I. I.* 3, pp. 9–10.

faith.¹¹⁰ Defending the methods of his synodal assembly, Cyril said that the majority synod compared Nestorius' letters, writings, and several public discourses to the Nicene Symbol of Faith and to the patristic *florilegium*, and had unanimously voted to depose and condemn Nestorius.¹¹¹ Cyril also found much to criticize about the emperor's representative, Candidianus, whom Cyril saw as a friend and supporter of Nestorius. Candidianus' account of the process was therefore said to be prejudicial, designed solely to win the emperor's favour and to divert him from the truth. Cyril maintained that the truth would emerge only after the emperor read the minutes to the proceedings that Cyril had attached to the *Relatio*. The transcript to the synodal proceedings had of course been produced by Cyril's secretary and notary, Peter of Alexandria, and was not the impartial document that Cyril claimed it to be.¹¹² Still, the synodal transcripts figured prominently in Cyril's defence of the synodal proceedings to the emperor.

The Eastern synod also barraged the emperor with letters that recapitulated in detail the accumulation of wrongs committed against them, including acts of physical violence. For example, John alleged that Cyril had sent Egyptian clergy and Asian peasants into the houses of the Eastern bishops to threaten and terrorize them.¹¹³ In another instance, while his fellow bishops were giving thanks at the Church of St John, Memnon's cohorts surrounded them, abruptly seized several of John's people, stole horses from some, and, armed with clubs and stones, relentlessly pursued the Eastern bishops, who fled as though barbarians were imperilling them.¹¹⁴ Further, John himself had arrived at Ephesus with a small contingent, as the imperial letters commanded, but Cyril arrived with approximately fifty bishops, and Memnon with forty. In John's view, the impressive numbers of

¹¹⁰ *Relatio Cyrillianorum ad Theodosium et Valentinianum imp.* (CPG 8697), ACO I. I. 3, pp. 10–13.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* 11 ll. 10–15.

¹¹² For the view that Cyril's party aimed to produce their version of the acts as quickly as possible in order to prove that they adhered to procedure, see de Halleux, 'La Première Session du concile d'Éphèse', 48–87.

¹¹³ *Epistula synodi Orientalium ad populum CPolitanum* (CPG 6343), ACO I. I. 5, p. 128.

¹¹⁴ *Relatio synodi Orientalium ad eosdem* (CPG 6324), ACO I. I. 5, p. 126 l. 36 to 127 l. 11.

his adversaries masked their impiety. To even the disparity, John had asked the emperor to limit each metropolitan bishop to only two bishops, a limitation that he himself followed.¹¹⁵ Still, the wide disparity in numbers had left John and the Eastern bishops at a decided disadvantage, for the numerical superiority of the majority gave the impression that the synod was a true ecumenical gathering.

John of Antioch's depiction of the Cyrillian council failed to appeal to the clergy and the people of the Imperial City, because they had already heard the reports by Cyril that Theodosius had sent to Constantinople. The clergy had read the notice of Nestorius' deposition to their congregations. Scarcely disturbed by the deposition of their bishop, the people received the news with jubilation.¹¹⁶ People and clergy alike unequivocally supported Cyril's majority council.

CYRIL COURTS ROME

Cyril continued to act also as papal representative in the second and third sessions of the majority council, which took place on 10/11 July 431 when the bishops and priest from Rome arrived. Held at the episcopal quarters of the bishop of Ephesus, the sessions acknowledged and celebrated the arrival and support of the Roman contingent. Philip, the presbyter, began by asserting papal authority in the conciliar proceedings, for pope Caelestine had already passed a sentence of judgement, as his prior exchange of letters with Cyril made plain.¹¹⁷ The legates had brought along an additional letter, already translated into Greek, that affirmed the dignity and authority of the apostolic succession, and, by extension, the power and authority of the pope. The doctrine of apostolic succession was thought to ensure the purity and immutability of the faith, which meant that the present ecclesiastical troubles could be resolved only by a unified

¹¹⁵ Ibid. ll. 23-36.

¹¹⁶ *Epistula cleri CPolitani ad synodum Cyrillianorum* (CPG 5777), ACO II. I. 3, pp. 66-7.

¹¹⁷ *Gesta Ephesina. Actiones II et III* (10, 11 Jul. 431) (CPG 8710), ACO I. I. 3, p. 53 ll. 25-33, citing *Epistula Caelestini papae ad Cyrillum Alex.* (10 Aug. 430), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 75-7.

heart and mind.¹¹⁸ Caelestine's demand that the council be unanimous rested on his belief that the doctrine of apostolic succession implied a catholic faith that consisted in a continuous trajectory of orthodox views.

Though Caelestine had earlier forbidden his representatives to participate in the substantive doctrinal debates, that limitation did not prevent papal encroachment into the larger conciliar process. The papal representatives at the July sessions, Arcadius, Projectus, and Philip, were in fact charged with carrying out before the council the sentence of deposition that the pope in Rome had previously decreed. Caelestine clearly believed that the Roman see wielded the definitive and final authority in the conciliar process. Since Rome's interests coincided with those of the Cyrillian council, the bishops present fully affirmed Caelestine's decree. They cried out: 'This is a just judgement. To Caelestine a new Paul. To Cyril a new Paul. . . . To Caelestine the whole synod offers its thanks.'¹¹⁹ It was the duty of the majority council none the less to establish the proper relationship between the sentence of deposition enacted by the pope, and the sentence they had rendered. Firmus, bishop of Caesarea, accomplished this when he declared that the earlier writings of pope Caelestine constituted a decision and type (*τύπος*) in the present matter. The Ephesian synod had therefore followed the pattern of Caelestine's decision when it pronounced a canonical and apostolic judgement against Nestorius.¹²⁰

Rome confirmed the sentence of the council on the following day, 11 July 431, in the third session of the council. The presbyter Philip, speaking for the Roman delegation, said that they had read the acts of the council, and had determined that the majority synod had reached their sentence of deposition in strict accordance with the canons and ecclesiastical laws. Arcadius, bishop and legate from Rome, affirmed Nestorius' deposition, declaring that the synodal bishops had meticulously followed the types/decisions (*τύποι*) of pope Caelestine; the instructions transmitted in unbroken succession from the very first apostles;

¹¹⁸ *Epistula Caelestini episc. Romae ad synodum. Versio graeca*, ACO I. I. 3, pp. 55-7.

¹¹⁹ *Gesta Ephesina. Actiones II et III* (10, 11 Jul. 431), ACO I. I. 3, p. 57 ll. 24-7.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* ACO I. I. 3, p. 58 ll. 1-11.

and the synodal decree rendered by the first session of the council.¹²¹ Arcadius was, therefore, confident that proper conciliar procedures had been followed by Cyril and the Roman legates in declaring that Nestorius should be deprived of his episcopal dignity and excommunicated from the church. This statement of Western support and confirmation of the majority synod's decree meant for Cyril that the churches had reached universal agreement on Nestorius' sentence of condemnation and deposition.¹²²

Because agreement with Rome implied for Cyril that the conciliar process had come to a successful end, he promptly wrote to the emperor seeking an official discharge from the assembly at Ephesus, and permission for his ailing bishops to begin the journey home. Cyril also wrote to the clergy and people of Constantinople and had the Roman legates affix their signatures to his letter. He thereby announced that they had agreed with his council. In this same letter, Cyril said that Nestorius had publicly stated, in all his blasphemy, that he did not choose to worship an infant; and that Nestorius blasphemously refused to designate as God one who fled to Egypt.¹²³ The letter, its authority enhanced by its Roman signatories, urged the clergy and people of the Imperial City to select another bishop more worthy of the office.

TWO OPPOSING SYNODAL DECISIONS

Not Nestorius alone, but also John of Antioch, along with the thirty-four bishops who participated in the counter-synod, were excommunicated by the Cyrillian party in Sessions 4 and 5 of the majority council on 16 July and 17 July 431.¹²⁴ Acacius said that these charges against the Antiochene party were none the less redundant (*περιτταί*) because John and his followers lacked the requisite authority (*ἀθθεντία*) to commit any wrong against the

¹²¹ Ibid. ll. 6–10.

¹²² Ibid. ll. 25–35; *Relatio ad imperatores* (CPG 8711), *ACO* I. I. 3, pp. 63–4.

¹²³ *Epistula ad clerum populumque CPolitanum* (CPG 8712), *ACO* I. I. 3, p. 13 ll. 19–23.

¹²⁴ *Gesta Ephesina. Actiones IV et V* (16, 17 Jul. 431) (CPG 8716), *ACO* I. I. 3, pp. 15–26.

council.¹²⁵ He probably believed that the majority council derived its authority from the emperor himself, especially from the imperial *Sacra* that had convoked the ecumenical gathering of bishops. An imperially sanctioned majority council, in Acacius' view, need not defend its authority from the illegitimate actions of a counter-synod. Acacius asserted that Cyril was outraged at John of Antioch's disregard for ecclesiastical laws, for John had deposed Cyril and the other synodal members without properly convoking them before the counter-synod. According to Acacius, Cyril believed that the counter-synod was simply incompetent to render such a judgement because neither the ecclesiastical canons nor imperial decree had given them appropriate authority. Although Acacius believed that it was unnecessary under the precepts of ecclesiastical law to convoke John before the majority synod, Cyril and the rest of the synodal bishops were eager to review the charges against him. But when John was called to defend himself as ecclesiastical law required, he had a crowd of soldiers surround his house and, like Nestorius, refused to obey the summons. Bishop Timothy testified that they found John's dwelling surrounded by many soldiers when they arrived, that they beseeched him and the clerics, saying, 'We were sent by the council,' to which John replied, 'We don't respond to people whom we have deposed.'¹²⁶ With that testimony entered into the record, Cyril and Memnon declared John's sentence of deposition against them invalid, and entered a conditional sentence against John, subject to his third convocation in accordance with the ecclesiastical law.

Instead of appearing before the council, John published a paper in the town, accusing Cyril of subscribing to the views of Apollinarius. The charge undoubtedly touched a nerve, for Cyril had inadvertently relied upon several Apollinarian treatises that had been preserved under the name of Athanasius. But Cyril's Christology was a far cry from the single-subject Christ, with the Logos as its soul, that the strict Apollinarians envisioned. Answering these charges in the fifth session of the council, convened on 17 July in the Church of St Mary, Cyril

¹²⁵ *Gesta Ephesina. Actiones IV et V* (16, 17 Jul. 431) (CPG 8716), ACO I. I. 3, p. 17 ll. 10-19.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* 19 ll. 8-19.

declared that he had impeccable, orthodox credentials, acquired since childhood at the hands of orthodox parents and saints. He then anathematized the beliefs of Apollinarius, Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius, Sabellius, Photinus, Paul, Mani, Celestius, Pelagius, and Nestorius and his followers. 'I have never agreed with them,' said Cyril, 'and it is not from repentance that I arrive at the desire to believe in the orthodox [faith], but, as I said, I was nourished in the orthodox and apostolic doctrines of the church.'¹²⁷ Eager to defend his orthodoxy, Cyril demanded the presence of John of Antioch. The majority council promptly responded, sending Daniel, Commodus, and Timothy to call upon John with a written message in hand, summoning him a third time to explain his 'errant' behaviour before the majority council. Unwilling to receive their message into his hand, John sent his own written message to the majority council, thereby inciting the anger of Cyril's emissaries.¹²⁸ Ecclesiastical law required three calls, each of which John resolutely refused, giving Cyril the procedural violation he needed to justify his rendering a sentence of deposition against John.

The formation of the counter-synod had implicitly called into question the legitimacy of the majority council. The papal legates Philip, Arcadius, and Projectus therefore wrote a detailed letter to the emperor, disputing the integrity and authority of John's assembly of bishops.¹²⁹ Although Rome believed that Nestorius had been justly deposed for his beliefs, which were contrary to the decisions of Nicaea, the Roman legates were now being forced to explain why approximately thirty of Nestorius' followers had remained with him, including John of Antioch, and had convened another council. The legates saw this as wrongfully suggesting that the emperor 'had ordered two councils instead of one.' Fearing reproach for their irregular action, John and his followers, said the legates, informed the emperor of the findings of their counter-synod as if the emperor were

¹²⁷ *Gesta Ephesina. Actiones IV et V* (16, 17 Jul. 431), *ACO I. I. 3*, p. 21 l. 11 to 22 l. 26, οὐ πεφρονηκότες τὰ ἐκείνων πάποτε οὐδὲ νῦν ἐκ μετανοίας εἰς τὸ θέλειν τὰ ὀρθὰ φρονεῖν ἀφιγμένοι, ἀλλ', ὡς ἔφη, ἐντετραμμένοι τοῖς ὀρθοῖς καὶ ἀποστολικοῖς τῆς ἐκκλησίας δόγμασιν. *Ibid.* 22 ll. 13–15.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* 22. l. 33 to 23 l. 34.

¹²⁹ *Epistula ad imperatores de Orientalibus* (CPG 8718), *ACO I. I. 3*, pp. 28–30.

unaware that he had ordered just one synod. The legates therefore exhorted the emperor not to recognize the counter-synod John had formed. They cited precedent from Nicaea, where one group, fearing vengeance, had separated itself from the council. Because Constantine had been aware of this violation of ecclesiastical procedure, he had refused to name the aberrant group a synod, and even declared judgements against them for interfering with the concord of bishops.¹³⁰

The sheer number of bishops who signed the decree of the majority council made the legates' arguments against the legitimacy of the counter-synod that much more convincing. A synod of two hundred and ten bishops, claimed the papal legates, together with the Western bishops, and through them, the rest of the world, must take precedence over the thirty bishops gathered with John—some of whom were deposed long ago, and others of whom were known heretics with views similar to those of Celestius and Nestorius.¹³¹ Eager to assert the papal prerogatives, the legates attempted to persuade the emperor that conciliar authority resided only in the majority council, and that the pope, his representatives, and, by extension, the entire West, had fully agreed with the council.¹³²

That did not stop the Eastern bishops from offering a plausible explanation for their fewer numbers. In obedience to the imperial decree, they had arrived with only three bishops from each province, while Cyril brought along many more simply in order to ensure numerous signatures for his party. The Eastern bishops believed that two bishops accompanying each metropolitan should have sufficed to reach the truth.¹³³ They also complained to the emperor that Cyril and Memnon continued to perform the priestly functions even after they had been deposed.¹³⁴

The final session, the sixth, of the majority council on 22 July

¹³⁰ *Epistula ad imperatores de Orientalibus* (CPG 8718), *ACO* I. I. 3, p. 30 ll. 16–22.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* ll. 22–9.

¹³² The council members made a similar declaration before pope Caelestine, in the *Epistula ad Caelestinum papam* (CPG 8719), *ACO* I. I. 3, pp. 5–9.

¹³³ *Epistula synodi Orientalium ad Theodosium imp.* (CPG 6327), *ACO* I. I. 5, p. 134 ll. 28–38.

¹³⁴ The Eastern bishops believed that this problem required imperial intervention to reach a just resolution.

confirmed the Symbol of Nicaea, reintroduced the patristic *florilegium* from Session 1, and addressed the problem of the libel of Charisius.¹³⁵ The relevance of this matter is that certain associates of Nestorius from Lydia, known heretics, had composed a Nestorian confession of faith, which Charisius of Philadelphia inadvertently inserted into the creed. Having signed the erroneous symbol, Charisius was promptly excluded from communion as a heretic, a sentence that the majority council sought to rescind when he reaffirmed several statements of belief that opposed Nestorius' views. 'We say that there are neither two sons nor two lords,' confessed Charisius, 'since God the Word is one Son in essence, the only begotten Son of the Father to which this one is joined and partakes in Sonship, and participates in the name and honour of the Son'.¹³⁶ A defensive statement written to confirm both Charisius' belief in Nicaea and his disapproval of Nestorianism, the several affirmations of orthodox belief recorded in Session 6 provide a neat repository of dogma that the majority council composed to eradicate any traces of Nestorianism.

But when Theodosius read the profusion of partisan reports, he was more than a little annoyed. Reluctant to discredit the legitimacy of either council, the emperor confirmed the depositions of all three: Cyril, Memnon, and Nestorius. This action evaded the crucial question of which council held the requisite authority derived from imperial decree. The emperor was nevertheless critical of both parties' actions. He saw his role as being the guardian of the orthodox faith, but both parties had disregarded that duty by their failure to reach a common agreement. Theodosius believed he had received that faith from an ancestral tradition unanimously sanctioned by the holy council gathered under Constantine.¹³⁷ Such a forthright affirmation of Nicaea and Constantine in this context suggests that Theodosius was concerned with more than the immediate controversy in the

¹³⁵ *Gesta Ephesina. Actio VI* (22 Jul. 431) (CPG 8721), ACO I. I. 7, pp. 84-117.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 98 ll. 27-30. καὶ οὐτε δύο φημέν υἱοὺς οὐτε δύο κυρίους, ἐπειδὴ εἰς υἱὸς κατ' οὐσίαν ὁ θεὸς λόγος, ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς τοῦ πατρὸς, ᾧ περ οὗτος συνημμένος τε καὶ μετέχων υἰότητος κοινώνει τῆς υἱοῦ προσηγορίας τε καὶ τιμῆς.

¹³⁷ *Sacra directa per Iohannem comitem concilio* (CPG 8723), ACO I. I. 3, pp. 31-2.

churches. He wished to situate his reign in relationship to Constantine, who had facilitated Nicaea, considered the greatest of councils, and had thereby set the standard for limited imperial intervention in conciliar decisions. Constantine had declared that decisions reached by a council of bishops were divinely inspired. Wanting to uphold that decree, Theodosius could not render null and void the conciliar decision of either synodal assembly.

Before Theodosius, the emperor Constantius had faced the problem of deciding between two opposing councils on three separate occasions: Antioch and Alexandria in 338, Antioch and Rome in 341, and the divided Council of Serdica in 343.¹³⁸ And it was Athanasius who had helped secure agreement to the notion that conciliar decisions reached by a large number of bishops enjoyed esteem and priority over those reached by smaller groups, a position that the Cyrillian majority readily adopted. It had little effect on Theodosius. Although Theodosius eventually declared the findings of one or the other synod legitimate, for the time being he left unresolved the problem of conciliar authority posed by the divided councils. It was up to either the Cyrillian or the Antiochene party to convince the emperor of their cause.

¹³⁸ Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 171.

II

The Rhetoric of the Nestorian Debates

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Introduction

In the first century AD, the Latin rhetorician Quintilian developed a way of interpreting legal texts that enabled orators to argue for either side of a legal case. Although he thereby seemed to construe justice in relative terms, he in fact believed that true rhetoric was appropriate only for ‘the good man’ to use. The highest forms of rhetoric and oratory were not indifferent arts (*ἀτεχνία*), nor evil arts (*κακοτεχνία*), but among the arts of excellence.¹ Orators who pleaded in the law courts were not to be ignorant of justice.² While Quintilian’s predecessors had argued that rhetoric was merely the power of persuasion (*ad persuadendi vim*), equally accessible to either side of any debate, Quintilian argued that rhetoric was the science of speaking well (*bene dicendi scientia*), and proper only to the good man (*vir bonus*).³ Defending rhetoric from critics who claimed that ‘eloquence snatches criminals from the penalties of the law . . . secures the condemnation of the innocent and leads deliberation astray’, Quintilian said that it was one of the arts that were the particular province of the good man, who could learn to use it for a just outcome.⁴ A century later, Aristides, a rhetorician of the second

¹ Quintilian, 2. 20. 2–4, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 122–3.

² Idem 2. 20. 8, *ibid.* 124. ‘Nam quid orator in laudando faciet nisi honestorum et turpium peritus? . . . aut in iudiciis si iustitiae sit ignarus?’ ‘For how will the orator succeed in panegyric unless he can distinguish between what is honourable and the reverse? . . . How can he plead in the law-courts, if he is ignorant of the nature of justice?’ *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, trans. Butler (1921), 353, 355.

³ Quintilian, 2. 16. 11, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 113. For the view that Quintilian’s orator is a good man in the sense used in the Platonic dialogues, see A. Brinton, ‘Quintilian, Plato and the *vir bonus*’, *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16 (1983), 167–84.

⁴ Quintilian, 2. 16. 2, *Quintiliani Institutio Oratoria*, 111. ‘eloquentiam esse, quae poenis eripiat scelestos, cuius fraude damnentur interim boni, consilia

sophistic, which was a literary movement (2nd–6th c.) interested in restoring ancient virtues, defended secular rhetoric against the charge that it was nothing more than vain and superficial verbal display. Rhetoric played an essential role in the formation of the just state because rhetoric, he said, persuaded rather than forced people to obey laws passed for the common good. Aristides thus attempted to imbue rhetoric with moral content.

John Chrysostom, a student of the pagan rhetorician Libanius, was similarly troubled by the rhetoricians' lack of moral commitment and by what he perceived to be the superficial nature of sophistic rhetoric. Chrysostom told his congregation that 'the pagan (ἑξωθεν) philosophers, rhetors, and writers, seek not what is beneficial in general, but have in view only that they might be admired; and even when they said something useful, they also concealed that with their usual obscurity, as in a kind of darkness.'⁵ For these Christian preachers, sophistic speech made excessive use of rhetorical figures and devices primarily to display the speaker's virtuosity. The rhetoricians of late antiquity, such as Hermogenes of Tarsus, were indeed concerned with the taxonomy of literary figures, producing handbooks that codified in painstaking detail the elements of literary style. To Christians, this implied that sophistic rhetoric in its quest for stylistic mastery had abandoned any commitment to moral content, that codifying stylistic figures had replaced broader philosophical concerns for truth and justice.

Christian preachers and writers attempted to fill this philosophical void by infusing rhetoric with a new set of truth claims.⁶

ducantur in peius . . . 'It is eloquence . . . that snatches criminals from the penalties of the law, eloquence that from time to time secures the condemnation of the innocent and leads deliberation astray . . . ' *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, 319. For another aspect of Quintilian's defence of rhetoric see B. Cassin, 'Philosophia enim simulari potest . . .', *Rhetorica* (1995), 106: Quintilian criticizes philosophers by using the same accusations that philosophers had made against rhetoricians: philosophy can be feigned and has poor intentions. Eloquence cannot be feigned and the orator is judged not by his intentions but by his acts.

⁵ John Chrysostom, *De Lazaro conciones*, 3. 3 (CPG 4329), PG 48. 994. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἑξωθεν φιλόσοφοι καὶ ῥήτορες καὶ συγγραφεῖς οὐ τὸ κοινῆ συμφέρον ζητοῦντες, ἀλλ' ὅπως αὐτοὶ θαυμασθεῖν μόνον σκοποῦντες, εἴ τι καὶ χρήσιμον εἶπον, καὶ τοῦτο, καθάπερ ἐν ζόφῳ τινί, τῇ συνήθει ἀσαφείᾳ κατέκρυψαν.

⁶ See G. L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonica, 1973),

It was the truth of the Christian message that the Christian preachers intended their audiences to embrace. Generally interested in preserving and disseminating Christ's sacred narrative to the masses, preaching was to acquire this more limited, yet rarefied, function. The art of persuasion was subtly transformed into the art of exhortation, in which the preacher insisted that his listeners conform to the singular truth of Christ's saving acts.⁷ The taxonomy of rhetorical figures and tropes contained in the handbooks of the period nevertheless continued to influence Christian preachers. Their sermons contained numerous examples of the rhetorical devices of the sophists.⁸ The Christian homiletic discourse of late antiquity thus represents a subtle amalgamation of the tropes and figures of sophistic rhetoric carefully selected by Christian preachers to express what many considered to be the unwavering truth of Christ's redemptive act.

Literary figures were one of the major devices of the rhetoric of this period. Among them, types and metaphors were the most prominent. Literary types had roots both in the allegorical and typological exegesis of the Bible, and in the rhetoric of the second sophistic. Philostratus asserted that these new sophists were not interested in discoursing on the grand themes of the first sophistic, but were concerned with sketching types (*ὑποτυποῦν*), by which he meant paradigms of the poor man, the rich man, the tyrant, and the prince.⁹ But types (*τύποι*) were also an essential element of the prophetic understanding of Scripture. Mimetic in

27–62, esp. 29: Christians inherited the notion that the object of rhetoric was truth from the Stoics, who 'supplied an ideological foundation for the claim of Christian literature to expound the true religion in language clear and simple, intelligible to all'. See also W. Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge, 1961), 77–8: 'Rhetoric and philosophy had competed from the fourth century B. C. for first place in the field of culture and education. It was imperative for Christianity to put both at its service.'

⁷ For the view that the authors of the New Testament borrowed the Greek notion of persuasion and incorporated that into their use of the words *πίστις* ('trust' or 'faith') and *πιστεύειν* ('to believe'), see J. L. Kinneavy, *Greek Rhetorical Origins of Christian Faith* (New York, 1987), 101–42.

⁸ See generally, G. A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill, 1999), 155–82.

⁹ Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists*, 481, trans. W. C. Wright (Cambridge, Mass., 1921), 6.

nature, types functioned as models or patterns, pivotal points in the narrative structure whose embodiment in the present or future they foreshadowed.¹⁰ Although biblical texts could adequately express them only through narrative and history, types undermined the linear nature of biblical narrative by making historical and sacred time intersect, as the past narrative moment found meaning and significance by being repeated in the present.¹¹ Cyril made significant use of literary types in his biblical exegesis, for he believed that the figures and types of the biblical text had lain in shadow until Christ himself brought them into the light by his Incarnation, enabling Christians to comprehend the spiritual sense of Scripture. With this as his method of biblical exegesis, Cyril constructed a vision of sacred time in which a continuous historical trajectory that began with Moses, Abraham, and Isaac culminated in Christ's Incarnation and Redemption.¹² Biblical stories such as the binding of Isaac were not merely historical events completed in the past but models and patterns—types—signifying the christological truths of the present.¹³ The stories of the biblical patriarchs, however, were thought to require careful interpretation and explication before Christians could fully grasp the presence of Christ's redemptive act.

Metaphor was the literary figure (*σχημα*) most closely analysed in the rhetorical handbooks of ancient Greece. Aristotle defined metaphor as a transference that took place at the level of the noun, for 'metaphor consists in assigning to a thing the name of something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on

¹⁰ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 153. For the view that patristic exegesis in general applied the types of the Hebrew Scriptures to the life of Christ, see J. Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in Biblical Typology of the Fathers* (London, 1960), 287–8.

¹¹ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 156–7.

¹² *Epistula Paschalis Cyrilli Alex. V* (CPG 5240), PG 77. 471–500; P. Évieux et al. (eds.), Cyrille, *Lettres festales*, SC 372, p. 492A–B.

¹³ On the typology of the sacrifice of Isaac, see Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, 115–30. On Daniélou's understanding of typology, see *ibid.* 11: 'All the outstanding persons and leading events of Scripture are both stages and rough outlines to prepare and prefigure the mystery which is one day to be fulfilled in Christ.'

the grounds of analogy'.¹⁴ The metaphor essentially transposed an alien (*ἀλλότριον*) name in place of the accepted, ordinary name for that thing, thereby calling up the image of the thing so that the listener would draw from the comparison the conclusion that the speaker intended.¹⁵ Although late twentieth-century discussion has focused on metaphor's epistemological shortcomings along the lines Nietzsche urged,¹⁶ the issue never arose in Aristotle's time.¹⁷ Metaphor was not a lie for Aristotle, simply because he viewed it in different terms.¹⁸ For him, metaphor succeeded as rhetorical and poetic expression at the very moment at which it surprised the listeners (*ἐκ τοῦ προσεξαπατᾶν*), turning their thinking in an unexpected direction.¹⁹ Chiefly concerned with metaphor's persuasive function, its *paraenetic* effect on an audience, Aristotle compared the person who used metaphor properly to the wise philosopher, who could always connect apparently dissimilar things.²⁰ Metaphorical language, therefore, was not meant to tell an audience that one thing was like another, but to show in figural terms one thing in the light of another.²¹ That subtle act of demonstration was crucial in persuading and instructing an audience, for 'shifting the imaginative labor onto the audience makes the ideas thereby produced infinitely more valuable rhetorically than they would be as products of the explicit assertions of the speaker'.²² The skilful use of metaphor, therefore, 'set before the eyes' (*πρὸ ὀμμάτων ποιεῖν*)²³ of an audience two seemingly dissimilar things, just as

¹⁴ *Aristotelis De Arte Poetica Liber*, ed. R. Kassel (Oxford, 1965), 21, 1457^b ll. 6–9; P. Ricœur, 'Between Rhetoric and Poetics', in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Aristotle's Rhetoric* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1996), 328.

¹⁵ Ricœur, 'Between Rhetoric and Poetics', in *Aristotle's Rhetoric*, 330; see also idem, 'Metaphor as "Change of Meaning"', in *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language* (Toronto, 1977), 110–20.

¹⁶ See Introduction, 7–8.

¹⁷ See Ricœur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 247–56.

¹⁸ R. Moran, 'Artifice and Persuasion: The Work of Metaphor in the Rhetoric', in (ed.), *Aristotle's Rhetoric*, 386.

¹⁹ *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, ed. W. D. Ross, Oxford Classical Texts (Oxford, 1959), 1412^a19–20.

²⁰ Ibid. 1412^a11–13.

²¹ Moran, 'Artifice and Persuasion', 392.

²² Ibid. 396.

²³ *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, 1411^b25.

the use of types in interpreting biblical texts joined two apparently disparate narrative points into one simultaneous moment in sacred time.²⁴

Cyril combined both metaphors and types throughout his public discourses, especially in his homilies and the Festal letters he wrote to exhort and persuade his listeners. Cyril's familiarity with the Cappadocians and John Chrysostom, Christian writers trained in sophistic rhetoric, and his intimate knowledge of the biblical text, where tropes and figures dominate the interpretative field, helped him forge a way of speaking about his adversaries that was responsible not only for legitimating his actions in history but also for making them ultimately authoritative. When Cyril compared Nestorius to the heretic Arius, he opened a doorway through which the audience saw that Nestorius had made Jesus into a common man. Cyril also implied that he himself was the new Athanasius, the next defender of Nicene orthodoxy. Such bold images shared certain features with metaphor by transferring the qualities of one being to those of another, guiding the listener towards the desired connection. These vivid comparisons, which brought together the qualities of two persons living at widely separated times into a single point in the present, also belonged to the category of types, both biblical and sophistic.²⁵ By representing events in terms of actions to be imitated, paradigms to be followed, types had strong moral implications.²⁶ To label one person with the epithet of another implied, especially in the context of the biblical text, that the second person embodied all the significant moral qualities, or deficiencies, of the first.

²⁴ On the importance of metaphor in religious language, see generally, Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley, 1991), esp. 58–60, 155–88. For the view that the church fathers understood religious language to function differently from ordinary language, see F. M. Young, 'The God of the Greeks and the Nature of Religious Language', in W. R. Schoedel and R. Wilken (eds.), *Early Christian Literature and The Classical Intellectual Tradition: In Honorem R. Grant*, *Théologique Historique* 53 (Paris, 1979), 45–74.

²⁵ For the view that in Christian theology the repetition of metaphor is often connected with the typological interpretation of Scripture, see J. M. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford, 1985), 158. Some models are given priority over others because the history of their application imbues them with meaning. *Ibid.* 142–61.

²⁶ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 226.

Cyril saw that he could selectively borrow elements from this rich cultural legacy, including the anti-Arian legacy of Athanasius, and apply it to its best effect in his encounters with Nestorius in the present.²⁷ Unlike modern linear notions of history, this view of time as circling backwards or forwards indifferently was made possible by Cyril's preference for typological exegesis, in which significant moments of biblical history were reinterpreted in relation to Christ's sacred drama.²⁸ Through the ways that metaphor transferred personal qualities, and types made past and present moments simultaneous, time is imagined in a circular fashion and the past is made present by mimesis and repetition. A particular sort of figural language and argumentative strategy thereby emerges. It bypasses discursive argumentation, so that simply saying that Nestorius is Arius makes Nestorius a heretic at the same level of infamy. In other words, by repeating statements containing striking images, Cyril could 'set before the eyes' of an audience past exemplars of orthodoxy (Athanasius) or heresy (Arius) that he wished to convey. He accomplished this transference of images by such subtle means that his listeners believed that they had reached the conclusion by themselves.

²⁷ Using Athanasius' anti-Arian polemic in his controversy with Nestorius, Cyril created a lineage for his theological views, thereby establishing himself as an orthodox father. Cyril was not the first to make such claims. When Irenaeus confronted Gnostic Christians, he similarly construed Christian doctrine in negative terms, by delineating a continuous genealogy that included the first apostles and excluded those he deemed as heretics for being outside the boundaries of orthodoxy. See R. Lyman, 'A Topography of Heresy: Mapping the Rhetorical Creation of Arianism', in M. R. Barnes and D. H. Williams (eds.), *Arianism After Arius* (Edinburgh, 1993), 45–62.

²⁸ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 152. For the view that the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools used the same typological method of exegesis in interpreting the major texts of the Septuagint, see Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, 129.

Rhetorical Style and Method in the Conciliar Homilies of Cyril

During the Council of Ephesus in 431, Cyril delivered a number of homilies, six of which are extant today. The conventional Christian homily (ὁμιλία, Latin: *sermo*), defined as the ‘public explanation of a sacred doctrine or a sacred text’,¹ was exemplified in the works of John Chrysostom, Origen, and others. It generally consisted in Christian *paraenesis* (παραίνεσις, instruction) and exhortation (παρακέλευσμα) that was based on a particular biblical text.² Cyril’s conciliar homilies were striking because they were polemical in nature. They went beyond conventional *paraenesis* and entered into the realm of rhetoric, for they were meant to persuade the audience of conciliar bishops to support Cyril’s party and, at the same time, to reject Nestorius and the other Eastern bishops (οἱ ἐκ τῆς Ἀνατολῆς). But followers of Athanasius had also used polemical sermons in their fight against the Arians.³ Cyril was thus continuing that tradition when he extended the genre of Christian homiletics beyond *paraenesis* and exhortation.

¹ F. Siegert, ‘Homily and Panegyric Sermon’, in S. E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period* (Leiden, 1997), 421.

² See Justin Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone Iudaeo*, 85. 5 (CPG 1076), PG 6. 677A–B. Justin implies that the proper ὁμιλία should be thoroughly grounded in the prophetic scriptures, even if that very same scriptural passage has been used numerous times before.

³ *Homilia adversus Arium, de s. genetrice dei Maria* (Coptic) (CPG 2187). L. Th. Lefort, ‘L’Homélie de S. Athanase des Papyrus de Turin’, *Muséon* 71 (1958), 5–50; 209–39. Authenticity doubted by R. Caro, *La Homiletica Mariana Griega en el Siglo*, Marian Library Studies 4 (Dayton, 1972), ii. 554–67. *Ad Arium* (Armenian) (CPG 2202), E. Tayeci, *S. Athanasii patriarchae Alexandriae homiliae, epistulae et controversiae* (Armenian) (Venice, 1899), 235–8.

Cyril delivered his first homily, designated *Homily V*⁴ in the Migne edition, shortly after the deposition of Nestorius on 22 June 431. In it, Cyril compared Nestorius to the Jews who had accused the early Christians of worshipping a mere man.⁵ The homily attacked Nestorius' statement, 'it is not necessary to say that God was 2 or 3 months old', which Nestorius had uttered in a sermon he preached before the conciliar proceedings opened. *Homily I* was a typological reinterpretation of several passages from the Septuagint. It declared that the Jews had not seen God on Mt. Sinai, for only the Christians had seen him in the form of Christ.⁶ Cyril delivered a homily against John of Antioch, *Homily VI*, probably shortly after the Eastern bishops deposed Cyril and Memnon on 26 June 431. There Cyril developed the metaphor of John as the fellow combatant for Christ, whose late arrival had precluded his entry into battle.⁷ *Homily IV*, which Cyril may have delivered soon after the papal delegates arrived from Rome on 10 July 431, compared Nestorius to the heretic Arius, and at the same time included a striking section on the Virgin Mary.⁸ After Cyril was deposed by the Antiochene party he preached *Homily VII*, expounding the virtues of patience and spiritual courage, 'before he was arrested by the *comes* and

⁴ The numbers that the editors of the Migne edition assigned to the homilies do not reflect their actual chronology. I present homilies V, IV, VI, VII, and II in the order in which Cyril may have delivered them, although it is not possible to date them precisely. The remaining homily I can be dated only to the summer of 431. For a discussion of the dating of the homilies delivered by Cyril during the summer of the council, see S. Wessel, 'Nestorius, Mary and Controversy in Cyril of Alexandria's Homily IV (*De Maria deipara in Nestorium*, CPG 5248)', *AHC* 31/1 (November 1999), 6–8. For a translation of the homilies, see Appendix.

⁵ *Homilia V. Ephesi dicta, deposito Nestorio* (CPG 5253), *ACO* I. I. 2, pp. 92–4.

⁶ *Homilia I, Ephesi habita, valde pulchra* (CPG 5245), *ACO* I. I. 2, pp. 96–8.

⁷ *Homilia VI. Ephesi dicta in Iohannem Antiochenum* (CPG 5250), *ACO* I. I. 2, pp. 98–100.

⁸ *Homilia IV, De Maria Deipara in Nestorium* (CPG 5248), *ACO* I. I. 2, pp. 102–4. Authenticity denied by E. Schwarz (*ACO* I. I. 4, p. xxv), but affirmed by others. Cf. Caro, *La Homiletica Mariana Griega en el Siglo V*, ii. 269–83; M. Santer, 'The Authorship and Occasion of Cyril of Alexandria's Sermon on the Virgin (Hom. Div. IV)', *SP* 12 (1975), 144–50. Another Marian homily was apparently delivered at Ephesus, now extant in only a fragment. *Homilia VIII, Ephesi dicta in Maiore ecclesia, quae vocatur Mariae* (frag.). (CPG 5252), *ACO* I. 3. p. 143 ll. 28–31.

guarded by the soldiers'.⁹ *Homily II*, delivered on 26 September 431 in the Church of St John, responded to Nestorius' allegations that Cyril ascribed change and suffering to the deity and unambiguously affirmed Cyril's vision of an immutable, unchanging God.¹⁰

CHRISTIAN PREACHING AND THE SECOND SOPHISTIC

While conventional Christian preachers were more interested in *paraenesis* than polemics, their homilies and sermons were probably shaped and influenced by the secular public discourse that was being practised in the city council (*βουλή*), the law courts, and the embassies to the imperial court during the first centuries AD.¹¹ This secular discourse loosely corresponded to the deliberative (*συμβουλευτικός λόγος*) and forensic (*δικανικός λόγος*) rhetoric that had been outlined in the rhetorical treatises of Aristotle, and practised by such Attic orators as Demosthenes.¹² During the period of late antiquity, interest in this type of rhetoric continued, when Hermogenes in the second century AD composed an important rhetorical treatise on *stasis* (issue) theory, which systematically arranged the argumentative strategies appropriate for the different types of legal disputes that a speaker might encounter.¹³ Rhetoricians of late antiquity, such as Libanius, Aristides, Sopater, and Syrianus, all displayed familiarity with Hermogenes' *stasis* theory throughout their orations.¹⁴ Early Christian discourse was not isolated from these

⁹ *Homilia VII, Ephesi dicta, priusquam a comite comprehenderetur* (CPG 5251), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 100–2.

¹⁰ *Homilia II, Ephesi habita in basilica s. Iohannis Evangelistae* (CPG 5246), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 94–6.

¹¹ R. W. Smith, *The Art of Rhetoric in Alexandria* (The Hague, 1974), 37–72, 88; F. Siegert, 'Homily and Panegyric Sermon', in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 421.

¹² *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, ed. Ross.

¹³ M. Heath, *Hermogenes 'On Issues' Strategies of Argument in Later Greek Rhetoric* (Oxford, 1997), 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 156–230. Heath analyses a number of deliberative and forensic speeches from late antiquity in accordance with Hermogenes' principles of *stasis* theory.

rhetorical methods being practised in the law courts and assemblies of late antiquity. There is widespread agreement among scholars that even St Paul incorporated many aspects of secular rhetoric when he presented his religious arguments to his nascent Christian communities.¹⁵

Although Cyril's writings do not display specialized knowledge of forensic and deliberative rhetoric, he probably absorbed something of the methods of polemical argumentation simply by frequently reading the letters of Paul. Cyril was also versed in the voluminous works of Athanasius, who used his knowledge of rhetorical methods throughout the Arian debate.¹⁶ This tradition of Alexandrian anti-heretical discourse, which developed alongside the Arian debates, helped Cyril forge the distinctive style of polemical preaching that is apparent in the homilies he delivered at Ephesus. Throughout these homilies, Cyril borrowed elements from secular rhetoric, with its preference for argumentative speech. But he was capable of delivering a more traditional sermon as well. His Festal letters, which were read to the congregations of churches throughout Egypt, represent a style of discourse that is more consistent with the exhortative, *paraenetic* function commonly associated with preaching. As Eusebius put it, the *homilia* was synonymous with exhortation, the quality most typical of the genre.¹⁷ When Cyril, like Athanasius before him, recast the conventional Christian homily to further his ecclesiastical political ends, he borrowed general features of secular rhetoric, especially the argumentative nature of public discourse endemic to the law courts, the city council, and the embassies, and combined those with the paraenetic and exhortative qualities proper to the Christian homily. The result

¹⁵ S. E. Porter, 'Paul of Tarsus and His Letters', in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 541. For basic bibliography on ancient and modern authors see *ibid.* nn. 28, 29. See generally, K. Berger, 'Antike Rhetorik und christliche Homiletik', in *Spätantike und Christentum: Beiträge zur Religions- und Geistesgeschichte der griechisch-römischen Kultur und Zivilisation der Kaiserzeit* (Berlin, 1992), 173–87.

¹⁶ For an analysis of the types of rhetorical arguments made by Athanasius, see C. Stead, 'Rhetorical Method in Athanasius', *VC* 30 (1976), 121–37.

¹⁷ Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, 3. 21 (*BHG* 361X), PG 20. 1080B–1084A. *Eusebius Werke*, i. 87–8. Eusebius reports that the emperor delivered a *ὁμιλία*, offering words of exhortation to the bishops.

was a discourse at once formidable for, yet accessible to, his audience.

That Cyril's conciliar sermons were argumentative should not in any sense imply that he had appropriated wholesale the secular rhetorical forms practised in the law courts and embassies. Christian preaching of every kind proceeded from presuppositions that were determined by the distinctive nature of Christian claims to truth. Irenaeus best expressed the nature of those claims when he declared that the proper interpretation of Scripture must be consistent with the Rule of Faith that every Christian received at baptism.¹⁸ The Rule of Faith embodied the narrative framework (*ἱστορία*) of Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection. For Cyril, the true Christian message was synonymous with Christ's mystery, which, like Irenaeus' Rule of Faith, contained the totality of Christ's dispensation (*οἰκονομία*).¹⁹ Belief in the narrative elements of Christ's mystery or dispensation was necessary for the salvation every Christian expected to achieve. Christian homiletic discourse, therefore, exhorted its listeners to embrace that truth without the slightest hesitation. Pagan rhetoric, on the other hand, was merely the art of persuasion. For late antique Christians, the unchanging truth of the Christian message²⁰ filled the void left by secular rhetoric's apparent disregard for moral content.²¹ That is why John Chrysostom criticized pagan philosophers and rhetoricians for their failure to promote the common good.²²

¹⁸ Once every scriptural expression was placed within that body of truth (*σῶμα τῆς ἀληθείας*), then the 'correct' meaning of Scripture was revealed and the false interpretations of the heretics were duly exposed.

¹⁹ Cyril believed that the figures that comprise Scripture constitute a type (*τύπος*) of a greater spiritual reality, a reality that wholly encompasses Christ's mystery (*μυστήριον*). Christ's mystery consisted in the totality of the dispensation (*οἰκονομία*). This resembles the Christian Rule of Faith, which sought to preserve the narrative framework of Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection. See e.g. Irenaeus, *Demonstratio praedicationis apostolicae* (*Epideixis*) (Armenian) (*CPG* 1307). For a discussion of the Christian Rule of Faith and Athanasius, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 43–5.

²⁰ Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, I, 9, asserts that the truth of the church is immovable.

²¹ Aristotle defined rhetoric as the power to discern the ways that persuasion can shape any subject matter whatsoever. *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, 1355^b25–6. Ἔστω δὲ ἡ ῥητορικὴ δύναμις περὶ ἕκαστον τοῦ θεωρηῆσαι τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον πιθανόν.

²² John Chrysostom, *In epistulam i ad Corinthios argumentum et homiliae 1–44* (*CPG* 4428), 6, PG 61. 48.

Even the sophist Aristides in the second century AD found it necessary to defend rhetoric against Socrates' charge in Plato's *Gorgias* that rhetoric was nothing more than flattery, 'a shadow of the part of politics'.²³ Aristides argued that rhetoric played an essential role in the formation of the just state because rhetoric persuaded, rather than forced, people to obey laws passed for the common good. In this way, rhetoric was imbued with moral content. The debate began in classical times when Plato, and then Aristotle, addressed the matter. But contrary to Aristides' view, Plato's conception of 'true rhetoric' (ἡ ἀληθινὴ ῥητορικὴ) aimed for more than the mere persuasion or manipulation of an audience by inciting their unfettered emotions.²⁴ Rather, the practice of rhetoric in its highest form implied a moral commitment, a knowledge of the just and unjust that removed rhetoric from the unscrupulous practice of rhetoricians who sought to persuade audiences with their speeches, without regard for truth.²⁵ If Plato infused the theory of rhetoric with an element of moral accountability, then Aristotle legitimated that theory even more thoroughly when he constituted rhetoric as a distinct sphere of philosophy, 'a counterpart of dialectic', as the first line of his *Rhetoric* declares.²⁶ It is not surprising that Aristides reconsidered the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy during the second sophistic, when many rhetoricians were accused of disregarding justice or truth and of offering merely the same sort of displays of virtuosity as had the rhetoricians of the first sophistic, such as Gorgias of Leontinoi.²⁷ Of course, the

²³ Aristides, *To Plato: In Defense of Oratory*, 22, trans. C. A. Behr (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), 290, 292. For the critical edition, see *P. Aelii Aristidis opera quae exstant omnia*, I, fasc. 2-3, ed. F. W. Lenz and C. A. Behr (Leiden, 1978). For the view that Aristides made his defence on rhetorical, or rather judiciary grounds, see, L. Pernot, 'Platon contre Platon: Le Problème de la rhétorique dans les discours platoniciens d'Aelius Aristide,' in M. Dixsaut (ed.), *Contre Platon*, i. *Le Platonisme Dévoilé* (Paris, 1993), 315-38.

²⁴ Plato, *Gorgias*, ed. E. R. Dodd (Oxford, 1959), 517^a, p. 172.

²⁵ Plato, *Gorgias*, 452^e, 460^b, 460^c.

²⁶ *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, 1354^a1.

²⁷ Hermogenes admits that it is not the function of rhetoric to determine what is truly and universally just and honourable. *On Issues*, 29, Heath, *Hermogenes*, 28. Philostratus identifies Gorgias of Leontinoi as the founder of the first sophistic, and compares its philosophic method to the prophetic art of soothsayers. Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists*, 480-1, trans. W. C. Wright (Cambridge, Mass., 1921).

reality was much more complex than the contest between rhetor and philosopher implied by Aristides' account.²⁸ Both philosophers and rhetors of the second sophistic went beyond the displays of verbal mastery and were 'known to advise cities, comfort the distressed, settle civil discord, and educate the young'.²⁹

Still, Christians were troubled by what they perceived to be the superficial nature of sophistic rhetoric, which they saw as making excessive use of rhetorical figures and devices mainly in order to demonstrate the speaker's virtuosity. The possibility that this oratory might find its way into the churches moved John Chrysostom to declare to his congregation, 'This has turned the churches upside down, because you do not desire to hear a discourse calculated to lead you to contrition, but one that may delight you from the sound and composition of the words, as though you were listening to singers and minstrels; and we too act a preposterous and pitiable part because we follow your desires, when we ought to root them out.'³⁰ Chrysostom was undoubtedly responding to the proliferation, during the second sophistic, of handbooks by such rhetoricians as Hermogenes that reduced rhetoric to style and arrangement, the third of the categories that Aristotle had distinguished.

To a certain extent, the Christian warnings against excessive rhetorical display echoed earlier pagan criticism of what Dionysius of Halicarnassus had termed 'Asiatic rhetoric',³¹ which was considered vulgar, banal, and wholly devoid of philosophy and of the elements of composition proper to a liberal education.³² Dionysius advocated a return to the literary style and moral principles of the great Attic orators of the classical past such as Lysias, Isocrates, Isaeus, Demosthenes, Hyperides, and Aeschines. But in the second sophistic, examples could be found of both styles Dionysius described, the ornate style of the Asians

²⁸ Aristides, *To Plato: In Defense of Oratory*, 48, trans. Behr, 306.

²⁹ G. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1969), 11.

³⁰ John Chrysostom, *In Acta apostolorum homiliae 1-55* (CPG 4426), 30, PG 60. 225 (*Acts* 13: 2), cited by T. E. Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Panegyric Sermons of St. John Chrysostom: A Study in Greek Rhetoric* (Washington, DC, 1921), 25.

³¹ C. Wooten, 'Le Développement du style Asiatique pendant l'époque hellénistique', *Revue des Études grecques* 88 (1975), 94-104, esp. 94-5.

³² Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Ancient Orators*, 1-2, transl S. Usher (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), 5.

and the more sober style of the Attic orators.³³ Nevertheless, Christians perceived in the rhetors of the second sophistic a continuation of the Asiatic style. Christian preachers and writers pre-empted the space occupied by the 'vulgar and banal' Asiatic style, with its tendency toward theatricality devoid of moral truth, not by imitating the classical past but by infusing rhetoric with an entirely new set of truth claims. The Christian preacher insisted that his audience yield to the immutable truth of Christ's saving acts, the dissemination of which became his sole aim. By limiting Christian discourse to the preservation of Christ's sacred narrative, preaching became more than the mere art of persuasion that was characteristic of secular rhetoric. It was transformed into the art of exhortation, in which the preacher demanded that his listeners conform to the truth claims of the Christian message. Isidore of Pelusium, writing in the fifth century, epitomized this transformation when he proclaimed truth (*ἀλήθεια*) one of the four virtues of discourse (*λόγος*), along with conciseness (*συντομία*), clarity (*σαφήνεια*), and propriety (*ἐνκαιρία*).³⁴ Christian preaching thus aimed to raise sophistic rhetoric from mere stylistic display into the service of truth.³⁵

THE RHETORICAL STYLE OF CYRIL'S CONCILIAR HOMILIES

The rhetorical style of the second sophistic was characterized by its distinctive use of tropes and figures. Particularly important was the stylistic handbook of Hermogenes, *On Style*, which codified literary figures, diction, and word arrangement. Hermogenes identified seven literary styles, depending upon whether they were marked by clarity (*σαφήνεια*), grandeur (*μέγεθος*), beauty (*κάλλος*), rapidity (*γοργότης*), character (*ἦθος*),

³³ Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire*, 10.

³⁴ Isidorus Pelusiota, *Epistula* 145. 5, PG 78. 1412A. Cited by Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, 28.

³⁵ Of course, this applies mainly to the level of theory. Christian preaching ideally aimed to impart the truth of the Christian message. That ideal, however, created an expectation in the audience that could be manipulated to serve the ecclesiastical/political ends of the preacher.

sincerity (*ἀλήθεια*),³⁶ or force (*δευότης*). He then classified these seven into subtypes, producing a total of twenty categories of style.³⁷ Other stylistic handbooks from late antiquity have survived as well. A work by pseudo-Hermogenes described the various literary elements needed to produce the impression of forcefulness (*δευότης*).³⁸ Another important contribution to the codification of literary style was made by the *Anonymous Seguerianus*, which discussed aspects of style and arrangement in a treatise devoted to the four basic parts of oratory: prologue, narration, proof, and epilogue. The Latin treatise of Aquila Romanus defined forty-six literary figures, with examples from the writings of Cicero. Along with the several Latin rhetoricians of style preserved in the *Rhetores Latini Minores*, these handbooks constitute the basic *corpus* of stylistic treatises extant from the period of the second sophistic. Other treatises on style were undoubtedly lost, as we know happened to the important work on figures produced by Alexander, son of Numenius, in the second century. The widespread dissemination of these treatises influenced secular oratory as well as Christian. Many rhetorical flourishes of the Christian homily are prefigured in the stylistic

³⁶ By the word *ἀλήθεια* Hermogenes had in mind the 'sincere style', the combination of figures and diction that produced an unaffected and spontaneous style.

³⁷ Hermogenes identified these types of style in the literary corpus of Demosthenes (*Δημοσθενικὸς λόγος*). Hermogenes, *Περὶ Ἰδεῶν Λόγου* (*On Types of Style*), *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe (Stuttgart, 1969), 217–18. For the view that Hermogenes' complex system of literary formulas allowed him both to evaluate literary works using common criteria and to describe the individual characteristics of those works, see G. Lindberg, 'Hermogenes of Tarsus', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, II. 34/3 (Berlin, 1997), 1978–2063, esp. 2005–53. On the structure of *On Style* and its categories of style, see M. Patillon, *La Théorie du discours chez Hermogène le Rhéteur: Essai sur les structures linguistiques de la rhétorique ancienne* (Paris, 1988), esp. 110–15. On Hermogenes' relationship to the tradition of rhetoric and literary criticism that precedes him, and to the literary currents of the period, see I. Rutherford, 'Inverting the Canon: Hermogenes on Literature', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 94 (1992), 355–78. For the view that Hermogenes' theory of literary style continued that of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, see D. Hagedorn, *Zur Ideenlehre des Hermogenes*, *Hypomnemata* 8 (Göttingen, 1964).

³⁸ *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. H. Rabe, *Περὶ Μεθόδου Δευότητος*, 414–56 (untrans.). The list of rhetorical handbooks that follows is based on G. A. Kennedy, 'Historical Survey of Rhetoric', in S. E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric* (Leiden, 1997), 34–7.

treatises of the second sophistic, which were used as school texts in the fourth and fifth centuries. Thus, the most highly educated Christian preachers had absorbed the stylistic complexities of figures, diction, word arrangement, and sentence structure codified in the rhetorical handbooks of the period.

This elite group of Christians, educated in the art of rhetoric, included the most famous theologians and preachers of the fourth century: Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom.³⁹ Though all four protested the excesses of sophistic rhetoric, their homilies nevertheless contained numerous examples of the tropes and figures characteristic of secular rhetoric. Some of the rhetorical figures that appeared throughout their sermons went as far back as the Attic law courts, which is not surprising given the fact that the second sophistic considered itself to be a renaissance of Attic rhetorical techniques.⁴⁰

The influence of the second sophistic on the homiletic styles of Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea, and John Chrysostom has been convincingly demonstrated in several works published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What remains to be considered, however, is the extent to which Cyril, who never received an advanced rhetorical education, nevertheless absorbed aspects of sophistic rhetoric through his familiarity with the works of these fourth-century Christians.

The six homilies that Cyril delivered to his audience of bishops reveal that he was an instinctive rhetorician who successfully borrowed a number of tropes and figures representative of the rhetorical techniques that John Chrysostom and the Cappadocians used. These Christian preachers frequently borrowed figures of speech appropriate to the courtroom. They also used the 'minor' figures of speech: figures of forcefulness, of sound, of repetition, and of redundancy. Certain other figures

³⁹ See generally Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*; J. M. Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Style of the Sermons of St. Basil the Great*, SP 2 (Washington, DC, 1922); L. Méridier, *L'Influence de la seconde sophistique sur l'œuvre de Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, 1906); M. Guignet, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze et la rhétorique* (Paris, 1911).

⁴⁰ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, p. xii.

and tropes particularly characteristic of the second sophistic such as the Gorgianic figures were scattered throughout their sermons as well.

1. Figures of the Courtroom. The figures appropriate to the courtroom included *hypophora*, *diaporesis*, *epidiorthosis*, *prokatalipsis*, *paraleipsis*, *prosopopoiia*, and *dialektikon*. English equivalents exist for only a very few of the Greek terms. Cyril displayed a marked fondness for using certain of these figures, especially *hypophora*, *prosopopoiia*, and *dialektikon*. In *hypophora*, the speaker raises an objection and then immediately refutes it. Cyril used the device in the argument: 'These are the accusations of the ancient Jews against our Saviour; and those who emulate their impiety and desperate folly bring an accusation [once] again, saying, 'Why do you, though a human being, make yourself God?' O witless and loathsome one, you have not grasped the mystery! For he did not make himself God from a human being, but being God by nature, he became a human being, immutably and without confusion.'⁴¹ Cyril here raised the common objection to Christ's divinity often attributed to the Jews, i.e. that Jesus was nothing more than a common man. He then carried the argument one step further by saying that Nestorius had made similar remarks against Christ's divinity, whereupon Cyril refutes that argument. Basil used the same device in the following passage: 'Those who inquire into such things will be questioned in turn. Whence comes illness? Whence come the imperfections of the body? For illness is not uncreated, and surely it is not a creation of God.'⁴²

Prosopopoiia attributes a statement to a person even though the person may not have made the statement or made it using those words. Cyril used that device effectively when he placed the following statement in the mouth of Nestorius: "'But I am ashamed,' he says, 'to confess that God was begotten of a woman.'⁴³ Although Nestorius probably never said those words, Cyril's use of *prosopopoiia* gave the statement an air of truth and immediacy that he could not have achieved had he

⁴¹ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2, p. 93 ll. 14-19.*

⁴² Basil, *Quod deus non est auctor malorum* (CPG 2853), PG 31. 344A. Ἀντερωτάσθωσαν οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐπιζητούντες· πόθεν νόσοι; πόθεν αἱ πηρώσεις τοῦ σώματος; Οὔτε γὰρ ἀγέννητος ἡ νόσος, οὔτε μὴν δημιουργημα τοῦ θεοῦ.

⁴³ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2, p. 94 ll. 13-14.*

merely reported Nestorius' alleged words in the third person: 'Nestorius said that he was ashamed to confess that God was begotten of a woman.' One of the more dramatic figural devices available to the rhetor, *prosopopoiia* appears approximately 130 times in the sermons of Basil, which explains Cyril's familiarity with the figure.⁴⁴

Cyril himself was more apt to use *dialektikon*, in which the speaker presents his argument to the audience by means of question and answer. Throughout the homilies delivered at Ephesus, Cyril often used this figure when he wished to impart information to his audience. When he delivered his last conciliar homily before he was arrested in August, he taught the necessity of spiritual endurance in the following dialogue: 'And how shall we achieve endurance? The divine Scripture teaches [us], saying . . . But perhaps someone will say: Was it not possible for humanity to succeed another way? Was it not possible for good to prevail without labour? Not at all, it says. And why? For very many [people] plot against the saints, and the war that envelopes them is terrible.'⁴⁵ By using the figure of question and answer, Cyril turned a potentially dull scriptural teaching into a lively discussion on the nature of spiritual endurance. Cyril probably learned of this figure through his reading of the sermons of Basil, in which the device frequently appeared.⁴⁶

All three courtroom figures brought an element of drama to the homiletic discourse by introducing a fictitious dialogue with either a real or imagined person. *Hypophora* and *prosopopoiia* enabled Cyril to put unlikely statements into the mouths of unnamed opponents so that he could quickly and easily refute them. *Dialektikon* let Cyril dramatize for his audience points of scriptural teaching that might not otherwise have captured their attention.

2. Minor Figures of Speech. (a) *Figures of forcefulness* include rhetorical questions, *apostrophe*, *asyndeton*, *hypostrophe*, *poly-syndeton*, *hiatus*, exclamations, and parenthesis. Cyril used only the first six of these figures to enhance the liveliness of his conciliar homilies.

⁴⁴ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 60.

⁴⁵ *Homilia VII, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 100 ll. 19-24.

⁴⁶ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 61-2.

Rhetorical questions are meant to produce effect rather than to impart information. A defining characteristic of Cyril's rhetorical style, they appear numerous times in his homilies. The following sequence of rhetorical questions was meant to demonstrate the paradox of Christ's Incarnation: 'But how can the blood of a common man, of one who is similar to us, be [sufficient] ransom for the world? And how, also, did one [man] die on behalf of all, that he may enrich all? How did we become his, we who declare him the true God, by nature? How do we venerate him, we who refuse to worship the creature rather than the creator?'⁴⁷

Apostrophe is the device of directing questions to one's adversary to produce a dramatic effect. When Cyril used this adversarial form of direct address,⁴⁸ the question generally included an element of refutation. For example, Cyril asked the absent Nestorius, 'Are you wiser than wisdom?'⁴⁹ A resounding 'no' was the only possible answer to Cyril's question. It meant that Nestorius had greatly exceeded the boundaries of his knowledge and authority when he impugned the integrity of Christ's birth from Mary. An assertion virtually incapable of contradiction, Cyril's rhetorical question meant that Nestorius had denied the very christological foundations necessary for the divine dispensation. Cyril frequently used this rhetorical figure against his adversaries. He asked Nestorius, 'Who advised you to proclaim this worthless argument? Who laboured with you in this inopportune affliction?'⁵⁰ In both questions, Cyril assumed as fact the very matter that the council had set out to consider: whether the Antiochene position was consistent with orthodox doctrine. In other words, he assumed that Nestorius was guilty of heresy. The use of *apostrophe*, however, made it seem that he

⁴⁷ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2, p. 92 ll. 31 to 93 l. 1.*

⁴⁸ According to Hermogenes, expressions that pointed directly to the adversary (τὸ δεικτικόν), such as 'This wretched eater of iambs', also gave the impression of vehemence. Cyril effectively used this rhetorical device (τὸ δεικτικόν) when he suddenly shifted his discourse to address his adversary directly: 'This man [Nestorius] exceeded with his wickedness every gentile who goes to the unlawful festivals.' *Homilia IV, ACO I. I. 2, p. 103 ll. 17-18.*

⁴⁹ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2, p. 94 l. 16.*

⁵⁰ *Homilia IV, ACO I. I. 2, p. 103 ll. 29-31. τίς δέ σοι τοῦτον τὸν εὐτελεῖ λογισμὸν συνεβούλευσε κηρῦξαι; τίς ὁ συμπότησας τῷ ἀκαίρῳ νοσήματι;*

was only enquiring into the source of Nestorius' descent into blasphemy.

Asyndeton is a series of short phrases or sentences without conjunctions connecting them. The absence of connecting conjunctions produces the clipped pace *asyndeton* relies upon. It gives the impression that the speaker's message is so urgent and compelling that there is no time to connect the parts together. Cyril produced this sense of urgency when he introduced a string of strong imperatives at the very end of his sermon against Nestorius: 'Accept, therefore, the dispensation. Honour the mystery with faith. Do not meddle in affairs beyond comprehension. Do not inquire into matters beyond discourse. Believe with us.'⁵¹ These exhortatory phrases, presented in quick succession, displayed in literary terms the imminent threat Nestorius' doctrines carried. The agitated pace of Cyril's words demonstrated that the church was confronting a dire emergency. It had no time for a long, luxurious sentence, or for any connections between them. Moreover, his short, choppy phrases relied on a cadence that reinforced the urgency of the message. Cyril's homiletic discourse was consistent with Hermogenes' recommendations for the vehement style: each clause should end in a different foot in order to form inconsistent metrical patterns. This presumably let the speaker avoid the harmonious effects of a smooth and flowing rhythm, which would have been inappropriate to the forceful style.

Hypostrophe is the skilful interruption of ordinary speech by ebullient displays of emotion. Intended to imitate anger, fear, indignation, and jealousy, this passionate way of speaking interrupted the sequence of discourse so abruptly that the listener was moved by the speaker's seeming spontaneity. Cyril achieved this effect in his homily delivered upon Nestorius' deposition when he declared, 'They belie the glory and pre-eminence of our Saviour, the imitators of the moral perversity and impiety of the Pharisees,—those who wrap themselves in a Christian demeanour but adopt the spirit of Judaism—they exercise such a

⁵¹ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 94 ll. 18–19. *παραδέχου τοίνυν τὴν οἰκονομίαν τήμησησον τῇ πίστει τὸ μυστήριον· μὴ περιεργάζου τὰ ὑπὲρ νοῦν· μὴ πολυπραγμόνει τὰ ὑπὲρ λόγον· πίστευε μεθ' ἡμῶν* (emphasis supplied). The sentence produces a disharmonious effect, due to its unappealing repetition of the letters 'π', 'ρ', 'γ', and 'τ'.

bitter and venomous tongue, that Christ also says this about it through the voice of Jeremiah.’⁵² An audience listening to this passionate outburst could only conclude that Cyril was so outraged at the slander committed against the Saviour, that he was spontaneously expressing his horror at the abominable offence, and only thereafter was he able to identify the perpetrators. Once he announced their identity as being ‘the imitators of the moral perversity and impiety of the Pharisees’, however, Cyril’s anger acquired a momentum of its own. He heaped upon his adversaries a second vituperative clause—‘those who wrap themselves in a Christian demeanour but adopt the spirit of Judaism’—exhibiting such passion that he summarily omitted the traditional connectives. Cyril was making vivid to his audience the urgency of the doctrinal disputes agitating the churches. He used the device to achieve the same effect in the following passage: ‘But, as I just said, some are ungrateful for the kindness of our Saviour, they deny the Lord, they shake off the yoke of service . . .’⁵³ Free from the harmonious, calming effects of the Greek connectives, the sentence expressed Cyril’s outrage at his adversaries’ ingratitude to the saving acts of Christ. The effect of *hypostrophe* is enhanced by using *asyndeton* (the absence of conjunctions) with the short clauses. This effect might have been lost had Cyril connected the clauses: ‘[S]ome are ungrateful for the kindness of our Saviour, for they deny the Lord and they shake off the yoke of service.’⁵⁴ The sentence loses all sense of urgency and imminent danger, for connecting the clauses creates the impression, in literary terms, that there is time enough to

⁵² Literal translation from the Greek, preserving Greek word order. *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 93 ll. 5–9. καταψεύδονται γὰρ τῆς τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν εὐκλείας καὶ ὑπεροχῆς οἱ τῆς τῶν Φαρισαίων σκαιότητος καὶ ἀνοσιότητος μιμηταί, οἱ Χριστιανοῦ μὲν πρόσωπον περιτιθέντες ἑαυτοῖς, Ἰουδαΐζουσιν δὲ τὴν διάνοιαν ἔχοντες, οἱ γλώσσαν ἐπηρεστικὴν πικρὰν καὶ ἰοβόλον, ἵνα καὶ πρὸς αὐτὴν λέγῃ Χριστὸς τὸ διὰ φωνῆς Ἱερεμίου. For a less literal translation see Appendix.

⁵³ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 93 ll. 1–3. ἀλλὰ γὰρ, ὡς ἔφην ἀρτίως, ἀχαριστοῦσί τινας τῆ τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν ἡμερότητι, ἀρνοῦνται τὸν δεσπότην, ἀποσειόνται τὸν τῆς δουλείας ζυγόν . . .

⁵⁴ This rewritten text inserts connecting conjunctives to offer an example of how the phrase would sound without the figure of *asyndeton*: ἀχαριστοῦσί τινας τῆ τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν ἡμερότητι, ἀρνοῦνται γὰρ τὸν δεσπότην, ἀποσειόνται τε τὸν τῆς δουλείας ζυγόν . . . The sentence could also read: ἡμερότητι, καὶ γὰρ ἀρνοῦνται τὸν δεσπότην, ἀποσειόνται τὸν τῆς δουλείας ζυγόν . . .

deliberate carefully about the matter. The revised sentence would have surely failed to arouse the outrage Cyril intended in his listening audience.

Polysyndeton produces a similar forcefulness by using excessive numbers of connecting conjunctions. Cyril used this figure when he wished his listeners to be aware of the accumulation of his adversary's wrongs: 'Even if you attack boldly and terribly [filled] with contempt and, like boastful Goliath, puffed up with barbarian madness and ignorance against us, yet Christ will conquer; he will, indeed, conquer through his own champions.'⁵⁵ The succession of connectives drew attention to each adjective that the word 'and' (*καί*) combined. The overall impression was that numerous acts of malfeasance had been committed by the speaker's opponent. Of the two figures, *asyndeton* and *polysyndeton*, Cyril preferred the former, which appeared frequently in these homilies. Many antecedents for both devices are found in the sermons of Basil.⁵⁶

Word arrangement also contributed to Cyril's forceful style. In *hiatus* (*σύγκρουσις*), a word that ends with a vowel is immediately followed by a word beginning with a vowel. The resulting clash of sound gives the impression of force and imbues the speech with spontaneity, as if the speaker's sudden emotion precludes a more harmonious arrangement of vowel sounds. Cyril dramatized his outrage using *hiatus* when he declared, 'But we, the genuine ministers of the Saviour, stewards of his mysteries, we consider those who rail against his glory [to be] our worst enemies.'⁵⁷ The immediate juxtaposition of the same diphthongs (*ου*) gave the impression that Cyril's anger was roused, disrupting the speaker's more usual intention of wanting to reach his audience with a pleasing arrangement of words.

(b) *Figures of sound* bring beauty and symmetry to a speech. They include *paronomasia*, assonance, *polyptoton*, and alliteration.

⁵⁵ *Homilia VI, ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 ll. 26-9. ὥστε καὶ ἐπέρχη θρασὺς καὶ δεινὸς καὶ πολλὴν ἔχων τὴν ὑπεροφίαν καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἀλαζόνα Γολιάθ βαρβαρικαῖς ἀπονοίαις καὶ ἀμαθίαις καθ' ἡμῶν ἐξογκούμενος, ἀλλὰ νικᾷσει Χριστός, νικᾷσει δὲ διὰ τῶν ἰδίων ὑπασπιστῶν.*

⁵⁶ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 45-9.

⁵⁷ *Homilia VI, ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 ll. 2-4. ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς μὲν οἱ γνήσιοι τοῦ σωτῆρος ἱερουργαί, οἱ τῶν αὐτοῦ μυστηρίων οἰκονόμοι, πολεμιωτάτους ἡγούμεθα τοὺς καταφλυαροῦντας τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.*

tion. *Paronomasia* is a kind of etymological play on words. Although Cyril was least likely to use figures of sound, he did use *paronomasia* in *Homily VI*, as in the following typological interpretation: 'How did David conquer? There were five stones in a bag, and the stones were smooth, and this was a type of Christ. What, indeed, is the bag of Christ? The church on earth, which contains many precious and select stones, concerning which the prophet says that *'sacred stones roll upon the earth.'* Christ will prevail through the holy stones. But the stones were smooth, as I said, and the smoothness of the stones alludes to that which cannot be grasped. For that which is smooth can never be grasped (*ἄληπτου γὰρ πως αἰεὶ τὸ λείον*); the conduct of the holy is blameless (*ἀνεπίληπτος δὲ τῶν ἁγίων ἢ πολιτεία*).'⁵⁸ By closely juxtaposing the two similar-sounding roots, *aleptos* (*ἄληπτος*, ungraspable) and *anepileptos* (*ἀνεπίληπτος*, blameless), Cyril produced an unlikely confluence of meaning. He used the phonetic similarity of the words to connect 'the smooth stones of David' to the 'blameless conduct of the holy', thereby underscoring the point made by his typological reading of the scriptural text.⁵⁹ This type of wordplay made an otherwise wooden passage seem more vivid by encouraging the listener to consider the relationship between two seemingly disparate ideas.⁶⁰ The Cappadocians used *paronomasia* with moderate restraint in their sermons.⁶¹

'Assonance' uses pleasing sounds to help make a point. Its musical quality appealed to John Chrysostom, who frequently used the device, but it was a rare occurrence in the sermons of Basil.⁶² Cyril used the figure only three times in his conciliar sermons, mainly to illustrate a metaphor in literary terms. He

⁵⁸ *Homilia VI, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 99 ll. 29–35.

⁵⁹ Cyril explains that the stones that cannot be grasped are a type of Christ, whose divine mystery remains, likewise, beyond comprehension. The bag by which David conquered contains the smooth stones and represents the Christian church. Indeed, the word *ἄληπτος* means 'ungraspable' and, therefore, 'incomprehensible'. It also means 'irreproachable', which produces an additional confluence of meaning with the word *ἀνεπίληπτος* (blameless).

⁶⁰ Hermogenes, *On Types of Style*, 342–3, p. 83.

⁶¹ Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 34; Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 39; Guignet, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze et la rhétorique*, 96.

⁶² Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 33.

also used it to express through poetic language a christological concept, as in the following passage: 'come and let us demonstrate . . . *the Son who appeared as a human being and who was named God*'.⁶³ Cyril combined assonance with *chiasmus*, which made two inverted clauses rhyme, in order to highlight in poetic terms the ineffable mystery of Christ as both God and man. Assonance can also be seen in this passage, where Cyril embellished with a musical sound the visual imagery of his metaphor: 'The sea . . . was subdued; and *while its stormy waves thrashed about*, the passage of the saints transformed the sea into stillness.'⁶⁴ The sea, a metaphor for ecclesiastical unrest, was calm once again, thanks to the first meeting of the council in which Nestorius was deposed. The ecclesiastical storm was finally under control.

(c) *Figures of repetition* include *epanaphora*, *antistrophe*, and *anastrophe*. *Epanaphora* repeats the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses to compel the listener to focus on the phrases the repetition connects. It is the only figure of repetition that appears in the homilies. Cyril used *epanaphora* in this passage aimed at his opponents: 'For those who deny the Lord who redeemed them are truly children of transgression, . . . But *how* can the blood of a common man, of one who is similar to us, be [sufficient] ransom for the world? And *how*, also, did one [man] die on behalf of all, that he may enrich all? *How* did we become his, we who declare him the true God, by nature? *How* do we venerate him, we who refuse to worship the creature rather than the creator?'⁶⁵ Beginning each clause with 'how' (πῶς), Cyril implied that his adversaries, 'the children of transgression', had exhibited their scepticism through this series of questions. Cyril also used the device to emphasize the depth of the emperor's orthodoxy: 'But imitating Beliar, you thought you could persuade . . . an emperor fond of orthodox doctrine . . .

⁶³ *Homilia I*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 97 ll. 9–10. φέρε δεικνύμεν . . . ἄνθρωπον [ὀρόμενον τὸν νιόν] καὶ [θεὸν ὀνομαζόμενον]. The words in brackets form a chiasmus.

⁶⁴ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 103 l. 8. . . . καὶ κυμάτων ἀγρίων ἢ τῶν ἁγίων ἐπίβασις εἰς γαλήνην μετέβαλεν.

⁶⁵ *Homilia V*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 92 l. 29 to 93 l. 1. τέκνα γὰρ ἀπωλείας . . . οἱ τὸν ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς δεσπότην ἀρνούμενοι . . . αἷμα δὲ ἀνθρώπου κοινού καὶ ἐνὸς τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς πῶς ἂν ἐγένετο τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀν[. . .]ξιον; πῶς δὲ καὶ εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα πάντας πλουτίσῃ; πῶς αὐτοῦ γεγόναμεν οἱ τὸν ἀληθῆ καὶ φύσει θεὸν ἐπιγραφόμενοι; πῶς αὐτῷ λατρεύομεν οἱ τὸ προσκυνεῖν τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα παραιτούμενοι;

through which he reigns continuously, through which he crushes the hostile enemies, through which the chorus of perpetual virgins reigns, through which he restores the world in peace—you thought you could make this man an apostate with your deceptive words.’⁶⁶ The passage also interrupts the flow of speech with emotional outbursts to underscore the repetition that *epanaphora* relies on. It suggested to the audience that the emperor’s orthodoxy had so many consequences that Cyril had to digress on them passionately, thereby losing the grammatical sequence of his sentence and having to start anew by repeating the main verb.

Cyril effectively combined *epanaphora* with *asyndeton* in his sermon against John of Antioch: ‘You saw the enemy fallen . . . and then you grieved. Tell me, why? Because Christ has conquered? Because he has prevailed against his adversaries? Because he has silenced a boastful tongue? Because the disease that strikes the children of the church has ceased?’⁶⁷ By beginning each sentence with the word ‘because’ (ὅτι), and at the same omitting the Greek connective (*asyndeton*), Cyril dramatized his reproaches against John of Antioch. The audience would agree that John’s sorrow over Nestorius’ deposition was inappropriate, for John should never have grieved that Christ had conquered and prevailed against his adversaries. The same word ‘because’ beginning each clipped question hammers his opponent with successive blows.

(d) *Figures of redundancy* include *pleonasm*, *arsis*, *periphrasis*, and *thesis*. Although they appear throughout the sermons of the Cappadocians, only *pleonasm* appears with any regularity in Cyril’s conciliar sermons.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *Homilia IV, ACO I. I. 2, p. 104 ll. 3–7. Βελίαρ μιμησάμενος ἐνόμισας . . . πειθew βασιλέα φίλον ὀρθοδοξίας . . . δι’ ἧς διηνεκῶς βασιλεύει, δι’ ἧς ἔθνη τὰ πολέμια συνετρίβη, δι’ ἧς χορὸς ἀειπαρθένων βασιλεύει, δι’ ἧς κόσμον ἐν εἰρήνῃ καθίστησι, τοῦτον λόγους σοῖς ἀπατηλοῖς ἐνόμισας ἀποστάτην γενέσθαι.*

⁶⁷ *Homilia VI, Ephesi dicta in Iohannem Antiochenum (CPG 5250), ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 ll. 10–14. ‘The fallen enemy’ is a reference to Nestorius’ deposition at the first session of the Council of Ephesus. John of Antioch and his colleagues were still en route when the conciliar bishops voted to depose Nestorius. See also ibid. ll. 12–14. εἶδες πεπτωκότα τὸν ἐχθρόν, . . . , εἶτα ἔλυπήθης. εἰπέ μοι διὰ ποῖαν αἰτίαν; ὅτι νενίκηκεν ὁ Χριστός; ὅτι κεκράτηκε τῶν ἀνθεστηκότων; ὅτι σεσίγηκεν στόμα λαλοῦν μέγала; ὅτι πέπανται νόσος τοῖς τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐγκατασκήπτουσα τέκνοις;*

⁶⁸ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 25–31; Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 29–30.

Pleonasm juxtaposes two or more synonyms, and is one of the more common figural devices. Cyril used it in enumerating titles for the divinity, as in the following passages (emphasis supplied): 'For He [Christ] is that *purest beauty of the One who begot him, the impress and radiance*;⁶⁹ and 'They have the *shield of faith, the armour of good repute, i.e. Christ*.'⁷⁰ But he also used it to describe, in favourable terms, both sides of the christological controversy: 'But we, *the genuine ministers of the Saviour, stewards of his mysteries*, we consider those who rail against his glory [to be] our worst enemies;⁷¹ and 'Meanwhile, *you who were one of our brothers, who registered Christ as your Master, who were obliged to serve as a fellow soldier, you raise arms against the dogmas of truth*.'⁷² This enumeration of synonyms in close juxtaposition brought a certain dignity and grandeur to the speech, while giving the audience time to absorb the speaker's point that his Antiochene adversaries were brethren who, for that reason, were obliged to fight against Nestorius alongside Cyril.

(e) Other tropes common in the second sophistic included metaphor, simile, and *ekphrasis*. The sermons of the Cappadocians and of Chrysostom contain many examples of all of them,⁷³ but only metaphor appears with any frequency in Cyril's conciliar sermons.

Cyril's most colourful metaphors are based on the sun, the sea, athletic games, and war. This same imagery is preferred by the orators of the second sophistic.⁷⁴ Cyril uses the imagery of the sun to rebuke Nestorius for refusing to confess that God was

⁶⁹ *Homilia I, ACO I. I. 2, p. 97 ll. 2-3. ἐστὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς τὸ ἀκραϊφνέστατον κάλλος τοῦ γεγεννηκότος, ὁ χαρακτήρ καὶ τὸ ἀπαύγασμα.*

⁷⁰ *Homilia VI, ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 l. 25. ἔχουσι τὸν θυρεὸν τῆς πίστεως, τὸ τῆς εὐδοκίας ὄπλον, τουτέστι Χριστόν.*

⁷¹ *Ibid. ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 ll. 2-4. ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς μὲν οἱ γνήσιοι τοῦ σωτήρος ἱεουργοί, οἱ τῶν αὐτοῦ μυστηρίων οἰκονόμοι, πολεμωτάτους ἡγούμεθα τοὺς καταφλυαροῦντας τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.*

⁷² *Ibid. ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 ll. 7-8. σὺ δὲ ὁ τεταγμένος εἰς ἀδελφούς, ὁ Χριστὸν δεσπότην ἐπιγραφόμενος, ὁ συνοπλιτεύειν ὀφείλων κατὰ τῶν τῆς ἀληθείας δογμάτων τὰ ὄπλα κινεῖς.*

⁷³ Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 56-67; Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 96-109; Guignet, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze et la rhétorique*, 131 ff.

⁷⁴ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 97.

begotten in a woman: 'Do you deny the dispensation? Do you reprove the will of the Lord? This was how he wanted to save the entire world. Are you wiser than wisdom? O incredible deed! A lamp contends with the sun.'⁷⁵ The metaphor of the lamp, whose paltry illumination offered no competition to the omnipresent brilliance of the sun, readily evoked an image of the arrogant Nestorius who foolishly attempted to defy the sacred mystery of Christ's human birth. But Cyril need not have been familiar with sophistic secular oratory in order to find metaphors for the sun, for they abound in the patristic texts. Chrysostom claimed, 'the martyrs were more radiant than ten thousand suns', or, this time using a simile, compared the rivulets of blood flowing over their bodies to the saffron-coloured rays of the rising sun.⁷⁶

Metaphors of the sea and of athletic games softened the rhetorical blows of Cyril's speech against Nestorius when he combined the image of a shipwreck with that of a fallen athlete in order to describe, in oddly gentle terms, Nestorius' alienation from the episcopal throne: 'Who has seen a ship coming into a harbour in tranquil weather, having [just] suffered a shipwreck? Who has seen an athlete who, after falling in the sandpit, has not stood upright again? But when you had fallen and were shipwrecked in your faith, did we not lend a hand?''⁷⁷ The images of Nestorius as both a broken-down ship and a fallen athlete conveyed to the audience that Nestorius' faith was in imminent danger of collapse, but that, simultaneously, Cyril was a kind and concerned pastor. Similar images of the sea, shipwrecks, and athletic games can be found in the sermons of Basil, as in the following: 'Beware lest similar things happen to you and, having committed sins too great for forgiveness, before the harbour of your hopes you suffer shipwreck.'⁷⁸

Metaphors of war also appear in the sermons of Chrysostom

⁷⁵ *Homilia V*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 94 ll. 15–17. ἀθετεῖς τὴν οἰκονομίαν; ἐπιπλήττεις ταῖς τοῦ δεσπότου βουλαῖς; οὕτως ἠθέλησε διασῶσαι τὴν οἰκουμένην· μὴ σοφώτερος εἶ τῆς σοφίας; ὡ παραδόξου πράγματος, λύχνος ἤλιω φιλονεικεῖ.

⁷⁶ John Chrysostom, *De s. hieromartyre Phoca* (CPG 4364), PG 50. 703; *De ss. martyribus* (BHGα 1188) (CPG 4365), PG 50. 709. Cited by Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 69.

⁷⁷ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 104 ll. 15–16. ἀλλὰ ἄρα, σοῦ πεσόντος ἢ ναυαγήσαντος περὶ τὴν πίστιν, ἡμεῖς χεῖρα οὐκ ὠρέξαμεν;

⁷⁸ Basil, *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptismum* (CPG 2857), PG 31. 433c; Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 106.

and the Cappadocians, as when Basil declared: 'Let us cease the long war against holiness, casting aside the sharpened weapons of impiety, turning our spears into ploughs and our swords into scythes.'⁷⁹ In contrast to Basil's plaintive cry for peace, Cyril's extended military metaphor chastised the Antiochenes for refusing to participate in the battle: 'You see us preparing to struggle as in war, still dripping with sweat from the battle, requiring spiritual courage and solace—but rather, already victorious. Meanwhile, you who were one of our brothers, who registered Christ as your Master, who were obliged to serve as a fellow soldier, *you* raise arms against the dogmas of truth. O incredible deed! You did not partake in the battle.'⁸⁰

(f) *The Gorgianic Figures* include *homoioteleuton*, *parison*, *chiasmus*, and *isocolon*, which used symmetry and parallelism to produce an artistic effect.⁸¹ The name derives from Gorgias of Leontinoi, the fifth-century BC sophist, after whom Plato named one of his *Dialogues*. By the second century AD, the Gorgianic figures were popular once again, thanks to the renewed interest in producing Atticizing Greek.⁸² But the excessive use of them was considered a negative quality of the Asiatic style, and later, of the sophist orators.⁸³ Nevertheless, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom all used these symmetrical figures, which brought a musical and poetic quality to their sermons.⁸⁴ It is surprising, however, that Cyril himself used Gorgianic figures with some regularity, more than twenty times in his conciliar sermons. Cyril used the rounded symmetry of these figures so that his verbal attacks upon his adversaries would reach his audience in a softened, and thus more acceptable, way.

In *homoioteleuton*, the final syllable of each clause ends in the same sound, thus giving a musical effect. It brought a sense of balance and reason to the following invective against Nestorius:

⁷⁹ Basil, *Contra Sabellianos et Arium et Anomoeos* (CPG 2869), PG 31. 604A; Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 103.

⁸⁰ *Homilia VI*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 99 ll. 5–9.

⁸¹ Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 80.

⁸² *Ibid.* 80.

⁸³ Ameringer, *The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 42.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 42–55; Campbell, *The Influence of the Second Sophistic*, 80–95; Méridier, *L'Influence de la seconde sophistique sur l'œuvre de Grégoire de Nysse*, 162–83; Guignet, *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze et la rhétorique*, 106–30.

‘But you did not take us into account, clothing yourself in a sort of cruelty and madness, being arrogant in your wickedness, and, like an all-powerful one, disputing over lawless points.’⁸⁵ When Cyril compared Nestorius both to Arius and to the pagans, *homoiooteleuton* made the unlikely comparisons seem all the more plausible, as if the steady rhythm of Cyril’s musical phrases could reassure the audience that his accusations were more than empty slander. ‘But will you mention the bitter plague of Arius? He harboured a pestilential longing for episcopal office. What about the unspeakable and godless tenet of pagan licentiousness? That was the practice of ignorance.’⁸⁶

Parison uses parallel structure, and antithesis opposes one thought to another. Cyril relied on both to imbue his summary of the Nestorian controversy with striking simplicity: ‘He confesses Christ who says that God is true and rebukes those who do not believe, but he denies Christ who does not say that God is true, but even fights with those who confess him.’⁸⁷ Cyril used the symmetry these figures lent to his assertions so that the audience would not notice his faulty assumption that the Antiochenes failed to confess that God is true.

What is most striking about Cyril’s rhetorical style is that he carefully balanced drama and forcefulness with the poetic artistry characteristic of the second sophistic. Although Cyril’s use of rhetorical figures does not compare to the rhetorical mastery of Chrysostom and the Cappadocians, there is evidence that he absorbed aspects of sophistic rhetoric from the Christian sermons and treatises of the fourth century with which he was so familiar. Whatever Cyril lacked in literary mastery he gained in rhetorical effectiveness, for his combination of rhetorical figures was designed not simply to produce the impression of beauty and artistry but to persuade the listener that his understanding of the

⁸⁵ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 104 ll. 20–1. σὺ δὲ οὐκ ἐλογίσω ἡμᾶς, ἀσπλαχνίαν τινὰ καὶ ἀπόνοιαν περιβεβλημένους, κακία ἐγκανχώμενους, ὡς δυνατός, ἄνομα διαλογιζόμενος.

⁸⁶ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 103 ll. 15–17. ἀλλὰ Ἀρείου τὸ πικρὸν νόσημα; φιλοκαθεδρίας λοιμικῆς τὸ ἐπιθύμημα. ἀλλ’ Ἑλληνικῆς ἀσελγείας τὸ ἀνώνυμον καὶ ἄθεον φρόνημα; ἀγνωσίας τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα.

⁸⁷ *Homilia VII*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 102 ll. 7–9. ὁμολογεῖ δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ λέγων ὅτι θεός ἐστιν ἀληθινός καὶ τοῖς ἀπιστοῦσιν ἐπιτιμῶν, ἀρνεῖται δὲ πάλιν ὁ μὴ λέγων ὅτι θεός ἐστιν ἀληθινός, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ὁμολογοῦσι μαχόμενος.

christological controversy was superior to that of his adversaries. That is what made Cyril's homilies so appealing to the masses and so devastating for Nestorius.

CYRIL'S RHETORICAL METHOD

Cyril's utter scorn for Nestorius and the Eastern bishops can be heard in his outbursts against them:⁸⁸ 'These are the accusations of the ancient Jews against our Saviour, and those who emulate their impiety and desperate folly bring an accusation [once] again, saying, 'Why do you, though a human being, make yourself God?' O witless and loathsome one, you have not grasped the mystery!'⁸⁹ Cyril compared Nestorius to Arius when he said, 'You had the holy clergy of presbyters and deacons excommunicated for refuting your importunate madness, which is nothing else but thinking like Arius.'⁹⁰ Against the Eastern bishops, Cyril charged, '[T]he base and wicked men, who do not know the great, sacred, and profound mystery of the Incarnation of the Only Begotten, readily commit blasphemy, speaking with an untempered and unrestrained tongue.'⁹¹

How did Cyril's listening audience perceive such expressions of vehemence? Educated persons, such as the conciliar bishops listening to Cyril's homilies, were almost certainly familiar with the rhetoric of abuse (*ψόγος*), which was included among the elementary school exercises known as the *progymnasmata*. These exercises focused on the content and organization of the different types of speech and avoided discussions of literary style included in the more advanced curriculum.⁹² *Psogos*, the speech of invective, was typically used to provide sharp contrast with the flattering speech known as the *encomium*. The *encomium* praised a

⁸⁸ *Homilia V*, ACO I. I. 2, pp. 92-4.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* ACO I. I. 2, p. 93 l. 17. ὦ ἀνόητε καὶ βδελυρώτατε, οὐ συνήκας τὸ μυστήριον. 'O witless and loathsome one, you have not grasped the mystery!'

⁹⁰ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 104 ll. 11-12. κλήρον ἄγιον . . . ἀποσυναγωγῶς ἐποίησας, ἐλέγχοντάς σου τὴν ἄκαιρον μανίαν μὴ τὰ Ἀρείου φρονεῖν.

⁹¹ *Homilia V*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 92 ll. 23-6. οἱ δὲ πονηροὶ καὶ ἀλιτήριοι οἱ τὸ μέγα καὶ σεπτὸν καὶ βαθὺ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ μονογενοῦς οὐκ εἰδότες μυστήριον δυσφημοῦσιν ἀφυλάκτως, ἀκρατές καὶ ἀπύλωτον ἀνοίγοντες στόμα.

⁹² Aphthonius, *ΤΗΣ ΡΗΤΟΡΙΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΓΥΜΝΑΣΜΑΤΑ (Progymnasmata), Rhetores Graeci*, ed. Ch. Walz, ii. 46-8.

person's familial lineage, education, and achievements, while the *psogos* accused and criticized. Gregory of Nazianzus' speech against the Arian bishop George illustrates the classic elements of invective in his description of George's low birth 'from mongrel blood (ἐπίμικτος)', a man whose aimless wanderings from city to city eventually brought him to Alexandria, 'like an Egyptian plague (τις Αἰγυπτιακὴ πλῆγη)'. Calling him a 'monster (τέρας) from Cappadocia', 'a good-for-nothing (οὐδενὸς ἄξιος) . . . without culture', Gregory said that the Arian bishop exhibited skill only in the evils of villainy and confusion.⁹³ Though Cyril's homilies contain a few examples of invective, they do not reflect the content and arrangement of material proper to the classical *psogos* that Gregory's *Oration* exemplifies. With no slanderous statements levelled against the education and family background of Nestorius and the Antiochenes, Cyril's homilies show little evidence of the classical invective defined by the rhetoricians of the day.⁹⁴

The church historian Socrates discusses the classical *psogos* from a Christian perspective and, therefore, sheds some light on the way in which a Christian audience may have perceived Cyril's statements. Socrates believed that sophistic methods of attack were far removed from reasoned discourse. When the pagan rhetorician Libanius praised the emperor Julian for his skilful attacks on Scripture, Socrates retorted that Julian's attempts to disprove the Christians' sacred texts amounted to mere sneers and contemptuous jests.⁹⁵ Socrates openly equated sophistic invective with slander when he declared that every time someone engages in controversy with another, he 'falsifies (καταψεύδεται) . . . the position of his adversary'.⁹⁶ From the Christian point of view, Julian's sophistic attacks on the Christians' sacred texts used scorn and derision, under the guise of reason, in order to discredit the adversary. Socrates' con-

⁹³ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration*, 21. 16 (CPG 3010), PG 35. 1097C, 1100B.

⁹⁴ Not surprisingly, the homilies of Nestorius, who was from Antioch, were influenced by Aphthonius, whose *progymnasmata* summarize in abbreviated form the rhetorical treatise of the great Antiochene rhetorician, Libanius. *Progymnasmata, Libanii Opera*, ed. R. Foerster (Leipzig, 1915), iii.

⁹⁵ Socrates, *HE* 3. 23, GCS NS 1, p. 219 ll. 25–34. See also Libanius, *Oration* 18, *Libanii Opera*, ed. R. Foerster (Hildesheim, 1963), ii.

⁹⁶ Socrates, *HE* 3. 23, GCS NS 1. p. 219 ll. 30–2.

demnation of Julian's anti-Christian invective, therefore, amounted to an attack on using sophistic methods in debate. To some extent, Socrates echoed the fourth-century Christian criticism of sophistic rhetoric for its absence of truth and moral content. All the same, Cyril's polemical sermons exhibit the characteristics of sophistic invective as Socrates outlined them. The skilled sophist vilified his adversary without regard to truth, just as Cyril made false and slanderous statements against Nestorius and the Antiochenes.

But falsehood and exaggeration of an adversary's shortcomings were considered appropriate to the secular rhetoric of invective. They did not necessarily imply that the speaker violated any unspoken rules of fair play. To the contrary, Socrates' discussion of invective discourse suggests that a fifth-century Christian audience listening to Cyril's homilies would probably have anticipated the slanders he scattered throughout the homilies he delivered before the synodal bishops and laity gathered for the council. That literate audience must have evaluated Cyril's claims against his adversaries partly in relation to the established conventions of secular polemical discourse, which would have been familiar to them through the school exercises in the rhetorical handbooks of the day. A conciliar audience of bishops and laity would not have been surprised to find the sort of exaggerated speech appropriate to the classical *psogos* that Cyril used in his homilies against his adversaries.

The art of preaching produced an additional set of expectations. Homilies were designed primarily to exhort and instruct a congregation of Christians, so they contained unambiguous claims to truth, such as short credal statements concerning the reality of Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection. Cyril effectively combined these two seemingly disparate elements, the exhortation and *paraenesis* of the Christian homily, and the polemical discourse of the sophist, in the homilies he delivered at the council. When that style of sophistic invective was juxtaposed with the language of Christian *paraenesis* and exhortation, the effect was explosive. It brought an air of authority to Cyril's conciliar discourse that must have been formidable for his adversary.

When Cyril compared Nestorius to Arius and to the Jews, therefore, the audience perceived a complex interplay of literary

forms, which included the paraenetic exhortation appropriate to the Christian homily, with its claims to representing truth, and the secular rhetorical speech of censure, in which the truth often yielded to the rhetorical demands of attacking one's adversary. Cyril's slander in comparing Nestorius to Arius and to the Jews also made use of a rhetorical technique that one scholar calls '*reductio ad haeresim*'. Here, a speaker's mere allegation that his adversary subscribed to a well-known heresy was sufficient to discredit the adversary. Cyril's charge that Nestorius was like Arius and the Jews thus had significant christological implications, for it implied that Nestorius believed that Christ was merely a man. A familiar allegation throughout the early Christian period, the charge had also been raised against Origen, Paul of Samosata, Asterius, Eusebius, Marcellus, and, of course, against the Arians by Athanasius.⁹⁷

But the comparison between Nestorius with Arius and the Jews was a complex one. When Cyril called Nestorius a Jew, he invoked the entire Christian corpus of anti-Jewish teachings, starting with the New Testament and its treatment of the Pharisees. In Cyril's early Festal letters, he first used the epithet 'unbelieving Jew' to instruct his congregations by illustrating the grave soteriological consequences of denying Christ's divinity. Speaking of Nestorius and his followers, Cyril declared, 'For those who imitate the moral perversity and impiety of the Pharisees belie the glory and pre-eminence of our Saviour,' and '[T]hose who emulate their [Jewish] impiety and desperate folly bring an accusation again, saying, 'Why do you, though a human being, make yourself God?' O witless and loathsome one, you have not grasped the mystery!⁹⁸ Pharisees were so frequently vilified throughout Christian literature that Cyril's audience would easily have recognized that Nestorius and his followers, the so-called imitators of Pharisaic impiety, slandered the divinity of Christ.

Well inured to invective, Cyril's audience very probably did not accept his allegations as being literally true. 'Nestorius was a Jew' did not mean to Cyril's listening audience that Nestorius had converted to the practice of Judaism, or that he renounced

⁹⁷ This list is taken from C. Stead, 'Rhetorical Method in Athanasius', *VC* 30 (1976), 132.

⁹⁸ *Homilia V, ACO* I. I. 2, p. 93 ll. 5-7, 15-17.

the teachings of Christ. Rather, it implied that, like the Jews, Nestorius had slandered Christ's divinity. Indeed, when Cyril used this epithet, he was merely using the conventions proper to the rhetoric of abuse and invective. The very circumstances of Cyril's speech—the deposition and excommunication of his arch-rival—made his rhetorical method appropriate. Cyril's listening audience was ready to hear all the false and exaggerated epithets, such as 'Jew' and 'Arian', that Cyril had already used in the Festal letters of his early episcopacy. When combined with the presuppositions of Christian preaching, the phrases and epithets proper to the rhetoric of abuse acquired a new air of legitimacy that the more conventional examples of the homiletic genre did not supply.

The results were devastating. When news of Nestorius' deposition reached Constantinople, the *Coptic Acts of Ephesus* report that crowds expressed their joy by shouting, 'Nestorius the Jew!' Four days later, another anti-Nestorian crowd gathered in the Great Church chanting, 'Nestorius and the thirty men are Jews.' That a crowd used these words to describe the Eastern counter-synod of 26 June that John of Antioch called is evidence that they understood Nestorius and the Antiochenes in the manner in which Cyril intended.⁹⁹ The chants reveal that Cyril's comparisons between Nestorius and the 'impious' Jews that he made the week before (*Homily V*) found an audience ready to agree that Nestorius believed that Christ was merely a man. In the same *Homily V* Cyril had alluded to the Antiochenes when he said: although 'the imitators of Pharisaic impiety' put on a Christian demeanour, they adhered to the theological presuppositions of Judaism, which denied the divinity of Christ.¹⁰⁰

Cyril incorporated his early credal formulations into this charge when he explained to his listeners, first, the importance of the epithet *Theotokos* for the Virgin Mary, and, second, the mystery of Christ's Incarnation. By refusing to acknowledge that God was begotten of a woman, he said Nestorius repeated the theological error of the Jews: if the Jews blasphemed that Christ, although a man, had made himself God, then Nestorius

⁹⁹ *Koptische Akten zum ephesinischen Konzil vom Jahre 431*, trans. W. Kraatz, TU (Leipzig, 1904), 47, 49–50. On the *vores populi*, see Holum, *Theodosian Emperors*, esp. 10–11, 170.

¹⁰⁰ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2*, p. 93 l. 11.

and the rest of the Antiochene bishops committed a similar outrage against Christ's divinity when they declared that Mary did not bear God.¹⁰¹ Cyril was claiming that the title *Theotokos* was more than a designation venerating Mary, for it incorporated all the theological implications of Christ's Incarnation. As for the mystery of the Incarnation: a man did not *become* God, as Nestorius and the Jews mistakenly asserted, 'For he did not make himself God from a human being, but being God by nature, he became a human being, immutably and without confusion. The One generated ineffably by God the Father endured generation in the flesh from a woman, and became Son of Man, that he may save us.'¹⁰² Cyril thus implied to his audience that Nestorius' 'Judaizing' doctrine was wrong in every respect, for it denied the divinity of Christ, the most basic tenet necessary for Christians to achieve salvation. In the process of explaining the soteriological implications of the title *Theotokos* for Mary and of Christ's Incarnation, Cyril demonstrated the grave consequences for those who followed Nestorius' doctrine, thereby imparting the Christian *paraenesis* of his early episcopacy to his conciliar audience.

Cyril also compared his adversary to Arius. But the anti-Arian discourse of the homily was much less subtle than that found in his early christological treatises because the homilies delivered at Ephesus were not serious discussions of the christological problems facing the churches. Instead they exhibited the highly polemical rhetoric that contributed to Cyril's victory before the council of bishops. Thus, when Cyril deemed Nestorius more reprehensible than the Jews, pagans, and even the Arians whose place of worship Nestorius had demolished at the start of his bishopric, he made Nestorius into the quintessential heretic in the eyes of the orthodox ecclesiastical establishment. Cyril's most devastating charge of Arianism, however, came in the form of a simple statement that was meant to destroy his unnamed

¹⁰¹ *Homilia V, ACO I. I. 2, p. 94 ll. 13–14. ἀλλὰ αἰσχύνομαι, φησί, θεὸν ὁμολογήσαι τὸν ἐκ γυναικὸς γεγεννημένον.* 'But I am ashamed, he says, to confess that God was begotten of a woman.'

¹⁰² *Ibid. 93 ll. 17–20. οὐ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος ὢν ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησε θεόν, ἀλλὰ θεὸς ὢν φύσει γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος ἀτρέπτως καὶ ἀσυγχύτως· ὁ τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἀπόρρητον ἔχων γέννησιν ὑπέμεινε γέννησιν κατὰ σάρκα τὴν ἐκ γυναικὸς καὶ κεχηρημάτικον υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, ἵνα ἡμᾶς διασώσῃ.*

opponent: 'You were not ashamed at making God similar to a Persian kingship.'¹⁰³ The simile constructed an image of Christ as an exalted pagan man, a blasphemy that Cyril's audience would have readily attributed to Arius and his followers. In one blow, therefore, Cyril condemned his adversary of subordinating Christ to the Godhead, itself a blasphemy, and then equated that belief with Arianism. This rhetorical manoeuvre must have inflamed public opinion against Nestorius.

Socrates reports that Nestorius' reluctance to use the epithet *Theotokos* for Mary had disastrous christological consequences in the eyes of the people of Constantinople. Nestorius' associate Anastasius, whom he held in high esteem, preached a sermon against the title *Theotokos*: 'Let no one call Mary *Theotokos*, for Mary was a human; and it is impossible that God be born of a human.'¹⁰⁴ Great confusion and controversy ensued. Many of those who heard the sermon believed that the very divinity of Christ was at stake. The masses accused Nestorius of teaching that Christ was merely a man, and compared him to the heretics Paul of Samosata and Photinus, both of whom were believed to have subscribed to that view. Some of the prominent laity and ecclesiastical officials of Constantinople agreed. Not long afterward, Eusebius, later bishop of Dorylaeum, posted a public decree charging Nestorius with following the doctrines of Paul of Samosata.¹⁰⁵ Quotations from Paul of Samosata and Nestorius, denying that Mary bore the Word, or that she could have produced one older than she, were contained in the decree.

¹⁰³ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 104 l. 31. οὐκ ἠδέσθης θεὸν ἐξομοιῶν Περσικῆ βασιλείᾳ;

¹⁰⁴ Socrates, *HE* 7. 32, GCS NS 1, p. 380. See also McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 29–30. On the title *Theotokos* for Mary, see M. Starowieyski, 'Le Titre Θεοτόκος avant le concile d'Éphèse', *SP* 19 (1989), 236–42. See also P. Imhof, *Maria Theotokos bei Cyrill von Alexandrien* (Munich, 1981).

¹⁰⁵ Although the *CPG* dates this document to sometime in 428 (*CPG* 5940) [8620], Loofs' dating of the text to around spring 429 is more plausible, since it is consistent with the incidents surrounding Nestorius' associate Anastasius, as reported by Socrates. See F. Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place in the History of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, 1914), 32. See also McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 32–3. For basic bibliography on Paul of Samosata, see F. Loofs, *Paulus von Samosata*, TU 44. 5 (Leipzig, 1924); F. Millar, 'Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria', *JRS* 61 (1971), 1–17. See also Marius Mercator, *Opera*, 50 ff., ed. S. Baluz (1684).

Eusebius' charges also adduced evidence that both parties heretically divided Christ, ascribing to Christ a double birth—once according to the prescripts of divinity, and once from Mary.¹⁰⁶

In spite of these contemporary reports, Socrates, writing approximately ten years after the charge, vigorously denied that Nestorius denigrated Christ's divinity. He claimed that Nestorius followed neither Paul nor Photinus.¹⁰⁷ Was Socrates correct to absolve Nestorius of any affront to Christ's divinity, or did Cyril's polemical charges of Arianism bear some relation to fact?

Nestorius himself had written passionately against the Arians and their subordination of the Godhead to the Virgin Mary when he claimed that Arian doctrine implicitly condoned the notion that Mary gave birth to the Godhead, producing one not consubstantial with her essence. Cyril included this very passage in his five books against Nestorius and therefore we know that he was familiar with Nestorius' anti-Arian polemic.¹⁰⁸ Writing to pope Caelestine, Nestorius in fact charged *Cyril* with Arianism and Apollinarianism because he commingled Christ's two

¹⁰⁶ *Contestatio Publice Proposita, Eusebii Dorylaei* (CPG 5940 [8620]), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 101–2. 'Paul: 'Mary did not bear the word.' Nestorius: 'Mary did not bear the divinity.' Paul: 'Mary is not older than the word.' Nestorius: 'How can Mary bear one older than herself?' Paul: 'Jesus is one thing, the Word another.' Nestorius: 'Is it not possible for the one born before the ages to be born once by another and also according to divinity?'" Though Nestorius asserted that Christ had two natures, he believed that they were fully conjoined in one single person. See *Epistula ii Nestorii ad Cyrillum Alex.* (June 430), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 29–32.

¹⁰⁷ Socrates, *HE* 7. 32, GCS NS 1, pp. 380–2. Socrates believed that Nestorius did not follow the heresies of Paul of Samosata or Photinus, but was simply frightened of the term *Theotokos*, and all that it implied. Though Socrates absolved Nestorius of following Paul's doctrine of two sons, modern interpreters have shown disagreement as to Nestorius' orthodoxy. For arguments in favour of Nestorius' orthodoxy, see M. V. Anastos, 'Nestorius was Orthodox', *DOP* 16 (1962), 119–40; R. C. Chesnut, 'The Two *Prosopa* in Nestorius' 'Bazaar of Heracleides"', *JTS* 29 (1978), 392–409. For a contrary view see H. E. W. Turner, 'Nestorius Reconsidered', *SP* 13 (1975), 306–21. Turner concludes that Nestorius' theory of *prosopic* union was inadequate to establish an ontological basis of union.

¹⁰⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, *Libri V Contra Nestorium* (CPG 5217), ACO I. I. 6, p. 31; *Nestoriana*, ed. F. Loofs (Halle, 1905), 245 ll. 15–27; see also Marius Mercator, *Sermo XI (Nestorii) Adversus Arianos*, PL 48. 830–1, who gives a fuller rendition of this passage cited by Cyril.

natures.¹⁰⁹ Nestorius claimed that Cyril ascribed fleshly passions to the divinity, and divine immutability to the humanity, and therefore he blended the human nature with the deity.¹¹⁰

Although Arianism was best known for subordinating the Logos to God, certain versions of Arianism prefigured the Miaphysite commingling of natures characteristic of the Apollinarian teachings.¹¹¹ Arians believed in a pre-existent Son of God who changed into man, taking his body from the Virgin while simultaneously substituting his own essence for the human soul.¹¹² Eudoxius the Arian confirmed these Miaphysite tendencies, at least among certain branches of the sect, for he denied the two natures in Christ, and substituted God for the human soul of Christ in affirming Christ's single, combined, and undifferentiated nature.¹¹³ Whether Cyril was guilty of the charges raised against him or not, many leaders of the Antiochene school persisted in making the allegations. Theodoret of Cyrrhus (d. 466) said that Cyril was wrong to condemn all those who divided in two the sayings of the Gospels. Theodoret affirmed the necessity of division, ascribing to God those sayings appropriate to divinity, and to man the humble words and deeds of the servant. Anything less, claimed Theodoret, would render one's confession synonymous with the blasphemy of Arius and Eunomius. Fully cognizant of Theodoret's and Nestorius' charges against him, Cyril responded to these accusations in his *Apologia contra Orientales* with a simple affirmation of Christ's undifferentiated nature: 'It is not necessary to distribute the sayings to two *prosopa* (persons) or two *hypostases*, or two Sons, for that divides the union or indeed the one Son. For the union is undivided and inseparable and the Son

¹⁰⁹ Nestorius, *Ad Caelestinum Papam I*, ACO I. 2, p. 13; *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 166.

¹¹⁰ Nestorius, *Ad Caelestinum Papam I*, ACO I. 2, p. 14; *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 170-1.

¹¹¹ See Loofs, *Nestorius*, 67 n. 1, for the following list of places in which Nestorius mentioned Arians and Apollinarians in juxtaposition: *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 166 l. 19; 170 l. 30; 179 l. 4; 181 l. 18; 182 l. 8; 184 l. 15; 185 l. 12; 194 l. 16; 208 l. 16; 267 l. 16; 273 l. 6ff.; 300 l. 20; 301 ll. 4, 5, 16; 305 l. 15ff.; 312 l. 7.

¹¹² Loofs, *Nestorius*, 67.

¹¹³ A. Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der Alten Kirchen*, 3rd edn. (Breslau, 1897), s. 191, p. 262; see Loofs, *Nestorius*, 67.

is one in every word/sense, manner and thought.¹¹⁴ Although Cyril was affirming the unity of Christ, his detractors saw his statement as resembling the heresy of Arius and Eunomius, both of whom ascribed a single nature to Christ.

Around the same time, Cyril publicly accused Nestorius of subscribing to the popular variety of Arianism, that Christ was unlike God. In the presence of several conciliar bishops, Nestorius had said that God was not an infant 2 or 3 months old.¹¹⁵ Cyril thereupon publicly accused Nestorius of asserting that Christ was merely a man. Cyril and his followers had made the common assumption that Christ/Jesus was once an infant. They argued that if God was never an infant, as Nestorius claimed, then Christ/Jesus was not God. Cyril was thus able to state in his letter to the ecclesiastical officials that Nestorius had declared that Jesus was not God.¹¹⁶ Two years earlier, around 429, Cyril had simply stated that Nestorius' rejection of the term *Theotokos* was confusing many of the monks and laity who, for that reason now believed that Christ was merely an instrument of the deity but not deity himself.¹¹⁷ For Cyril, the disturbing soteriological implications were clear. If Christ were simply an instrument of the deity but in all other respects an ordinary human being, then Christ was no longer of the same essence with God. This meant that humanity would finally succumb to death.¹¹⁸

Cyril intended to stir such popular misconceptions when he declared to his listeners that Nestorius made Jesus no better than a Persian kingship. While the subtleties of Nestorius' christological position certainly defied such a facile statement, Cyril's

¹¹⁴ Cyril of Alexandria, *Apologia xii Capitulum contra Orientales* (CPG 5221), *ACO* I. I. 7, pp. 42–3. For the Eastern position, see *ibid.* 41, esp. when they compare Cyril to Eunomius and Arius because Cyril believed in a single-nature Christ. See also H. A. Wolfson, 'Philosophical Implications of Arianism and Apollinarianism', *DOP* 12 (1958), 3–29. See also McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 49–50.

¹¹⁵ *Gesta Ephesina, Actio I* (22 June 431) (CPG 86755), *ACO* I. I. 2, p. 38, testimony of Theodotus of Ancyra.

¹¹⁶ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Comarium et Potamonem Episc. et Dalmatium Archimandritam et Timotheum et Eulogium Presb.* (CPG 5323), Ep. 23, *ACO* I. I. 2, p. 66 ll. 24–30.

¹¹⁷ *Epistula I Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium*, *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 24 ll. 7–9.

¹¹⁸ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Monachos*, *ACO* I. I. 1, pp. 22–3.

polemic was undeniably effective. As Socrates noted in his discussion of invective, one of the most devastating tools of abusive rhetoric was to level the same charge against an adversary that the adversary had already levelled against the speaker.¹¹⁹ This tactic enabled the speaker to deflect allegations that had been made against him, just in case the audience might have been tempted to believe them. That Cyril's adversaries had charged him with Arianism, therefore, probably led him to compare Nestorius to the greatest heretic in the church's recent institutional memory:¹²⁰ 'You had the holy clergy of presbyters and deacons excommunicated for refuting your importunate madness, which is nothing else but thinking like Arius,' declared Cyril in *Homily IV*.¹²¹ A generation earlier, Athanasius had called the Arians 'the harbingers of the anti-Christ', while Epiphanius accused them of igniting 'the great fire' that nearly consumed the entire Roman Empire.¹²² Such a forthright comparison with this despised heretic must have sounded the death-knell for Cyril's opponent.

Nestorius also used the tactic of turning the adversary's argument against him. In a homily delivered 6 December 430, Nestorius said that Paul of Samosata and Photinus both heretically ignored the deity of the Son, as well as his two natures, and that Photinus taught that the Son's deity stood beyond that which had become incarnate, and could never be fully encompassed in the temple.¹²³ Paul of Samosata's assertion that Christ received his beginnings from the Virgin was equally heretical because it made the eternal deity contemporaneous with the flesh. Nestorius was convinced that Cyril had similarly

¹¹⁹ Socrates describes the practice in his *Ecclesiastical History* *HE* 3. 23, GCS NS I, p. 219 l. 34: *καὶ τὰ αὐτῷ προσόντα φαῦλα τῷ πρὸς ὃν ἢ ἔχθρα περιτρέπων φιλεῖ*. 'The adversary likes to cast upon his foe the evils present in himself.'

¹²⁰ Cyril implied that Nestorius denied Christ's divinity and imbued him with merely the exalted status of an earthly king. Likewise, popular understanding ascribed to Arians the belief that Christ was nothing more than an exalted man.

¹²¹ *Homily IV, ACO* I. I. 2, p. 104 ll. 11–12.

¹²² Athanasius, *Orations Contra Arianos* iii, I. 1, PG 26. 13; Epiphanius, *Panarion (Adversus haereses)* (CPG 3745), 69. 1. 1–2. 1; Epiphanius, iii. *Panarion* (nos. 65–80), ed. K. Holl and J. Dummer (Berlin, 1985).

¹²³ Nestorius, *Sermo xviii. De Divina Inhumanatione, ACO* I. 5, pp. 42–4; *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 305–6, 310.

transformed the immutable deity into passive flesh born of a woman by insisting on using the term *Theotokos*. In this way, Nestorius turned the charges of heresy back against Cyril, alleging that he advanced the very doctrines implied by the heretic Paul.¹²⁴

But this rhetorical method was more appropriate to the inflammatory statements of Cyril than to the reasoned philosophical arguments Nestorius preferred. When Cyril publicly declared that Nestorius purposefully divided the ecclesiastical community by imitating the likes of Arius, that he rendered Jesus no better than a Persian kingship, and made a 'mockery of the temple of God (ἐφύβριζων ναὸν Θεοῦ)', Nestorius became the new Arius. Although that declaration bore little relation to fact, an audience familiar with the conventions of rhetorical speech must have found it readily acceptable. While abusive rhetoric showed little concern for the truth or falsity of a speaker's claims, the truth claims of Christian discourse brought legitimacy to Cyril's slanderous allegations. The undeniable authority of Christian *paraenesis* and exhortation that homilies relied upon, coupled with Cyril's skilful incorporation of the credal formulations he had developed in his early episcopacy, elevated Cyril's anti-Nestorian invective from the 'acceptable' lies of sophistic slander to the authoritative truth claims of Christian discourse.

THE VIRGIN MARY AS SYMBOL OF CYRIL'S INVECTIVE AGAINST NESTORIUS

Cyril's *Homily IV* (delivered in the Church of St Mary), in which Cyril compared Nestorius to Arius, also expressed his devotion to the Virgin Mary, *Theotokos*. His discourse on the Virgin was not a separate expression of Marian devotion but another aspect of his polemic against Nestorius' anti-*Theotokos* assertions, part of the larger discourse that was Cyril's continuing invective against his adversary. Furthermore, Nestorius as the 'new Arius' was a typological innovation that acquired significance in the context of Cyril's opening discourse on Mary, for Mary embodied the paradox that the Arians could not fathom

¹²⁴ Whether Nestorius presented a fair picture of Paul of Samosata is another matter altogether.

in their understanding of the relationship between God and Jesus. Cyril's Mary was the paradoxical container for the uncontained (ἡ τὸν ἀχώρητον χωρήσασα), the place for the infinite (τὸ χωρίον τοῦ ἀχωρήτου), the answer and antithesis to the incredulous Arians who had asked early in Cyril's episcopacy, 'How can one be contained in the other?'

Hail from us, the holy, mystical Trinity, which convened us all in this holy church of Mary, Mother of God. Hail from us, Mary, Mother of God, the venerable treasure of all the world, the inextinguishable flame, the crown of virginity, the sceptre of orthodoxy, the indissoluble temple, the place for the infinite, the Mother and Virgin; through whom *the one who comes in the name of the Lord is called blessed* in the holy Gospels; Hail, the one who contains the uncontainable in the holy virginal womb, through whom the holy Trinity is glorified and venerated throughout the world, through whom heaven is exalted, through whom angels and archangels are delighted, through whom demons are banished, through whom the tempting devil fell from heaven, through whom fallen human nature is assumed into heaven, through whom all creation, possessed by the madness of idolatry, came to the full knowledge of truth, through whom holy baptism came into being for all the faithful, through whom is the oil of exultation, through whom the churches have been founded for all the world, through whom the nations are brought into repentance. And what more is there to say? Through whom the Only Begotten Son of God shined light for *those that sit in the darkness and shadow of death*; through whom the prophets prophesied; through whom the apostles proclaim salvation to the nations; through whom the dead were revived; through whom kings reign, through the Holy Trinity. Is it even possible for people to speak of the celebrated Mary? The virginal womb; O thing of wonder! The marvel strikes me with awe! Who ever heard of a builder who, after he constructed his own temple, was prevented from dwelling in it? Who is insulted for having summoned his own servant into motherhood?¹²⁵

The literary relationship between Cyril's anti-Arian discourse aimed at Nestorius, and Cyril's paradoxical spatial metaphors for Mary and her womb are illuminated when set in the broader context of late antique conceptions of space. Steeped in classical learning, Origen constructed a Christian God that was both incomprehensible and immeasurable, existing beyond the confines of space. Plato had loosely articulated a notion of place

¹²⁵ *Homilia IV, ACO I. I. 2, p. 102 l. 18 to 103 l. 6.*

or space in his account of the creation of the universe, positing the metaphor of the Mother and Receptacle who was invisible, unformed, and all receptive, who, in some sense that defied categorization, partook of the intelligible world. She was the substance that received all bodies, yet, paradoxically, never partook of the stuff that entered into her all-receiving nature. She was the receptacle or nurse of 'becoming', she served as the moulding material of creation, and she was the place in which 'becoming' came into being.¹²⁶ If Plato's metaphorical Mother served as the all-receiving container, receptacle and nurse of everything that came into being, then Origen's God was the parent of all things, filling and containing the entire universe with the fullness of His power. Encompassing in some way the receptacle Mother and the Source Father of Plato's account, Origen's notion of God was both the Source that filled the universe, and its receptacle, containing all with its fullness. As the Source or Mind from which all intellectual existence originated, Origen's God/Mind needed no physical space in which to move. A simple intellectual being, God was the ultimate Oneness. This God/Mind was thoroughly separated from the particularities of space, requiring no body or place of any kind.¹²⁷ Nor did it need physical magnitude to perform its proper acts or movements. If Christ is God's wisdom hypostatically existing, explained Origen, then he is likewise without shape, colour, or size, begotten without beginning or temporal limitation of any kind.¹²⁸ Not limited by the physical constraints of a mortal body, Christ's divinity was in no way separated from the Father so as to prevent

¹²⁶ Plato, *Timaeus*, 51^a, *Platonis Opera*, ed. I. Burnet (Oxford, 1984); *ibid.* 50c–d; *ibid.* 49^b. Plato posits three kinds (*γένη*), the Becoming (*τὸ γιγνώμενον*), the place in which Becoming comes into being (*τὸ δ' ἐν ᾧ γίγνεται*), and the place from where Becoming is copied and made (*τὸ δ' ὅθεν ἀφομοιούμενον φύεται τὸ γιγνώμενον*). The Mother is a metaphor for the recipient (*προσεικάσαι πρέπει τὸ μὲν δεχόμενον μητρὶ*), or the place in which Becoming comes into being; the Source from where it comes into being is the Father (*τὸ δ' ὅθεν πατρὶ*), and the Offspring is that which these two produce, namely Becoming (*τὴν δὲ μεταξὺ τούτων φύσιν ἐκγόνω*).

¹²⁷ Origen, *De Principiis*, 1. 1. 5; 1. 1. 6 (CPG 1482), *Origenes Werke*, v. *De Principiis*, ed. P. Koetschau, GCS 22 (Leipzig, 1913).

¹²⁸ Origen, *De Principiis*, 1. 2. 2.; 1. 1. 6; see also *Contra Celsum* (CPG 1476), trans. and ed. H. Chadwick (Cambridge, 1965), 379 n. 5, regarding parallels in Plato and Justin.

it from operating elsewhere.¹²⁹ Because Origen was concerned with preserving the omnipresence of divine power, he constructed a paradoxical notion of place that fully embraced the divine Godhead without confining its divinity to spatial categories. His opponent Celsus dismissed these paradoxical notions of place, objecting that when God Himself comes down to men, He will be absent from His throne. Origen's answer was that Christ and God were in no way spatially bound, for 'The power and divinity of God come to dwell among men through the man whom God wills to choose and in whom He finds room without any changing from one place to another or leaving His former place empty and filling another.'¹³⁰

Athanasius confronted this paradox of space in his theology of the Incarnation, asserting that Jesus was in the body without being circumscribed by it and without being absent elsewhere. Never contained by spatially bound flesh, Jesus readily contained all things, and while he was fully present with his Father, creation somehow remained filled with his being. Just as Plato's receptacle Mother received 'becoming' without altering her essence, so Athanasius' Jesus remained fully present in all things without suffering the slightest alteration. By this paradoxical language, Athanasius crafted a theology that avoided any notion of containment: Jesus was in the flesh of the body, but was not contained by it; he was present in creation, yet fully present with his Father; he took his human body from Mary, but suffered no alteration to his essence; he was at once outside the world, and actively working within.¹³¹

These paradoxical notions of place and containment also partially defined the contours of the Arian controversy.¹³² 'How,' asked the Arians, 'can the one be contained in the other and the other in the one? How at all can the Father who is the greater be contained in the Son who is the less?'¹³³ Athanasius

¹²⁹ Origen, *De Principiis*, 4. 4. 1, 3.

¹³⁰ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 4. 5, ed. Chadwick, 187.

¹³¹ Athanasius, *Oratio de Incarnatione Verbi* (CPG 2091), PG 25. 96–197, ss. 8, 17; *Sur l'Incarnation du Verbe*, ed. Ch. Kannengiesser, SC 199 (Paris, 1973).

¹³² For a full discussion, see T. F. Torrance, 'The Relation of the Incarnation to Space in Nicene Theology', in A. Blane (ed.), *The Ecumenical World of Orthodox Civilization* (The Hague, 1974), iii. 45–7, 65 ff.

¹³³ Athanasius, *Orationes Contra Arianos iii*, 3. 1, PG 26. 321C, trans. in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd ser. (Michigan, 1978), iv. 393.

replied that the Arians' failure to understand was the result of their interpreting immaterial things in a material manner. They refused to accept the language of paradox, the only language appropriate to the immaterial realm. Athanasius reaffirmed the innate fullness of Father and Son: 'they are not discharged into each other, filling the One the Other, as in the case of empty vessels, so that the Son fills the emptiness of the Father and the Father that of the Son'.¹³⁴ Rejecting the metaphor of the empty vessel, Athanasius used the notion of mutual co-inherence, which became a test of orthodoxy over against Arianism.¹³⁵ The Arians, however, denied this mutual indwelling of Father and Son, and asserted the contravening notion of *anepimiktoi* (ἀνεπίμικτοι, unmixed): 'there is a triad not in equal glories. Not intermingling with each other are their subsistences'.¹³⁶ Part of the reason that the Arians subordinated Sonship to the Father is that they rejected the prevailing Christian language in which paradoxical ideas about place were being expressed.¹³⁷

Athanasius' anti-Arian arguments and their assumptions about the nature of space were familiar to Cyril, whose *Thesaurus* was in large measure a summary of Athanasius' *Orationes Contra Arianos*. Readily borrowing from its predecessor, Cyril's *Thesaurus* addressed the Arians who asked, 'How can the Father who is greater than the Son be contained in him? Or how can the Son who is much lesser than the Father, be contained in him and fill the One greater?' Cyril's response condemned their materialistic conception of deity, which erroneously substituted Father and Son and denied the fullness of their mutual indwelling. In Cyril's view, the Arian understanding of corporeal substitution was a doctrine appropriate to physical bodies. It did not apply to the divine, incorporeal essence, whose nature was plainly devoid of all matter.¹³⁸ Well acquainted with Athanasius' argument

¹³⁴ *Orationes Contra Arianos* iii, 3. 1, PG 26. 324B, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 394.

¹³⁵ *Orationes Contra Arianos* iii, 3. 1–2, PG 26. 321, 324, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 393 n. 9. Father and Son each contain the fullness and essence of the other.

¹³⁶ Athanasius, *De Synodis Arimini in Italia et Seleucia, in Isauria* (CPG 2128), PG 26. 708; Opitz, ii. 1. 242.

¹³⁷ Athanasius, *Orationes Contra Arianos* iii, 3. 25. 10.

¹³⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus de Sancta et Consubstantiali Trinitate*, PG 75. 9–656. 177A–B.

against Arianism, Cyril knew the paradoxical language of containment that was meant to refute Arian claims of a spatially circumscribed deity.

Cyril borrowed this paradoxical language for his refutation of one of Nestorius' sermons, in which Nestorius claimed that the Lord 'passed through' the Virgin.¹³⁹ Cyril said that if the Word passed through Mary, then that wrongly implied a deity spatially circumscribed and limited, moving from one place to another. 'The divinity,' said Cyril, 'exists in no place, and does not know physical changes, for it fills all things.'¹⁴⁰ Cyril's conception of deity was that it existed everywhere, unembodied, and not in any specific place to the exclusion of all other places. It was therefore inconceivable that the Godhead should pass through a single body.¹⁴¹ Also writing in the fifth century, Pseudo-Athanasius explored the implications for Jesus' body in relation to Mary, claiming that Jesus took his human body from Mary and rendered it 'capable of giving room for the fullness of the Godhead bodily'.¹⁴² A Jesus who was omnipresent with his Father was certainly not limited by the confines of a human body. Cyril extended these paradoxical spatial notions and developed their implications with respect to Mary. If Jesus is the uncontainable, then Mary must be his paradoxical container; if Jesus exists in no place, then Mary is the place for the placeless. Through this language of paradox, Cyril built an image of Mary as the spatially uncircumscribed temple of God, the revered place in which Jesus dwelt. Cyril contrasted this view with the Arian belief he imputed to Nestorius, which ascribed spatial limitation to the deity, and made 'a mockery of the temple of God',¹⁴³ rendering Mary only a physical being. If the Arians,

¹³⁹ Cyril of Alexandria, *Libri V Contra Nestorium*, ACO I. I. 6, p. 18; *Sermo xi* (frag.), *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 277.

¹⁴⁰ Cyril of Alexandria, *Libri V Contra Nestorium*, ACO I. I. 6, p. 20 ll. 18–19; *ibid.* 38 ll. 26–8.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.* 21 ll. 3–6.

¹⁴² Pseudo-Athanasius, *Sermo Major de fide* (CPG 2803), PG 26. 1269c.

¹⁴³ *Homilia IV*, ACO I. I. 2, p. 104 l. 1. This way of construing Mary was to provide the theological basis for a typology in which Mary fulfils the types of sacred space of the Septuagint. For a list of the biblical types and images that Proclus used for Mary, see N. P. Constanas, 'Weaving the Body of God: Proclus of Constantinople, the Theotokos, and the Loom of the Flesh', *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 3/2 (1995), 177.

with their materialist conception of God, could not fathom Athanasius' paradox of mutual inherence, then Nestorius, the new Arius, was equally incapable of understanding the paradox of Mary's sacred space.¹⁴⁴

While Cyril's spatial metaphors construed Mary as a sacred place, the remainder of the homily made Nestorius 'without place'. Not once named throughout the entire homily, Nestorius became simply 'this man'. Absent from the homiletic discourse, Nestorius was also literally absent from the conciliar proceedings, as he consistently refused all invitations extended to him in accordance with ecclesiastical law.¹⁴⁵ Cyril dramatized Nestorius' failure to appear before the council when he told his audience that Nestorius' name had been stricken from the list of brethren: 'Wishing to alienate yourself from the episcopal throne by [your] blasphemy, you have even deleted your name from the list of brethren, not recognizing the One who bestowed the office of Highpriest on you.'¹⁴⁶ Just as Cyril's Marian metaphors construed her as the sacred place *par excellence*, Nestorius who mocked her sacred space became the placeless heretic, absent from the ecclesiastical proceedings, and removed from communion with the faithful by his deposition a few weeks before Cyril's address.

Cyril also applied metaphors depicting royalty and exaltation to Mary: she was the treasure of the world, the crown of virginity, and the sceptre of orthodoxy. A 'treasure' (κειμήλιον) could be any object stored as valuable, but the term often applied to the sacred objects of a church, especially its sacred vessels.¹⁴⁷ Cyril used both senses of the term in describing Mary. She was not only valuable as a vessel storing something sacred but was herself precious and venerated: 'Is it even possible for people to speak of the celebrated Mary? The virginal womb; O thing of wonder! The marvel strikes me with awe!'¹⁴⁸ The 'crown' (στέφανος) was

¹⁴⁴ On the use of paradox in Christian texts, see generally, Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*.

¹⁴⁵ *Gesta Ephesina, Actio I* (22 Jun. 431). *ACO I. I. 2*, pp. 11–12.

¹⁴⁶ *Homilia IV*, *ACO I. I. 2*, p. 103 ll. 21–3. δυσφημία σεαυτὸν βουλόμενος ἀλλοτριῶσαι τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τοῦ καταλόγου τῶν ἀδελφῶν σεαυτὸν ἐξήλειψας, μὴ ἐπιγνοῦς τὸν σοι χαρισάμενον ἀρχιερέως κλήρον.

¹⁴⁷ G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), 740, s.v.

¹⁴⁸ *Homilia IV*, *ACO I. I. 2*, p. 103 ll. 3–4.

another metaphor of exaltation, having royal overtones. It often evoked images of glory and honour: Christ was the crown of the church;¹⁴⁹ the Holy Ghost was the crown of the just;¹⁵⁰ and faith was the crown of the Christian profession.¹⁵¹ More distinctly royal than either the treasure or crown, was the sceptre (*σκήπτρον*), a symbol of divine and kingly power and a metaphor for Christ and the Cross.¹⁵² Cyril first used the royal sceptre as a metaphor for Mary in *Homily IV*. Here again, Cyril's Marian metaphors contrasted with those he used for Nestorius. Mary was the crown and sceptre, accoutrements of royalty and exaltation, but Nestorius was clothed in images of wickedness.¹⁵³ Indeed, Nestorius was not the standard (or sceptre) of orthodoxy, but had even tried to precipitate its demise, for '[he was] not content to ruin [himself] in blaspheming God, but . . . announced [his] blasphemy to the entire world'.¹⁵⁴ Cyril even charged that Nestorius threatened the very functioning of the *oikoumene* when he attempted to persuade Theodosius II to follow his heretical doctrines: 'You thought you could persuade . . . an emperor fond of orthodox doctrine, who worships the . . . Trinity, through which he reigns continuously, through which he crushes the hostile enemies . . . through which he restores the world in peace—you thought you could make this man an apostate with your deceptive words.'¹⁵⁵ Well acquainted with Theodosius' imperial theology, expressed in his *Sacra* to the council, Cyril's audience must have found Nestorius' heresy quite threatening to the continued stability of the empire.¹⁵⁶ If Theodosius II had been present for Cyril's address, these words

¹⁴⁹ Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, 2. 8 (CPG 1376), PG 8. 480b.

¹⁵⁰ Didymus the Blind, *De Trinitate*, 2. 1 (spurious) (CPG 2570), PG 39. 453A.

¹⁵¹ Basil, *Epistula 221* (CPG 2900), PG 32. 816c.

¹⁵² Clemens Romanus, *Epistula ad Corinthios*, 16. 2 (CPG 1001), PG 1. 240A.

¹⁵³ Cyril's *Homily IV*: 'But you do not take us into account, clothing yourself in a sort of cruelty and madness, being arrogant in your evil, and, like an all powerful one, disputing over lawless points.' *ACO I. I.* 2, p. 103 ll. 20–1.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 104 ll. 8–9.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 104 ll. 4–7.

¹⁵⁶ *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad singulos Metropolitans* (19 Nou. 430) (CPG 8651), *ACO I. I.* 1, p. 115: 'The condition of our state depends on piety toward God and there is a relationship between the two. . . .' Read into the record at the first session of the council on 22 June 431. *Gesta Ephesina. Actio I.* *ACO I. I.* 2, p. 8.

might have angered him as well as Nestorius,¹⁵⁷ for they implied that Nestorius' 'blasphemy' had nearly succeeded in persuading him. To make matters even worse, Cyril had applied to the Virgin Mary the royal images of crown and sceptre, to which only the imperial family was entitled.

These royal metaphors, like Cyril's paradoxical language of space, acquired new significance when placed in the context of Cyril's larger homiletic discourse. The Virgin Mary was now the triumphant standard for orthodoxy over against the defeated Nestorius, whose heretical anti-Marian sermons threatened the stability of the empire. Nearly every Marian metaphor gave an exalted status for Mary, in deliberate and immediate contrast to that given to Nestorius. She was the exalted treasure, the paradoxical place, and the royal sceptre, while Nestorius had no name, no place, and his pernicious doctrines threatened the peaceful functioning of the *oikoumene*.

Cyril's depiction of Nestorius, therefore, cast him as the archetypal heretic to as wide a public as the homilies could reach. Although the homily was a genre of discourse better known for *paraenesis* and exhortation, Cyril used it to slander an enemy. Calling Nestorius a man eager to demote Jesus to the status of a Persian kingship eventually made Nestorius the new Arius. That typology echoed Nestorius' popular reputation as one who impugned the divinity of Christ by refusing to admit that Mary was the Mother of God, *Theotokos*. Depicting Nestorius as the new Arius thus carried christological implications that cast Cyril's discourse on Mary in a new light.

Cyril's image of Mary served his political and christological ends: Mary as Mother of God paradoxically embodied the transcendent God/Christ that Nestorius with his 'deceptive sermons' relegated to the status of a worldly king. In Cyril's homiletic discourse words mattered, and Nestorius' ill-considered words had 'turned the world upside down',¹⁵⁸ while Cyril's rhetorical arguments turned the world right side up, with the triumphant, exalted Mary holding the sceptre of orthodoxy

¹⁵⁷ Cyril was not on good terms with the emperor at this time, having been recently chastised for sowing discord within the imperial family because he had sent separate treatises to the empresses Eudocia and Pulcheria. *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex.* (CPG 8652), *ACO* I. I. 1, pp. 73–4.

¹⁵⁸ *Homilia IV*, *ACO* I. I. 2, p. 103 l. 34 to 104 l. 1.

at the top. Cyril's homily had constructed an image of Nestorius that was so reprehensible to early fifth-century sensibilities that Nestorius' vision of Mary could not prevail.¹⁵⁹ Nestorius denied Christ's transcendent status, refused Mary her rightful appellation 'Mother of God', and entirely removed himself from the conciliar proceedings and from the list of brethren. Cyril had even removed him from the homiletic discourse itself. But Cyril's Mary embodied every attribute that Nestorius denied. She was the *Theotokos* who paradoxically contained the uncontainable Christ in her virginal womb. Although the designation was in fact theologically correct, Cyril used it rhetorically to make the Virgin Mary embody the anti-Arian discourse that he devised to discredit his adversary.

Cyril's rhetorical arguments were devastatingly effective because he skilfully combined the style and methods of sophistic rhetoric with the truth claims of the Christian homily and the simple creeds of his early episcopacy, weaving the various elements into a well-unified literary discourse. Writing in the first century AD, Longinus similarly understood literary composition as a system (*σύστημα*), whose complex, interrelated members produced a composite structure not unlike the human body.¹⁶⁰ This notion of the unified discourse (*logos*) had its roots in classical antiquity when Plato's *Phaedrus* ascribed to discourse a definitive literary structure in which each part stood in distinct relation to the whole. Literary discourse was therefore equated with a living organism (*ζῶον*), a metaphor that aptly described the mutual dependence of its constituent parts.¹⁶¹ For Longinus,

¹⁵⁹ Although the Marian metaphors served Cyril's ecclesiastical and theological agenda, the public nature of this discourse ensured that his understanding of Mary would eventually stand on its own. This is exactly what happened in the later *Homilia XI, Encomium in s. Mariam deiparam*, a 7th–9th-c. embellishment and elaboration of Cyril's *Homily IV*, which was rewritten independently of the early 5th-c. ecclesiastical controversy that originally shaped Cyril's vision of Mary. See A. Ehrhard, 'Eine Unechte Marienhomilie des Cyrill von Alexandrien', *Römische Quartalschrift* 3 (1889), 97–113. Ehrhard argues convincingly that Cyril himself did not rework the homily because there are a number of anachronisms. He finds it plausible, however, that another author should choose to embellish this famous Marian homily. *Ibid.* 112.

¹⁶⁰ Longinus, *Libellus de Sublimitate*, ed. D. A. Russell (Oxford, 1968), 14 ll. 10–14; 49 ll. 5–12.

¹⁶¹ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 264^c, *Platonis Opera*, ed. Burnet, 274.

the impression of sublimity came about when these constituent parts were harmoniously arranged into a single unified body. Sublimity was 'a contribution made by a multitude'. Hermogenes had proposed a similar organic theory of literary composition when he set out to demonstrate that individual elements (*στοιχεῖα*) and basic principles of composition (*ἀρχαί*) combined to produce the stylistic features characteristic of Demosthenes.¹⁶² Hermogenes' systematic analysis of Demosthenes' style implied that the literary text was an integrated whole that could be discerned by analysis of its constituent parts. Hermogenes was so confident of the literary value of what he called 'the Demosthenic logos' (*ὁ Δημοσθενικός λόγος*) that he believed that his systematic classification of the features of Demosthenes' literary style revealed the stylistic features of the entire *corpus* of Greek literature.¹⁶³

This desire to classify every stylistic feature of the Demosthenic logos in minute detail is the forerunner of efforts that were concerned to understand matters other than literature. By the second century AD, the Stoics tried to delineate an *orthos logos* (*ὀρθὸς λόγος*, right reason) that pervades the universe. And, in the christological controversies of the fifth century, the Christians attempted to define the Logos of Christ.¹⁶⁴ It is no accident that Hermogenes' systematic classification of the literary logos in his rhetorical handbook became one of the most influential treatises on style during the late antique and early Byzantine period¹⁶⁵ at around the same time that Christians were trying to make precise the christological relationship between the human and divine natures that comprised the constituent parts of the divine Logos, Christ. The unified logos exemplified in Cyril's homilies similarly reflects his larger christological concern for a unified Logos

¹⁶² Hermogenes, *ΠΕΡΙ ΙΔΕΩΝ ΛΟΓΟΥ*, 217 ll. 12–17.

¹⁶³ Hermogenes, *ibid.* 217. See generally, C. W. Wooten, 'Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Hermogenes on the Style of Demosthenes', *American Journal of Philology* 110 (1989), 576–88.

¹⁶⁴ G. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, 19. '[Hermogenes] is developing for the world of the literary logos a scheme of interplay between universals and particulars which will have its counterpart in Neoplatonic and Christian speculations about the divine Logos.'

¹⁶⁵ On the widespread influence of Hermogenes' *corpus* in the Byzantine period, see Hermogenes, *On Types of Style*, trans. C. W. Wooten, Introduction, p. xvii.

in Christ. As Cyril repeatedly insisted in the early years of the controversy, Christ was 'one incarnate nature of God the Word (*μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη*)'. At a much greater level of subtlety, therefore, Cyril's polemical homilies represent the close relationship between literary form and content that Longinus asserted was necessary for the sublime, and that Hermogenes uncovered as he delineated, analysed, and interpreted the Demosthenic *logos*. The closely integrated form of Cyril's *Homily IV* against Nestorius thus expresses in literary terms the content of Cyril's single-nature Christology.¹⁶⁶ Longinus said that form and content should represent one another, for just as 'art is perfect when it seems to be nature, nature succeeds when it contains art hidden within'.¹⁶⁷ Cyril's homilies took this relationship seriously. There, the juxtaposition of Christian *paraenesis* and anti-Nestorian rhetoric reciprocally expressed one another as form and content.

¹⁶⁶ Just as Cyril depicted Nestorius as the new Arius, he depicted the Virgin Mary as the ultimate symbol of anti-Arianism. For Cyril there is one nature of Christ, one Christian doctrine, and one organic literary whole.

¹⁶⁷ Longinus, *Libellus de Sublimitate*, 30 ll. 6–8.

The Rhetorical and Interpretative Method of Nestorius

Cyril's homilies devastated his opponents rhetorically by effectively combining the truths he developed in the credal statements of his early episcopacy with the sophistic techniques and methods of adversarial attack that he had instinctively absorbed through reading the church fathers. But Nestorius' homilies¹ presented his christological views by carefully explicating the biblical text. The slanderous words, 'Jew', 'pagan', and 'Arian' that Cyril used in his homilies were absent. Though Nestorius attempted to attack his adversary with words, he did not use the exaggerated speech that was proper to the rhetoric of abuse. One might even say that Nestorius' homiletic discourse paled in comparison to Cyril's rhetorical flourishes, that it was merely a desperate attempt to stem the inevitable tide of his own demise. But that does not mean Nestorius was a poor rhetorician, or that he had failed to master the rhetorical methods and techniques of the second sophistic. Though Nestorius' style differed from Cyril's, his homilies displayed their own variety of rhetorical skill, which was more learned and studied than the homespun rhetoric of his adversary, and which arose from the rhetorical traditions of his native Antioch.

¹ After Nestorius was deposed and sent into exile, Theodosius II ordered that his theological works be destroyed. The few writings of Nestorius that have survived include his pseudonymous treatise the *Book of Heraclides*, which was preserved in Syriac translation, and some letters and homilies that have come down to us mainly in Latin translation. (See *CPG* 5665–766). Any study of the homilies of Nestorius delivered during the controversy, therefore, immediately confronts the paucity of source material preserved in the original Greek. These fragments of Greek text and the extant Latin translations are the basis for my discussion.

THE SECULAR RHETORIC OF ANTIOCH

The rhetorical tradition of Antioch was particularly rich and distinguished. It centred on the rhetorician Libanius, who was a student of the pagan Zenobius. After opening schools in Constantinople and then Nicomedia, Libanius eventually settled in Antioch in 354, where he spent the remainder of his long career as a rhetorician and teacher.² Several prominent Christians were among his students, including John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzen, and, even more significantly, Nestorius' own teacher, Theodore of Mopsuestia.³ This close pedagogical connection with the sophistic rhetoric of Antioch meant that Nestorius absorbed his city's rhetorical traditions.⁴ The prodigious literary output of Libanius best exemplified that tradition, which was far less interested in style than were the handbooks of the second sophistic.

Neither Libanius nor his student Aphthonius ever produced a treatise on style. Instead, their interest lay in the method and structure of logical argumentation. The emphasis on method and structure is evident in their surviving rhetorical handbooks, which present the basic school exercises known as *progymnasmata*.⁵ Libanius' *Progymnasmata* describes, elucidates, and illustrates the various types of literary composition, including myths (*μῦθοι*), narratives (*διηγήματα*), *chreiai* (*χρεΐαι*), proverbs (*γνώμαι*), refutations (*ἀνασκευαί*), confirmations (*κατασκευαί*), commonplaces (*κοινὸὶ τόποι*), *encomia* (*ἐγκώμια*), vituperations (*ψόγοι*, *ῥσогоι*), comparisons (*συγκρίσεις*), characterizations (*ἡθοποιΐαι*), descriptions (*ἐκφράσεις*), and theses (*θέσεις*). Aphthonius treats each of these topical divisions more summarily in

² G. Downey, *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton, 1963), 193. See also D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Christian Antioch: A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East* (Cambridge, 1982).

³ On prosopographic evidence for the 198 students of Libanius, see P. Petit, *Les Étudiants de Libanius* (Paris, 1956); see also A. J. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne; Libanius, Chrysostome et les moines de Syrie* (Paris, 1959), 141–79.

⁴ Downey, *Ancient Antioch*, 193.

⁵ Aphthonius, *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. Rabe, in *Rhetores Graeci* (Leipzig, 1926), x; Libanius, *Libanii Opera, Progymnasmata*, ed. Foerster (Leipzig, 1915), iii.

his *Progymnasmata*, which probably borrowed from the handbook of his teacher. It is a similar treatise in abbreviated form. No detailed discussion of figures, diction, prose rhythm, and word arrangement appears in either handbook, which were used as the early exercises in rhetorical education. Literary style was considered appropriate only for advanced rhetorical work and was, therefore, relegated to the end of one's training.⁶ Instead of enumerating the figures appropriate to the various types of literary style, both rhetoricians elucidated the content and structure proper to the literary forms their handbooks included. The content was drawn partly from ancient poetry. Libanius' examples were taken from tales of the Trojan War, as were those of Aphthonius, who cited 'Hecuba after the fall of Troy and Achilles on the death of Patroclus as suitable subjects for *ethopoeia*'.⁷

This interest in content and structure suggests that Libanius and Aphthonius differed from the sophists whom John Chrysostom criticized for their excessive concern with virtuosity in rhetorical delivery at the expense of moral truth. In the second century AD, Aristides had defended rhetoric against this charge that it was merely a superficial, morally ambivalent display of verbal skill and was, therefore, inferior to philosophy. Aristides put up a good case for the defence, because the sophists of the Roman empire were much more than masters of oratory. Because of their prestige and influence, they were expected to serve in public office and to provide financial aid to their city in times of need.⁸ Libanius was among these socially responsible sophists, for he did more than merely entertain the masses with his oratory. He also involved himself in the administration of the city. Though his biographer Eunapius unfairly accused him of falling into vulgar Atticisms, he acknowledged Libanius' competence in administering public affairs.⁹ Libanius' letters and orations support this view. His reform speeches argued passion-

⁶ *Hermogenes On Issues*, ed. M. Heath, 35. 6-11 (Oxford, 1995), 32.

⁷ R. Webb, 'Poetry and Rhetoric', in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 346.

⁸ G. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1969), 26, and Ch. 3, *passim*.

⁹ *Eunapius: Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, 496, trans. W. C. Wright (Cambridge, Mass., 1921), 524. See generally, R. J. Penella, *Greek Philosophers and Sophists in the Fourth Century A.D.* (New York, 1990).

ately against the oppressive social conditions afflicting the poor, farmers, artisans, prisoners, and *curiales*.¹⁰

That spirit of social reform can be seen in a series of speeches (*Orations* 26–8 and 50) Libanius delivered against a *comes Orientis* named Icarius.¹¹ Growing more and more concerned about the social problems troubling his city, he delivered *Oration* 50 before the emperor Theodosius I. *Comes* Icarius had ordered the local peasantry to remove the debris remaining from the city's building projects. Libanius argued that this practice was burdensome for the peasants economically, and had even placed them in physical danger. He declared that the city should pay for the disposal of the rubble.

Libanius used elements of the refutation (*ἀνασκευή*), a form of argument capable of overthrowing any reasonable assertion.¹² He first gave his exposition (*ἔκθεσις*) of the matter, setting forth the facts of the case: there is a problem with excessive building debris in the city, the expenses of which should be borne by the city. Next, to highlight the absurdity of the administration's position, Libanius argued from the impossible (*ἀδύνατος*) proposition, that if the city's requisitioning of peasant labour were fair and just with respect to the disposing of rubble, then it should apply equally to every aspect of the city's building projects.¹³ Libanius then moved to a statement of the improper (*ἀπρεπής*), which delineated the breach of justice that would occur if the practice continued. Arguing next from the inconsistent (*ἀνακόλουθον*), another method appropriate to refutation, Libanius declared, 'I would like to ask them why they don't take male and

¹⁰ R. A. Pack, *Studies in Libanius and Antiochene Society Under Theodosius* (Menasha, Wis., 1935), 13. On social criticism in Libanius, see *ibid.* 1–12; on social forces inimical to the ideal order, see *ibid.* 13–69. On Libanius as a source for the ideological representations of the social world of late antique Syria, see P. N. Doukellis, *Libanios et la Terre: Discours et Idéologie Politique* (Beirut, 1995).

¹¹ Libanius, *Libanii Opera*, ed. R. Foerster (Leipzig, 1963): *Libanii oratio ad Icarium* (XXVI); *Libanii oratio contra Icarium I* (XXVII); *Libanii oratio contra Icarium II* (XXVIII), 4–58; *Libanii oratio pro agricolis de angariis* (L), 471–87.

¹² See *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*: 10–13. See also *Hermogenes On Issues*, ed. Heath, 156–75, 194–208, in which Heath analyses Libanius' *Orations* 44, 36, and demonstrates that they follow quite closely Hermogenes' guidelines on conjecture and counterplea respectively.

¹³ Libanius, *Libanii Opera: Libanii oratio pro agricolis de angariis* (L), 3, p. 472 ll. 7–18.

female slaves, bedding, furniture, and carriages from private houses for the service of the city. If they say that it is illegal, this is illegal too.¹⁴

Elements of the thesis (*θέσις*), the rhetorical form devoted to the reasoned examination of both sides of a debate, also appear in *Oration 50*.¹⁵ Thesis is the only rhetorical discourse in which the counterthesis (*ἀντίθεσις*) and rebuttal (*λύσις*) regularly appeared. Using it, a speaker could offer a balanced consideration of any number of political concerns, including such questions as whether to marry, set sail, or fortify a city. Libanius used this rhetorical method to consider the possibility that the requisitioning of forced labour had passed into legal custom. By thus rhetorically addressing troublesome aspects of current social policy, and speaking eloquently for the city's poor and oppressed, Libanius persuaded local opinion as well as the emperor Theodosius I of the necessity for social reform.

Though persuasion was the goal of Libanius' oratory, education or *paraenesis* was equally important for his broader social concerns. Not specific to rhetorical discourse, *paraenesis* had antecedents that reached to classical times, as when Plato declared that fable was an appropriate vehicle of instruction for the young.¹⁶ As an introduction to the more inaccessible discourse of philosophy, fable could express certain general principles for the benefit of a young audience, and therefore poetic content needed to be carefully tailored to the purpose for which it was being taught. Plato therefore insisted that didactic myths for his ideal *Republic* be governed by *typoi* (*τύποι*, types) that inculcated virtues that the guardians of his utopian society would need.¹⁷ Once rhetoric turned to the use of poetic forms such as the fable, some of these same concerns for moral content were transferred to rhetorical composition.

Moral instruction came to the fore in the *progymnasmata* of Libanius and Aphthonius, which used the fable or *mythos* (*μῦθος*)

¹⁴ Libanius, *Libanii Opera: Libanii oratio pro agricolis de angariis* (L), 7, p. 474 ll. 1–14; ἡδέως δ' ἂν αὐτοὺς ἐροίμην, διὰ τί μὴ καὶ οἰκέτας καὶ θεραπαίνας καὶ στρώματα καὶ σκεύη καὶ ἀμάξια ἄγουσιν ἐκ τῶν οἰκίων ἐπὶ τὴν τῆς πόλεως χρείαν. εἰ γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἔξεστι φήσουσιν, οὐδὲ ταῦτα ἔξεστι, *ibid.* ll. 2–6. *Selected Orations*, ii, trans. A. F. Norman, *Oration 7*.

¹⁵ *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, x: 41–6.

¹⁶ See Plato, *Republic*, *Platonis Opera*, ed. Burnet, 378^d–379^e2.

¹⁷ See D. A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* (London, 1981), 89.

to exemplify moral behaviour. A literary form poetic in origin, the *mythos* [ha[d] also become common in the addresses of public speakers (γεγένηται δὲ καὶ ῥητόρων κοινὸς ἐκ παλαιέσεως). The history of the *mythos* was complex, for it began as a simple narrative illustrating a moral point, but eventually the form found its way into the rhetorical curriculum.¹⁸ It thus retained aspects of its early beginnings as a vehicle for moral instruction. Aphthonius described the structure and content proper to this literary and rhetorical form: the *promythium* (προμύθιον) contained its moral at the beginning, and the *epimythium* (ἐπιμύθιον) at the end.¹⁹

The *chreia* (χρεία) was another rhetorical form that joined rhetorical persuasion with poetic instruction. Described as 'a brief recollection bearing appropriately on some person', the *chreia* was the rhetorical form for expressing something 'useful (χρειώδης)'.²⁰ Aphthonius' description showed how the *chreia* could convey moral content and instruction. The example of a *chreia* he used was based upon Isocrates' saying, 'The root of learning is bitter, but its fruits are sweet,' which illustrated its predilection for learning and instruction. The structure of the *chreia* began with the verbal statement or saying, followed by the panegyric (ἐγκωμισιαστικός), the paraphrastic (παραφραστικός), the argument from cause (αἰτία), the argument from the contrary (ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου), an analogy (παραβολή), or example (παράδειγμα), then the testimony of ancients (μαρτυρία παλαιῶν), and a final brief epilogue (ἐπιλόγος). Each of these elements elucidated, tested, and, working together, eventually confirmed the simple truth contained in Isocrates' saying. The *chreia* was equally important as a part of rhetorical instruction, and as a means by which moral content was imparted in other subjects in the schools.

The rhetorical treatises of Libanius and Aphthonius virtually ensured that rhetoric would not become merely the province of

¹⁸ R. Webb, 'Poetry and Rhetoric', in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 347.

¹⁹ *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, x. 1–2; see also Libanius, *Libanii Opera, Progymnasmata*, iii. 24–8.

²⁰ Χρεία ἐστὶ ἀπομνημόνευμα σύντομον εὐστόχως ἐπὶ τι πρόσωπον ἀναφέρουσα. *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, x. 3–6. D. L. Clark (trans.), 'Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in Translation', in *Speech Monographs*, 19 (November 1952), 264–85, esp. 266.

literary stylists, as some feared, but would convey moral content as Plato had urged, and more recently as had the sophist Aristides. The didactic element of *mythos* and *chreia* thus penetrated the stylistic veil of rhetorical persuasion, imparting to rhetorical discourse the literary and moral content that certain branches of the discipline had lacked.

NESTORIUS' RHETORICAL METHOD

The homilies that Nestorius delivered contain this complex interplay of the rhetorical elements in the Antiochene style: the preference for well-structured argument rather than stylistic flourishes, the insistence on *paraenesis* and instruction, and the devotion to serious philosophical and social discourse, even in public orations. Nestorius probably did not undergo advanced rhetorical training, as did Chrysostom or the Cappadocians, but it is quite likely that he received an elementary rhetorical education that would surely have exposed him to the *progymnasmata* of his native Antioch. Nestorius' homiletic discourse loosely approximates the rhetorical form of the refutation (*ἀνασκευή*) as Libanius and Aphthonius outlined it in their *Progymnasmata*.²¹ The standard framework for refutation included a statement describing the opponent's false assertion (*ἡ τῶν φησάντων διαβολή*); an exposition of the topic under examination (*ἡ τοῦ πράγματος ἔκθεσις*); and one's choice of any or all of the argumentative approaches: the obscure (*ἀσαφής*), the unconvincing (*ἀπίθανον*), the impossible (*ἀδύνατον*), the inconsistent (*ἀνακόλουθον*), the improper (*ἀπρεπής*), and the irrational (*ἀσύμφορος*).

Nestorius' *Homily X* uses refutation in dealing with the christological assertions of the Cyrillian opposition. Its very first sentence identified the persons Nestorius intended to refute: 'those who, because of the conjunction, either killed the deity of the only begotten, or deified its humanity'.²² Next, he briefly set

²¹ On Libanius' influence on Christian writers, see R. Goebel, *De Ioannis Chrysostomi et Libanii Orationibus quae sunt de Seditione Antiochenis* (Göttingen, 1886); J. Çazeaux, *Les Échos de la Sophistique Autour de Libanios, ou Le style 'simple' dans un traité de Basile de Césarée* (Paris, 1980); Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne*, 211–40.

²² Πρὸς τοὺς διὰ τὴν συνάφειαν ἢ τὴν θεότητα τοῦ μονογενοῦς νεκρούντας ἢ

forth the opposition's false claims: their attempt to preserve the close relationship between ordinary humanity and the divine Word improperly ascribed mortal characteristics to the Word of God and to God himself.²³

Nestorius also used the argument from the impossible in the same homily. Aphthonius illustrated that argument in a school exercise meant to refute an opponent's fallacious tales about the goddess Daphne. 'But let it be so; let it be conceded to the poets that Daphne was born of Earth and of Ladon . . . Even if you concede her birth, her childhood turns out to be impossible.'²⁴ The argument from the impossible is used to demonstrate the impossibility of the adversarial position by conceding the point of controversy provisionally, only to refute it. The orator then concludes that the adversary's position cannot be maintained. Nestorius used the ploy when he asked, 'For if Christ who gives life is dead, who would there be who could raise the dead?' ('Nam si ipse mortuus est, qui vivificat, quis subsisteret, qui mortuum suscitaret?')²⁵ Nestorius used an inflammatory clause, which he attributed to his opponents, 'that Christ was subject to death', in order to make vivid the impossibility of their christological position. Even if the deity were capable of mortal suffering and death, the soteriological implications of the position showed the untenability of their christological assertions.

Aphthonius illustrates the argument from the inconsistent (*ἀνακόλουθον*) with the following example: 'How did the Pythian (Apollo) in his pursuit of the maiden come off second best to a mortal soul [i.e. Daphne]?'²⁶ The implications were clear, for if

ἀποθεοῦντας τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα. Nestorius, *Sermo x. Ad eos, qui propter coniunctionem aut deitatem vel societatem filii mortificant aut humanitatem in deum transferunt* (frag.) (CPG 5699) *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 265–77.

²³ Ibid. 266 ll. 4–6. 'mortalem enim vivificatricem deitatem appellant et in theatricas fabulas deum verbum audent deducere, tanquam idem sit pannis involutus et mortuus.'

²⁴ *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, x. 12 ll. 5–8. Ἄλλ' ἦτω, συγκεχωρήσθω τοῖς ποιηταῖς γενέσθαι τὴν Δάφνην Γῆς τε καὶ Λάδωνος. . . . κὰν γὰρ συγχωρήσῃ τὴν γέννησιν, ἢ τροφὴν προῆλθεν ἀδύνατος. Clark (trans.), 'Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in Translation', 269.

²⁵ Nestorius, *Sermo x, Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 267 ll. 1–2.

²⁶ *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, x. 13 ll. 1–2; Πῶς δὲ διώκων τὴν κόρην ὁ Πύθιος θνητῆς ἐγένετο δεύτερος; Clark (trans.), 'Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in Translation', 269.

Daphne the immortal goddess were simply a mortal, then the immortal Pythian could never have appeared second to her. Nestorius used this method of argument, which asserts that the opponent's claims are not consistent with the available facts, when he said that the deity or spirit was composed of neither flesh nor bones. He argued, if Thomas could recognize God the Word, or perceive him through touching, then the Lord would have said, 'Touch and see, for I am spirit and God.' Instead Christ said, 'Touch and see, for the spirit does not have flesh and bones as I have.'²⁷ The adversaries' claims were simply inconsistent with the words of Thomas from Scripture.

Aphthonius exemplified the argument from the irrational (*ἀσύμφορον*) by turning again to the immortal nature of pagan deity. 'How . . . did the Pythian reconcile things which were not disposed by nature to be brought together?' he asked, and then hammered the point home with an unanswerable question: 'How was the cause on a mortal plane but the effect on an immortal one?'²⁸ Using this same device, Nestorius expounded his view of the dual nature of Christ, insisting that the various titles 'Lord', 'Christ', and 'Son' variously reflected Christ's divinity, his humanity, and sometimes both combined. 'Why, therefore, do you confuse those that cannot be confused?' ('Quid ergo confundis, quae sunt inconfusa') asked Nestorius, and 'Why do you attribute the name of God to the dead?' ('Quid dei nomen deputas morti')²⁹ For Nestorius, the distinct titles for Christ represented Christ's dual nature. Scripture itself guaranteed the correctness of his christological position. Anything other than his view bordered on the irrational, for the claims of his adversaries subjected the immortal deity to birth and death, an absurd doctrine that demonstrated the confused nature of their 'silly imagination', said Nestorius.³⁰

Nestorius' homilies were, of course, more complex than the simple school exercises illustrated in Aphthonius' treatise. Unlike those of Cyril, however, his homilies contained almost

²⁷ Nestorius, *Sermo x. Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 268 ll. 3–11.

²⁸ *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, in *Rhetores Graeci*, x. 13 ll. 14–16; πῶς οὖν συνῆψεν ὁ Πύθιος, ἃ μὴ πέφυκε μίγνυσθαι; τί δαί; θνητῆ μὲν ἢ πρόφασις, τὸ δὲ πάθος ἀθάνατον; Clark (trans.), 'Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in Translation', 269.

²⁹ Nestorius, *Sermo x. Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 271 ll. 23–4.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 272 ll. 1–2.

nothing of the finer points of rhetorical style, the figures, diction, and word arrangement that Cyril used against his opponent. The few extant fragments from the writings of Nestorius indicate that he was no master of literary style. The surviving Greek text in the first lines of his *Homily X*, the same homily discussed above, say that his opponents believed either that the deity could be put to death or that humanity could become deity. But Nestorius plainly contradicted Hermogenes' guidelines for vehemence by expressing this vitriolic sentiment through a sonorous and balanced arrangement of words: 'Those, who, because of the conjunction either killed the deity of the only begotten or deified its humanity.' (*Πρὸς τοὺς διὰ τὴν συνάφειαν ἢ τὴν θεότητα τοῦ μονογενοῦς νεκροῦντας ἢ ἀποθεοῦντας τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα.*) He should have used discordant words to emphasize the clash between the clauses. A more appropriate word arrangement would have expressed something abrupt and startling: 'To those who either killed the deity of the only-begotten, or—for the sake of the connection—deified the humanity,' for example.³¹

In the same homily, Nestorius implicitly compared Cyril to Arius, Apollinarius, and Eunomius. But instead of making Cyril their direct heir—as Cyril himself did to Nestorius—he mentioned their names simply to introduce his christological concerns over the designation *Theotokos* for Mary. He told his audience that a greater danger lurked behind the seemingly innocent expression of Marian devotion. 'In order to explain [my christological concerns] more clearly, and to make it more understandable for all,' he said, 'Arius, Eunomius, Apollinarius, and those in agreement with them, took particular care to introduce the word *Theotokos* [for the Virgin Mary].'³² And then, far from 'explaining clearly', the sentence continued its recondite christological discussion for another thirteen lines of printed text.³³ Cyril, on the other hand, preferred simple and pithy

³¹ *Πρὸς τοὺς ἢ τὴν θεότητα τοῦ μονογενοῦς νεκροῦντας ἢ, διὰ τὴν συνάφειαν, τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα ἀποθεοῦντας.*

³² *ἵνα δὲ αὐτὸ σαφέστερον καὶ πᾶσιν ἐὺληπτότερον εἶπω· τοῖς Ἀρείου καὶ Εὐνομίου καὶ Ἀπολλιναρίου καὶ πάντων τοῖς χοροῖς τῶν τῆς τριακτῆς φρατρίας σπουδῆ τὸ θεοτόκος εἰσάγειν, Nestorius, *Sermo x. Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 273 ll. 5–8, 8–17.*

³³ In Loofs' edition, the sentence continues on for at least thirteen lines of printed text, followed by a lacuna.

declarations: 'If Mary is not *Theotokos*,' said Cyril to his quarrelling monks, 'then Jesus is not God.' Nothing could strike more directly the soteriological foundations of Christian piety than this straightforward sentence encapsulating the entirety of the Trinitarian concerns debated at Nicaea.³⁴

Nestorius displayed such an uneasy relationship between form and content that claims of simplicity and clarity in his homilies invariably introduced long, verbose discussions that must have been difficult for his audience to comprehend. He thereby violated the basic precepts of composition that Longinus had articulated: an effective literary composition must maintain a close relationship between form and content. Clipped sentences in quick succession best produce the impression of passionate emotion. And the speaker's sense of outrage and of imminent danger are not conveyed by long sentences, sonorously arranged.³⁵ This stylistic imperative meant that literary content should strive to reproduce stylistically the real emotions the speaker wanted to stir.³⁶ Content was intimately tied with form in another sense as well, for in the organic theory of literature, every part was closely linked within the whole. This implied that the constituent elements of a literary composition—figures, diction, word arrangement, structure, and content of thought—were all necessary for interpreting the unified discourse. But Nestorius' preference for reasoning his way into his listeners' minds rather than for reaching them through their emotions defied this organic theory of literature.

Nestorius was so fond of philosophical argumentation that he was unwilling to simplify his rarefied style of discourse for his public sermons. When he received the letters of denunciation from Cyril and pope Caecelstine, he preached a lengthy sermon filled with philosophical arguments demonstrating the heretical implications of the designation *Theotokos* for Mary. Without

³⁴ In contrast, Nestorius' public literary style, with its preference for long philosophical explanations, contained almost none of the figural devices found in Cyril's homiletic discourse.

³⁵ Cyril, too, produced the impression of force by using clipped sentences.

³⁶ Longinus, *Libellus de Sublimitate*, 30 ll. 6–8. τότε γὰρ ἡ τέχνη τέλειος ἦν ἵκ' ἂν φύσις εἶναι δοκῆ, ἢ δ' αὖ φύσις ἐπιτυχῆς ὅταν λανθάνουσαν περιέχῃ τὴν τέχνην. 'For technique is then complete when one thinks that it is nature; on the other hand, nature is successful whenever it consists in a technique that escapes one's notice.'

denigrating his opponents in any way, he said that the heretics Apollinarius, Arius, and Eunomius used the term *Theotokos* strictly to affirm the single nature of Christ.³⁷ These heretics failed to attribute the humble sayings of Christ to the human essence (*substantia/οὐσία*), and his lofty sayings to the Lord and God of all, and so brought about a confusion of the two natures in Christ. To overcome this christological problem, Nestorius urged his audience to include the additional title ‘bearer of man’ (*ἀνθρωποτόκος*). This further designation, said Nestorius, takes note of the distinction of natures in Christ. Ever concerned with the finer points of theological discourse, Nestorius’ well-reasoned response to the christological discussion illustrated that the epithet *Theotokos* for Mary, when used by itself, carried heretical underpinnings.

Although Nestorius used this complex style of theological discourse, he nevertheless understood that his adversaries’ eloquent sermons were very persuasive. When he eventually conceded that the single designation *Theotokos* applied to the Virgin Mary, it was only to overcome ‘their elegant (*elegantēs*) and sophistic (*sapidulas*) public addresses (*conciones*)’. Clearly, he understood that the eloquence of his opponents’ words presented a formidable challenge to the reasoned claims of his own theological discourse.³⁸

That realization, however, did not prevent him from using the same style of argument long after his defeat and exile. In his *Book of Heraclides*, written while he was in exile (440s), Nestorius answered earlier claims that his public sermons, excerpted in the *florilegium* read into the record at the Council of Ephesus, contained much heretical material.³⁹ Explicating the contents of his earlier sermon, he said ‘Perhaps [I am accused] because I . . . have not confessed that God the Word suffered in both his natures and *ousia*.’⁴⁰ Such theological distinctions were not

³⁷ Nestorius, *Sermo xviii. De divina inhumanatione* (CPG 5707), *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 301.

³⁸ Ibid. 302 ll. 1–2. Igitur ut eorum conciones etiam elegantes et sapidulas superemus, dicamus τὸ θεοτόκος. ‘That I may overcome their elegant and sophistic public sermons, let me thus say “Theotokos”.’

³⁹ *Sermo x*, 269–71; Nestorius, *Liber Heraclidis* (Syriac); *Le Livre d’Héraclide de Damas*, trans. Nau, 228–9.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 230.

responsible for his condemnation at Ephesus. That rested only upon the skilful rhetoric of his adversaries. Ever willing to engage in sincere, theological reflection, Nestorius even attempted to respond to earlier claims that his writings denied the divinity of Christ. He would have been far more effective if he had made the very same charge against Cyril. If he had said that Cyril's Christology made Christ no better than an ordinary man, his listeners would have recognized that he was using the same rhetorical manoeuvre that Cyril and his party used so often. Instead, Nestorius articulated his own sincere belief that Christ, who is God by nature, contains the two natures of humanity and divinity.⁴¹ Thus did the confusion stemming from his original words remain.

The sincerity of Nestorius' public discourses reflected his preference for instruction and *paraenesis*. 'If someone,' he said, 'wished briefly to teach knowledge of piety and introduce correct reasoning of the deity of the *homoousios* trinity . . . then one should urge and vehemently insist upon precision.'⁴² Teaching the 'knowledge (*scientia*) of piety' was serious business that demanded exactness. Presumably that demand excluded the highly rhetorical language his adversaries preferred. The task of instruction or *paraenesis* was so compelling to Nestorius that, in *Homily XIX (On the Incarnation)*, he explained his entire theology of the *homoousios* trinity to his audience, including the Incarnation of the Only Begotten, and the ineffable union of the divine and human natures in the virginal womb. He undertook this difficult task even as the ongoing controversy with Cyril was disturbing his listeners. Instead of attacking Cyril using strong language, Nestorius addressed his adversaries as though conscientious instruction would resolve for them the confusion besetting the churches.⁴³

⁴¹ *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, 230–1.

⁴² *Sermo xix. De inhumanatione* (CPG 5708), *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 315 ll. 5–22. si quis velit compendio discere scientiam pietatis et de consubstantivae trinitatis divinitate rectam inire rationem, urgetis et circa exactionem vehementer insistitis.

⁴³ Nestorius spoke of 'yielding to the pressure' of his audience, who imposed a 'pious tyranny' on him, demanding that he explain to them the 'knowledge of piety'. 'Quoniam igitur necesse est violentiae vestrae succumbere, quae piam in nobis possidet tyrannidem, iterum apud vos eadem verba repetemus. Servate igitur compendio hanc scientiam pietatis.' 'Since, therefore, it is necessary for

The use of intellectual rigour, exactness, and theological complexity was an integral part of *paraenetic* discourse, even for public address. That the theological discussions in Nestorius' sermons exhibit those virtues does not mean that Nestorius was a poor rhetorician, ill equipped for public discourse. They show him to be a typical pastor as well. Primarily concerned with instructing his congregations in theology, Nestorius insisted upon correct reason (*ratio*) and exactitude in matters of doctrine. Time and again, he explained the theological foundations of his dual-nature Christology to his congregation in Constantinople. 'Among them', declared Nestorius of his adversaries, 'the name of Son is a naked word, that lacks something consubstantial with the Father. But among us, in fact, the name of Son is combined with the cause of a thing or a work. Among them, Christ, the Lord of all, is called God and is so called among us as well. But among them Christ is called God created, but among us is called, along with him who generated him, uncreated.'⁴⁴ No matter what the consequences, his duty was to instruct his congregation concerning the pernicious nature of the christological claims of his adversaries.⁴⁵

NESTORIUS' INTERPRETATIVE METHOD

Paraenesis was also appropriate to biblical exegesis. Nestorius frequently said that biblical sources unambiguously taught that the appellation 'Christ' signified both the divine and human natures. He pointed to the fact that Matthew called his Gospel that detailed Christ's divinity and humanity, 'the book of the generation of Jesus Christ ('*liber generationis Jesu Christi*'),'

me to yield to your pressure, which imposes on me a pious tyranny, I shall repeat to you the same words for a second time. Attend, therefore, briefly, to this science of piety.' *Ibid.* 315 l. 22 to 316 l. 4.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 320 ll. 10–21. *apud illos quidem filii nomen nudum vocabulum est, non habens patri consubstantivum aliquid, apud nos vero filii appellatio cum causa vel re vel opere est. sic apud illos iterum omnium dominus Christus 'deus' nominatur, nominatur apud nos quoque; sed apud illos deus creatus, apud nos vero cum eo, qui genuit, increatus.*

⁴⁵ In this case, Nestorius instructs his congregations about the heretical views of the Eunomians.

not ‘the book of the generation of the Word of God (‘*liber generationis dei verbi*’),’ nor even ‘the book of the generation of man (‘*liber generationis hominis*’).’⁴⁶

The Antiochene method of biblical exegesis was intimately bound up with the larger enterprise of *paraenesis* and instruction. Diodore of Tarsus wrote in the prologue to his *Commentary on the Psalms* that Scripture ‘teaches what is useful, refutes what is sinful, corrects shortcomings, and thus completes the perfect human being’.⁴⁷ If Scripture helped shape the perfect human being, then proper textual interpretation was essential to the task. Diodore’s ensuing *Prologue* described the proper way to interpret the Psalms and the way to understand their logical coherence. Similarly for John Chrysostom, context was important for understanding the text. Correct interpretation demanded attention to the sense of the text, the aim of the speaker, the cause, and the occasion for the composition. Considered together, these elements helped unlock the text’s ‘hidden meaning’.⁴⁸ Both theologians were drawing upon the instruction they had received from the Antiochene school of rhetoric, with its focus on rational argument and on the internal, logical consistency in a unified text. Diodore believed that these assumptions, which were the foundation for his polemic against the Origenist allegorizing of the Alexandrian school, constituted a middle ground between the allegorical methods that the Alexandrians often used in their exegesis and the so-called literalism of the Jews. This middle ground ensured that the underlying sense (λέξις) of the text was faithfully preserved against the assaults of allegory.⁴⁹ Diodore’s approach was characterized by its high regard for the plain sense of Scripture, and its commitment to preserving the text’s underlying unity and logical coherence. But this approach was never meant to dispense with the

⁴⁶ *Sermo xix, Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 317 l. 22 to 318 l. 6.

⁴⁷ Diodorus Tarsensis, *Commentarii in psalmos* (CPG 3818), *Diodori Tarsensis commentarii in Psalmos*, i. *Commentarii in Psalmos I–L*, ed. J.-M. Olivier, CCSG 6 (Turnhout, 1980), 3 ll. 3–5. Διδάσκει μὲν τὰ χρήσιμα, ἐλέγχει τὰ ἀμαρτήματα, ἐπανορθοῦται τὰ ἐλλείματα, καὶ οὕτως ἀπαρτίζει τὸν τέλειον ἄνθρωπον.

⁴⁸ John Chrysostom, *Against Marcionists and Manichaeans*, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. P. Schaff, Ser. 1, ix. 201.

⁴⁹ See generally, K. Froehlich, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* (Philadelphia, 1984), 20–2; Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 173–5, 177–80, 189–202.

occasional insight (*θεωρία*) that extended beyond the literal meaning of the text.

Nestorius' public discourse illustrated this thorough grounding in the plain sense of Scripture. His logical arguments were based on evidence adduced from the entirety of the biblical text and maintained its structural integrity.⁵⁰ When Nestorius wished to explain the christological significance of the various titles for Christ, he thus appealed to the coherence of scripture: 'If you are investigating the entire New Testament, you will not anywhere find death attributed to God: it is assigned either to Christ or Son or Lord. For whenever the words 'Christ', 'Son', and 'Lord' occur in Scripture referring to the Only Begotten, they signify the two natures. Sometimes [any of those words] means the deity, sometimes the humanity, and sometimes both.'⁵¹ For Nestorius, the christological implications were clear: the confluence of biblical evidence unambiguously supported his view that Christ had two natures. His public discourse was therefore devoted to expounding the conclusions of his thorough research into the entirety of the biblical text. If Cyril's exegetical method interpreted Scripture in relation to the credal formulations concerning Christ's Incarnation, death, and Resurrection, then Nestorius' exegetical method sought to uncover the truths contained in the printed pages of the text.

These contrasting interpretative assumptions helped produce Nestorius' distinctive style of discourse. His high regard for the unity and coherence of the biblical text was an important feature

⁵⁰ See J. J. O'Keefe, 'A Letter that Killeth': Toward a Reassessment of Antiochene Exegesis, or Diodore, Theodore, and Theodoret on the Psalms', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8 (2000), 83–104, in which the author argues that the conflict between Antiochene and Alexandrian exegetes was not a debate about the value of history. Because of their tradition in rhetoric and historiography, the Antiochenes were more interested than the Alexandrians in maintaining the integrity of the narrative. *Ibid.* 88; H. J. Vogt, 'Unterschiedliche Exegese der Alexandriner und der Antiocher', in G. Schöllgen and C. Scholten (eds.), *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum. Festschrift für Ernst Dassman* (Münster, 1996), 357–69.

⁵¹ *Sermo x, Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 269 ll. 14–20. *Καὶ ὅλως, εἰ πάσαν ὁμοῦ τὴν καινὴν μεταλλεύεις (διαθήκην), οὐκ ἂν εὔροις οὐδαμῶς παρὰ ταύτη τὸν θάνατον τῷ θεῷ προσαπτόμενον, ἀλλ' ἢ Χριστῷ ἢ υἱῷ ἢ κυρίῳ. τὸ γὰρ Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ κύριος, ἐπὶ τοῦ μονογενοῦς παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς λαμβανόμενον, τῶν φύσεων ἐστὶ τῶν δύο σημαντικὸν καὶ ποτὲ μὲν δηλοῦν τὴν θεότητα, ποτὲ δὲ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, ποτὲ δὲ ἀμφότερα.*

of his rhetorical as well as his pedagogical style. Adducing illustrations from Scripture, Nestorius meant to demonstrate to his listeners the correct interpretation of doctrine. The tacit assumption about the nature of homiletic discourse on which these demonstrations rested was that the Christian homily was the proper vehicle for reporting the findings of one's investigations into the sacred text. Like his Antiochene counterparts, Nestorius believed that homiletic discourse, supported by good exegetical method, could resolve all the difficult doctrinal questions facing the churches.

III

Cyril Emerges as a Saint
in the Byzantine Church

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From a Tentative Resolution to the Renewal of Controversy (AD 431–451)

In the years following Ephesus, Cyril's portrayal of Nestorius as an archetypal heretic gradually gained widespread acceptance. After the majority council at Ephesus deposed Nestorius in June 431, Theodosius II never even considered reinstating Nestorius as bishop of the Imperial City. Instead, he turned his attention to the problems of conciliar procedure that were left unresolved when Cyril's party deposed not only Nestorius, but also John of Antioch, the leader of the Antiochene delegation who had similarly deposed Cyril and Memnon. Which of the two synods, the Cyrillian or the Antiochene counter-synod, had been invested with the requisite authority to make a conciliar decision?

Theodosius' decision to confirm the conflicting findings of the majority bishops and the counter-synod produced such confusion among the disputing parties that it was necessary for both sides to gather again, this time at Chalcedon in the autumn of 431, less than six weeks after the proceedings closed at Ephesus.¹

¹ *Sacra directa per Iohannem comitem concilio* (CPG 8723), *ACO* I. I. 3, pp. 31–2. According to the Antiochenes, the emperor arrived at Chalcedon on 11 September (*Goropiaeus*) 431. There are no minutes of the proceedings at Chalcedon in 431, only accounts written later. Some fragments of Theodoret may preserve original speeches that he presented during the course of the proceedings. Mansi, ix. 292–3. See also Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, iii. 103 n. 1.

THE PERSUASION OF THE EMPEROR

At Ephesus, Theodosius had distanced himself from the proceedings both geographically and procedurally, but at Chalcedon 431 he assumed an active role, actually presiding over discussions at the assembly.² The rules of the game thereby changed considerably. Instead of trying to persuade the conciliar bishops through the public exchange of christological arguments, both parties now sought to persuade the emperor himself. At Chalcedon, the emperor was always present, which meant that both parties vied for his attention and sought to convince him of the superiority of their party's christological position. Chalcedon differed in another sense from the earlier proceedings. Instead of the public gathering at Ephesus, the discussions at Chalcedon were conducted in an informal, private setting that affected the strategy of both parties. Acutely aware that Theodosius controlled the outcome of the christological discussions, the disputing parties now turned their attention to the emperor himself. They watched his every move, hoping to discern which way the imperial favour turned. When the Eastern bishops had their first audience with Theodosius at Chalcedon, they carefully evaluated the imperial 'mood'. The conclusion they reached was that they had triumphed over their Cyrillian opponents, that the emperor wholeheartedly embraced their doctrinal views, and that their adversaries' position held no persuasive power for him.³ The opinion of the emperor was so important that the Eastern bishops measured their defeat of their opponent Acacius (of Melitene) not by the astuteness of their arguments against him but by the emperor's startled reaction at Acacius' claim that the deity was capable of suffering. Theodosius' disgust with Acacius was so great that he left the proceedings to retire briefly to the back room, purple robe in hand.⁴

Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, was also aware of the strategic

² Theodosius had never once attended the official council proceedings of Ephesus.

³ *Epistula mandatariorum Orientalium ad episcopos Ephesi degentes* (CPG 6350), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 77 ll. 17–20.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 77 ll. 23–6.

value of rhetoric, of persuasion as a practical tool, a way of speaking to one's superior that adduced every verbal means available to produce the desired end.⁵ But Theodoret was left with a much more negative impression of the emperor's position at this post-conciliar assembly. Concerned that he was losing ground with the emperor, and that he needed to convince the emperor and his consistory to denounce Cyril's *Twelve Chapters*, to reaffirm the faith established at Nicaea, and to recognize that Cyril and his followers had corrupted the faith,⁶ Theodoret used all the rhetorical forms (εἶδος) available to him, including modesty (ἐπιείκεια), asperity (τραχύτης), beseechment (παράκλησις), and invective (καταβόησις). He saw, however, that the favour of his listeners moved from one side of the debate to the other, like the shifting wind. Persuasion of the emperor nevertheless remained central to his strategy at Chalcedon.

Theodoret's broader plan was to convince the emperor that Cyril and Memnon could never be restored to communion with the Antiochene bishops unless they first denounced Cyril's *Twelve Chapters*.⁷ Like many of the Eastern bishops, Theodoret was concerned that Cyril's Miaphysite Christology had attributed suffering to the Godhead. Theodoret argued that Cyril had invented a concept of the unity of substance (καθ' ὑπόστασιν) in

⁵ On Theodoret's use of rhetorical figures, see C. Spadavecchia, 'The Rhetorical Tradition in the Letters of Theodoret of Cyrus', in V. Vavrínek (ed.), *From Late Antiquity to Early Byzantium* (Prague, 1986), 249–52. For basic bibliography on Theodoret, see L. Abramowski, 'Der Streit um Diodor und Theodor zwischen den beiden ephesinischen Konzilien', *ZFK* 67 (1955–6), 252–87; G. Koch, *Strukturen und Geschichte des Heils in der Theologie des Theodoret von Kyros* (Frankfurt, 1974); M. Richard, 'Notes sur l'évolution doctrinale de Théodoret', *RSPT* 25 (1936), 459–81; idem, 'L'Activité littéraire de Théodoret avant le concile d'Éphèse', *RSPT* 24 (1935), 83–106.

⁶ *Epistula Theodreti ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6242), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 79 ll. 31–3. For a discussion of τραχύτης and ἐπιείκεια in an ancient rhetorical handbook, see *Hermogenis Opera*, ed. Rabe; *Hermogenes' On Types of Style*, trans. C. W. Wooten (Chapel Hill 1987). On Cyril's *Twelve Chapters*, see *Cyrilli explicatio xii capitulorum* (CPG 5223), *ACO* I. I. 5, pp. 15–25. *Cyrilli apologia xii anathematismorum contra Theodoretum* (CPG 5222), *ACO* I. I. 6, 110–46.

⁷ The Antiochene bishops received limited support from the West, notably from bishop Martin of Milan who had sent them a copy of St Ambrose's *De incarnationis dominicae sacramento* (CPL 152), PL 16. 853–83. Martin claimed that Ambrose's work was contrary to the heresies contained in Cyril's *Twelve Chapters*. Hefele, *A History of the Councils*, iii. 104.

Christ that did not appear in Scripture or in the writings of the Fathers.⁸ But in the early discussions at Chalcedon Theodoret grew wary of trying to explain these theological concepts to the emperor. Writing to Alexander of Hierapolis, Theodoret said that he had nearly lost all hope, for the judges, bribed by gold, approved only of a single nature of deity and humanity.⁹ The more difficult task was to defend Nestorius. By then, the emperor was so thoroughly disgusted with his former archbishop that he recoiled in horror at every mention of his name. 'Let no one speak to me of him,' ordered the emperor, 'His affairs, once and for all, have received judgement.'¹⁰ Sometime during the intervening period between Ephesus and Chalcedon, the emperor had come to detest Nestorius, perhaps under the influence of his sister Pulcheria,¹¹ and perhaps because of the persuasive power of Cyril's public sermons that portrayed Nestorius as an Arian and as a Jew. Theodosius, as well as the monks and laity of Constantinople, probably knew of Cyril's conciliar sermons because, as now appears likely, stenographers had recorded them and then disseminated them along the mail routes into the Imperial City.¹² Under no matter what influence, by the time of the early discussions at Chalcedon, the emperor was no longer interested in evaluating the christological beliefs

⁸ A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (London, 1975), i. 489. See M. Richard, 'Un écrit de Théodoret sur l'unité du Christ après l'incarnation', *RevSR* 14 (1934), 34–61; M. Mandac, 'L'Union christologique dans les œuvres de Théodoret antérieures au concile d'Ephèse', *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 47 (1971), 64–96.

⁹ *Epistula Theodoretī ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6242), ACO I. I. 7, p. 80 ll. 12–14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 80 ll. 9–10. The emperor Theodosius' sister Pulcheria truly hated Nestorius because he had accused her of having an affair with her brother. Holum argues that Pulcheria was instrumental in influencing her brother Theodosius against Nestorius and in favour of Cyril. See generally, Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, *passim*. His view is partly supported by a letter pope Leo wrote to Pulcheria just prior to the Council of Chalcedon, thanking her for helping to eradicate the Nestorian, and then the Eutychian, heresy. *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (13 Apr. 451) (CPG 8977) (CPL 1656) (ep. 79), ACO II. 4, pp. 37–8.

¹¹ See generally, Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, *passim*.

¹² On the recording of homilies, see F. Siegert, 'Homily and Panegyric Sermon', in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 423.

of his former archbishop, seeming to favour at one time the single-nature doctrine that Cyril and his followers proposed at the majority council, and at another, the dual-nature christological views held by the Eastern bishops.

But Theodosius was gradually made to respond to the demands of the Diphysite party. Theodoret's public sermons attracted large crowds and he was steadily building a loyal following of clerics and monks. Evidence for the popularity of his sermons rests mainly on his own testimony, although the details he recites lend plausibility to his reports. He claimed his audience for one sermon remained listening 'until the seventh hour', for example. He also described standing on the second floor in the courtyard, which contained four porticoes, and addressing from that vantage point a huge crowd assembled below before he left for his audience with the emperor.¹³ Theodosius was aware of Theodoret's growing influence with the crowds and it troubled him. During his conversations with Theodoret, the emperor reproached the bishop saying, 'I know that you hold assemblies.' Theodoret answered by challenging the emperor's notion that only Cyril's party should be granted the right to assemble freely: 'Is it just that the excommunicated and heretics hold assemblies, and that we, who struggle for the faith . . . cannot enter the church?'¹⁴ Unsure of how to respond, Theodosius asked for Theodoret's suggestion. Theodoret replied that the emperor should follow the actions of his *comes* at Ephesus, who had refused either party the right of assembly until both were reconciled in peace. Theodosius promptly replied that he would not give such an order to a bishop.

Theodoret had intended only to highlight the contradictions inherent in the emperor's apparent rebuke of the Antiochene party. His strategy was successful. Theodosius' reply had paved the way for Theodoret to urge the emperor to apply this same reasoning to the present affair: 'Don't give an order to us either,' said Theodoret, 'and we will take a church and hold an assembly there, so your piety will realize that our followers are much more

¹³ *Epistula Theodoretī ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6242), ACO I. I. 7, p. 80 ll. 14–19.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 80 ll. 25–7. Apparently the emperor had given Theodoret the privilege of speaking frankly (*παρηγοία*) throughout their conversation. *Ibid.* ll. 24–5.

numerous than theirs.’¹⁵ This appeal to the emperor’s respect for the boundaries between the imperial and ecclesiastical spheres produced the desired result; were Theodosius to maintain those boundaries consistently, he could not then deny Theodoret and his followers the right to hold public assemblies in churches. Once Theodoret was granted this right, the numerous crowds that attended his speeches were brought to the emperor’s attention. With his christological position well received by the growing crowd of supporters, Theodoret believed that the emperor’s favour had shifted toward the Antiochene party, an impression that was for the most part accurate.¹⁶ During the discussions at Chalcedon, for example, Theodosius began to pay closer attention to the requests of the Eastern bishops. The emperor even ordered the Cyrillian party either to reject Cyril’s controversial *Twelve Chapters* as being contrary to the faith, or to defend them as orthodox and consistent with the Nicene creed.¹⁷ The imperial mood had begun to change but the Cyrillian party stubbornly failed to take note of that change, for they refused to comply with the emperor’s request.

But the Eastern bishops were quite eager to take advantage of the opportunity by attacking the *Twelve Chapters*. They argued that Cyril’s unwillingness to assign the sayings of Jesus from Scripture to either the deity or the humanity of Christ was a dangerous revival of the Arian and Eunomian heresies. They were convinced that this refusal to distribute the biblical sayings of Jesus had led to such a confusion of his divine and human natures that the Arians and Eunomians could legitimately claim that the Word of God, having suffered, was nothing more than a creature, that he was composed of a substance different from the Father.¹⁸ In his conciliar sermons, Cyril had raised this very accusation of Arianism against Nestorius. Perhaps Cyril took the offensive to deflect the charges of Arianism that were already stirring against him. Even though the Eastern bishops had

¹⁵ *Epistula Theodoretī ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6242), *ACO I. I.* 7, p. 80 ll. 33–5.

¹⁶ All the same, monks and clerics attacked Theodoret, who remained in physical danger. *Ibid.* *ACO I. I.* 7, p. 80 ll. 40–2.

¹⁷ *Epistula mandatariorum Orientalium ad Rufum* (CPG 6319), *ACO I. I.* 3, p. 40 l. 38 to 41 l. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* *ACO I. I.* 3, p. 40 ll. 11–16.

gained some ground with the emperor, their charges of Arianism were probably not damaging to Cyril, mainly because he had already secured his reputation as the opponent of Arianism during the incipient stages of the controversy.¹⁹

It is most unlikely that Theodosius even grasped the subtle christological distinctions behind the charges of the Eastern bishops. Their petition to the emperor made no mention of their christological concerns. Instead, they reasoned from their understanding of imperial theology. Harm to the imperial state was thought to be the unavoidable consequence of a troubled and divided church: '[The emperor] will not find a double doctrine of Christianity in Persia, and our [religion] will not be considered great by them if we are divided . . . nor will the prosperity of the empire be attributed to the prayers of two opposing parties.'²⁰ Whether this argument had any effect on the emperor is difficult to say, but shortly after receiving this letter Theodosius decreed that the ecumenical council be dissolved, that the Eastern bishops be returned to their churches, and that Cyril and Memnon return to their respective sees. Theodosius made it clear, however, that the dissolution of the council was neither a condemnation nor an affirmation of the Eastern bishops: 'As much as we live,' stated the imperial *Sacra*, 'we cannot condemn the East, because we have not convicted them of refusing to enter discussions [with the opposition].'²¹ The emperor's unwillingness to condemn the Eastern bishops applied to the Cyrillian party as well, for at Chalcedon he did not carry out his threat to force Cyril and his party into discussions with the Eastern bishops.²² When Theodosius left for Constantinople to appoint Maximian as the new patriarch of the Imperial City, he was under

¹⁹ *Epistula Caelestini Papae ad Clerum Populumque Constantinopolitanum* (10 Aug. 430) (CPG [8641]), ACO I. I. 1, p. 88; *Epistula Alypii ad Cyrillum Alex.* (CPG 5779), ACO I. I. 3, p. 75.

²⁰ *Contestatio prima eorundem [Orientalium] ad imperatores* (CPG 6329), ACO I. I. 7, p. 73 ll. 28–34.

²¹ *Sacra qua synodus dissoluitur, Cyrillo et Memnone restituitis* (CPG 8760), ACO I. I. 7, p. 142 ll. 28–30. Before the emperor promulgated this decree, Cyril had been released from prison and had already begun his journey back to Alexandria. Mansi, v. 805. Cyril arrived in Alexandria on 30 October 431, to much rejoicing. Hefele, *A History of the Councils*, 110.

²² *Epistula mandatariorum Orientalium ad episcopos Ephesi degentes* (CPG 6351), ACO I. I. 7, p. 81 ll. 10–12.

the false impression that the two opposing parties had willingly agreed to examine their differences.²³ Theodosius apparently believed that the empire was safe, for the moment, from the damaging effects of a divided church. The Eastern bishops disagreed. When they finally departed from Chalcedon, they feared that the emperor had misunderstood the significance of their christological position. Pointing out that the Orient was not a small part of Theodosius' empire, and that he needed the faith undivided in his present war in Africa, they reminded Theodosius of the impending threat to the empire's stability.²⁴

After both parties to the dispute were sent home from the discussions at Chalcedon, the emperor continued to vacillate between the Eastern bishops and the Cyrillians, intending to adopt a neutral position with respect to the contending parties. He accepted as undisputed fact only the deposition of Nestorius and the subsequent ordination of Maximian. Acacius believed otherwise. In his view, Cyril's extravagant gifts to the imperial court, which were found among the possessions of the Eunuch Scholasticus after his death, began to have their desired effect.²⁵ The chronology of events suggests a different scenario, however. We know that Theodosius favoured the Cyrillian party only *after* the monks, whom Cyril had courted prior to the council,

²³ *Contestatio secunda mandatariorum Orientalium ad imperatores* (CPG 6330), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 75 ll. 3–6.

²⁴ *Contestatio tertia mandatariorum Orientalium ad imperatores* (CPG 6331), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 76 ll. 3–7.

²⁵ *Epistula mandatariorum Orientalium ad episcopos Ephesi degentes* (CPG 6351), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 81 ll. 24–6; *Epistula Acacii Beroensis ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6477), *ACO* I. 4, p. 85 ll. 28–33. After the death of the Eunuch Scholasticus, the emperor discovered a note in his possession, which stated that Scholasticus had received many pounds of silver from Cyril. Acacius claimed that the silver had been handed over to Scholasticus by Cyril's nephew Paul who was, at that time, the *comes* of the consistory (*Comes Consistorianorum*). In fact, Paul was the son of Cyril's sister Isidora. Cf. the paper that Cyril's brother Athanasius presented to the Council of Chalcedon. *Gesta concilii Chalcedonensis Actio III* (Textus gr. et Φ a II) (13 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro) (CPG 9002), *ACO* II. I. 2, pp. 20–2, *Libellus Athanasii presbyteri Alexandriae contra Dioscorum*. See P. Batiffol, 'Les Présents de Saint Cyrille à la cour de Constantinople', *Études de liturgie et d'archéologie chrétienne* (Paris, 1919); P. Goubert, 'Le Rôle de Sainte Pulchérie et de l'eunuque Chrysaphios', in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon I* (Würzburg, 1951), 303–21; A. H. M. Jones, *Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1964), i. 346.

instigated a riot in Constantinople, pressuring the emperor to yield to their demands by refusing to admit the Eastern bishops into the city. The monks had also pressured him to ordain Maximian as the new bishop of Constantinople against the express wishes of the Eastern party.²⁶

The discussions at Chalcedon, therefore, did little to resolve the divisions within the church. Neither party was fully assured of Theodosius' unreserved support. Cyril continued to curry the emperor's favour, all the same. He composed a letter to the emperor,²⁷ apologizing for his actions in having written separate treatises to each member of the imperial family. He had intended only to set forth his christological position, but Theodosius had accused him of intending to sow discord, he said.²⁸ Cyril's apologetic letter is interesting for the change in circumstance it reveals from the early stages of the controversy. With Theodosius always present at Chalcedon, Cyril understood that he had to approach the emperor much more deferentially, as someone who needed to be persuaded rather than exhorted.²⁹

For that reason, Cyril recounted the history of the Nestorian controversy in anything but objective terms. Recasting the controversy in relation to the distant past, the most relevant being, of course, the Arian ecclesiastical controversy of the century before, Cyril said that the blessed fathers of the church had successfully opposed the Arian heresy at a time when the emperors themselves subscribed to its views.³⁰ It is no accident that at the same time Cyril was writing, the Eastern bishops were charging him with Arianism. Instead of responding to these

²⁶ *Epistula Acacii Beroensis ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6477), ACO I, 4, p. 85 l. 37 to 86 l. 5.

²⁷ *Cyrilli apologeticus ad Theodosium imperatorem* (CPG 5224), ACO I. I. 3, pp. 75–90.

²⁸ *Cyrilli oratio ad Theodosium imp.* (CPG 5218), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 42–72; see also *Cyrilli oratio ad Pulcheriam et Eudociam augustas* (CPG 5220), ACO I. I. 5, pp. 26–61; *Cyrilli oratio ad Arcadium et Marinam augustas* (CPG 5219), ACO I. I. 5, pp. 62–118. *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex.* (CPG 8652), ACO I. I. 1, p. 73 ll. 22 to 74 l. 5.

²⁹ Cf. *Cyrilli oratio ad Theodosium imp.* (CPG 5218), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 42–72, and *Cyrilli apologeticus ad Theodosium imperatorem* (CPG 5224), ACO I. I. 3, pp. 75–90.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 79 ll. 27–31.

accusations directly, Cyril said that the anti-Arian battles of the past resembled his own in the present. To the emperor, he told the following story: when Athanasius was struggling against the Arians, his enemies claimed that he had cut off the hand of a certain Arsenios. Although the Arians displayed the hand of some unfortunate individual, it was not that of Arsenios, who had gone into hiding to make the deception easier. Athanasius' innocence was later revealed when Arsenios was discovered with both hands intact.³¹ That Cyril chose to describe this incident in some detail suggests that he did not relate the story casually. Telling it was a strategic ploy for Cyril, who intended to convince Theodosius that his present situation was similar to that of Athanasius. Just as Athanasius had been unjustly slandered by the friends of Arius, so was Cyril wrongly condemned by the followers of Nestorius, whose blasphemies against Christ rivaled those of Arius.³² Cyril never explicitly drew the intended connection. The emperor himself was to do that, and then to reflect on the incident. Theodosius was then supposed to dismiss the charges of Arianism against Cyril, and to facilitate his becoming the legitimate heir to the anti-Arianism of Athanasius.

How Theodosius received these various attempts at persuasion may be unearthed from the imperial *Sacra* he wrote soon thereafter. Wanting to resolve the discord between Cyril and John of Antioch, Theodosius declared that if John subscribed to Nestorius' deposition and anathematized his doctrines, then peace in the churches could be fully restored. Any remaining problems would be resolved once John entered into communion with Caelestine and the other orthodox bishops.³³ Theodosius' plan for peace between the dissenting parties suggests that Cyril's apologetic letter had produced its desired effect, for the emperor was no longer enraged at Cyril. Theodosius' decision that John of Antioch be convinced in public and in private, and ultimately returned to the majority position, meant that the emperor was refusing to address the Antiochene party's con-

³¹ *Cyrelli apologeticus ad Theodosium imperatorem* (CPG 5224), ACO I. I. 3, p. 89 ll. 16–25.

³² *Ibid.* 81 ll. 3–16. Cyril asserts that Nestorius committed grievous blasphemies against Christ in the presence of pious bishops at Ephesus.

³³ *Sacra ad Iohannem Antiochenum* (CPG 8810), ACO I. I. 4, p. 4 ll. 2–10. It seems that by autumn 431, Theodosius and the imperial court had already abandoned Nestorius.

cerns that Cyril's *Twelve Chapters* contained doctrine reminiscent of the Arian, Eunomian, and Apollinarian heresies. For Theodosius, the solution to the ongoing discord within the church was relatively simple: command Cyril and John to meet in Nicomedia and to resolve their differences in private discussions. To underscore his seriousness, Theodosius refused to meet with either of them until the quarrels ceased and they had reached agreement. Concerned that he might appear to side with Cyril, Theodosius promised John of Antioch that he would under no circumstances meet with Cyril before John arrived.³⁴

In fact, Theodosius placed much of the blame for the present dissension upon John of Antioch. He told Symeon the Stylite that peace would be restored to the churches only if John finally assented to Nestorius' deposition and assured the world that he, John, did not subscribe to an innovative doctrine.³⁵ It was incumbent upon Symeon, said Theodosius, to pray that the superfluous doctrine be removed, and that tranquillity and peace be restored within the churches.³⁶ He also sought the help of Acacius of Beroea, whom he urged to persuade John to turn away from the 'error of his human will' by rejecting the doctrine of Nestorius.³⁷ Of course, merely assenting to Nestorius' deposition fell far short of addressing the complex christological issues troubling John and the rest of the Antiochene party. By this time, however, the emperor had lost interest in their claims, since he no longer attributed the present troubles to Cyril. His overriding purpose was to force a resolution between Cyril and John in Nicomedia.

The Eastern bishops, however, were not eager to acquiesce in such a demand, for they believed that the doctrinal problems the *Twelve Chapters* raised required attention before there could be peace within the churches. Alexander of Hierapolis compared Cyril to the Arians who insincerely anathematized Arius. Alexander said to Acacius of Beroea that Cyril was a committed Apollinarian who preached one nature in Christ, and that he wrongly joined that nature, the divine, to Christ's suffering and

³⁴ Ibid. *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 4 ll. 16–17.

³⁵ *Sacra ad Symeonem Stylitam* (CPG 8811), *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 5 ll. 18–22.

³⁶ Ibid., *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 5 ll. 25–8.

³⁷ *Sacra ad Acacium Beroensem* (CPG 8812), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 146 ll. 10–13.

death.³⁸ To Alexander, Cyril's teachings sounded all too similar to the Apollinarian discussions that had already been held with pope Damasus in Rome. When Alexander of Hierapolis and his party had confessed two natures in Christ in order to refute the heresy of a deity capable of suffering, the Apollinarians had immediately charged them with propounding a two-sons doctrine. Cyril and his followers had apparently levelled the same accusation against the Antiochenes.³⁹

In the meantime, Theodoret wrote to Acacius of Beroea that Cyril's most recent letters from Egypt were markedly different in content from his earlier teachings, and that they were much more consistent with Theodoret's own understanding of orthodox doctrine.⁴⁰ Although Theodoret was generally pleased with the content of the letters Cyril had recently written to Acacius, he was disturbed by their style, which he considered too full of convoluted phrases and falsehoods. Theodoret was nevertheless willing to overlook Cyril's stylistic novelties for the sake of ecclesiastical peace.⁴¹ In fact, it was Cyril's stylistic flourishes that may have helped persuade Theodoret to assent to Nestorius' deposition and to cast aside the more pressing concerns of his fellow Antiochenes. Even though Theodoret made these concessions of his own accord, he felt guilty and uncertain that he had wrongfully condemned Nestorius and too readily abandoned the christological issues dividing the churches.⁴² Faithful to Nicaea and to the letters of Athanasius, Theodoret remained especially unsure that Cyril's recent change in confession conformed to the well-settled boundaries of orthodoxy that had been established at Nicaea. Though Cyril himself had already professed his firm adherence to the doctrines of Athanasius, Theodoret and his followers laid equal claim to Athanasius' anti-Arian legacy.

³⁸ *Epistula Alexandri Hierapolitani ad Acacium Beroeensem* (CPG 6392), ACO I. 4, p. 98 ll. 14–20.

³⁹ *Ibid.* ll. 6–11.

⁴⁰ *Epistula Theodoretii ad Acacium Beroeensem* (CPG 6241), ACO I. 4, p. 101 ll. 24–9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* ACO I. 4, p. 101 ll. 29–32. Theodoret wrote of Cyril's loquacious style, 'nescio cuius rei causa multis verbis usus effugit brevem pacis viam'. *Ibid.* ll. 31–2; Latin trans. from the Greek.

⁴² On Theodoret's later correspondence with Nestorius, see M. Parmentier, 'A Letter from Theodoret of Cyrus to the Exiled Nestorius (CPG 6270) in a Syriac Version', in *Bijdragen, tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie* 51 (1990), 234–45.

Alexander of Hierapolis was even less optimistic than Theodoret that Cyril's recent confessional changes constituted his sincere adherence to established doctrine, for Alexander believed that Cyril's devotion to his *Twelve Chapters* amounted to a rejection of Nicaea.⁴³ Alexander's observations also disturbed Andrew of Samosata, who believed that the Antiochene party had made far too many concessions for the sake of ecclesiastical peace.⁴⁴ Andrew had had a vivid dream in which Apollinarius had told him that he would never acquiesce to Andrew's orthodox words. Then suddenly John of Antioch was lying in bed receiving benedictions from Apollinarius, and Alexander was helping him. Yet Alexander was also saying, 'I was forced because of the concessions.' The distraught Andrew repeated several times, 'This concession is impious to Christ's Incarnation,' and then he woke up.⁴⁵ For Andrew, Apollinarius was very much alive in the form of Cyril, and any concessions made for the sake of ecclesiastical peace would amount to a wholesale revival of Apollinarius' heretical doctrine. Theodoret was aware of Andrew's concerns, for he assured Andrew that Cyril's letters from Egypt, which Aristolaus had sent, fully anathematized Arius, Eunomius, and Apollinarius, as well as those who proclaimed a confusion of natures in Christ. The letters even agreed to remove the requirement that the Antiochenes 'indiscriminately anathematize' both Nestorius and his dogma.⁴⁶ With this concession from Cyril, the stage was set for reconciliation between the opposing parties.⁴⁷

⁴³ *Epistula Alexandri Hierapolitani ad Andream Samosatenum* (CPG 6349), ACO I. 4, p. 99 ll. 5-11.

⁴⁴ *Epistula Andreae Samosateni ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6375), ACO I. 4, p. 100 ll. 37-40. On the precision of Andrew of Samosata's theological language and his preference for the expression 'a single *prosopon*' to describe the unity of the divine and human natures in Christ, see P. Évieux, 'André de Samosate. Un adversaire de Cyrille d'Alexandrie durant la crise nestorienne', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 32 (1974), 252-300; Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, i. 495-501.

⁴⁵ *Epistula Andreae Samosateni ad Alexandrum Hierapolitanum* (CPG 6375), ACO I. 4, p. 100 l. 41 to 101 l. 18.

⁴⁶ *Epistula Theodreti ad Andream Samosatenum* (CPG 6256), ACO I. 4, p. 102 ll. 5-12. By this time, Cyril yielded to Theodoret's plea that not all of Nestorius' doctrine should be indiscriminately rejected ('indeterminate anathematizare').

⁴⁷ Whether Cyril, in fact, conceded anything at this point in the negotiations

THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION

At this point in the negotiations, both sides agreed that Athanasius' letter to Epictetus contained the doctrinal assertions necessary for a proper reconciliation.⁴⁸ John of Antioch was especially optimistic because Cyril had 'graciously received' the letter to Epictetus, which, as John put it, contained an interpretation of Nicene orthodoxy that would finally settle the differences between the opposing parties. Though John did not elaborate upon the content of their christological differences, he made it quite clear that Athanasius' reputation as the orthodox father *par excellence* was a legacy worth fighting for, even for those beyond the borders of Egypt.⁴⁹ Both sides were therefore claiming Athanasius as their own, for he was considered to be the quintessential interpreter of Nicene orthodoxy.

Modern scholars generally assert that the fifth-century christological debates were shaped by the different doctrinal responses to Arianism that the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools represented. Although this is partly true, there is an additional factor to consider. Both parties claimed the very same historical legacy, which suggests that they were concerned with matters other than preserving the christological traditions of their native cities.⁵⁰ John did not simply wish to promote an Antiochene response to the Arian crisis, for he also wished to assert the right to interpret the shared historical past exemplified by Athanasius and his winning fight against the Arians.

Here we see a new idea about how orthodox doctrine is formed. The procedure seems to be similar to that by which legal

remains a separate issue. More important for the settlement process was the simple fact, attested in Theodoret's letter to Andrew of Samosata (*CPG* 6256), that the Eastern party *perceived* that Cyril had made the necessary concessions.

⁴⁸ Athanasius Alex., *Epistula ad Epictetum* (*CPG* 2095), PG 26. 1049–69; G. Ludwig (ed.), *Epistula ad Epictetum* (Vienna, 1911); Versio latina, *In collectione Quesneliana*, ed. E. Schwartz, *ACO* I. 5, pp. 321–34. J. Lebon, 'Altération doctrinale de la lettre à Epictète de saint Athanase', *RHE* 31 (1935), 713–61.

⁴⁹ *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad Cyrillum* (*CPG* 6309), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 151 ll. 34–7.

⁵⁰ See e.g. R. L. Wilken, 'Tradition, Exegesis, and the Christological Controversies', *Church History* 34 (1965), 123–45.

precedent is set. Each party in the Nestorian controversy laid claim to a common orthodox legacy by using an argumentative strategy that would let them demonstrate by means of carefully chosen arguments that their christological position remained true to a shared, inherited past. Each side was also compelled to distance itself from the disparaging epithets the other hurled at them, including 'Jew' and 'pagan', which were meant to dismiss the opposing side simply by their having been uttered. In his letter to Cyril, John of Antioch complained that some Cyrillians called John's party 'the Christians of the Jews', an insult that John compared to the charges that Apollinarius had made against the universal church.⁵¹ Just as Apollinarius had used the epithet 'Jews' to slander whoever opposed his doctrines, so did Cyril's followers slander their Antiochene opposition. Being compared with Apollinarius must have disturbed Cyril, and that may be the reason that he refused John's letter when Paul of Emesa delivered it.

Paul of Emesa's arrival in Alexandria marked a turning point in the settlement discussions, for he worked sedulously to reconcile the disputing parties. First he set the limits of the negotiating process according to the wishes of the emperor, informing the parties that certain matters were not open to negotiation. He meant that Theodosius required the parties' assent to the deposition of Nestorius, and that he obliged them to cease their quarrelling in the churches.⁵² With Nestorius' deposition and anathematization a foregone conclusion, Paul of Emesa simply informed Cyril and John that Maximian would be installed as bishop of Constantinople.⁵³ Thus did Theodosius isolate the most contentious issue for Cyril and John to settle, that of

⁵¹ *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad Cyrillum* (CPG 6309), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 152 ll. 7–11.

⁵² *Libellus a Paulo Emeseno Cyrillo oblatus* (CPG 6368), *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 6 ll. 16–26.

⁵³ *Ibid.* *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 7 ll. 6–10. From the year 432 Nestorius lived in his former monastery in Antioch. In 435 Theodosius commanded that he be banished to Petra in Arabia, although he was ultimately exiled to Oasis in Egypt. *Relatio Decreti regii, quo Nestorio exilium indicitur*, Mansi v. 256; Socrates, *HE* 7. 34, GCS NS I, p. 383 ll. 19–20. Eventually he fled from barbarian tribes to the Thebaid where the imperial governor commanded him against his will to Elephantis and, then, to Panopolis. Hefele, *A History of the Councils*, iii. 153.

reconciling their doctrinal disagreements, which were centred mainly around Cyril's controversial *Twelve Chapters*.

Paul of Emesa had already done much to facilitate peace between the parties. He had brought with him to Alexandria a letter from John of Antioch, which included the profession of faith that John and his party had submitted at Ephesus in August, 431.⁵⁴ Soon thereafter Cyril agreed to its doctrinal language, which he quoted, with approval, in his reply to John in April, 433:

ὁμολογοῦμεν τοιγαροῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, Θεὸν τέλειον καὶ ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος, πρὸ αἰώνων μὲν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα κατὰ τὴν θεότητα, ἐπ' ἔσχάτου δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν τὸν αὐτὸν δι' ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ τὸν αὐτὸν κατὰ τὴν θεότητα καὶ ὁμοούσιον ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα. δύο γὰρ φύσεων ἔνωσις γέγονεν· δι' ὃ ἓνα Χριστόν, ἓνα υἱόν, ἓνα κύριον ὁμολογοῦμεν. κατὰ ταύτην τὴν τῆς ἀσυγχύτου ἐνώσεως ἔννοια ὁμολογοῦμεν τὴν ἁγίαν παρθένον θεοτόκον διὰ τὸ τὸν θεὸν λόγον σαρκωθῆναι καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαι καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς συλλήψεως ἐνώσαι ἑαυτῷ τὸν ἐξ αὐτῆς ληφθέντα ναόν.⁵⁵

We confess, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, perfect God and perfect man, consisting in a rational soul and flesh, begotten before the ages of the Father according to his divinity, and in the last days, the same for us and for our salvation, of the Virgin Mary according to his humanity, of the same substance as his Father according to his divinity, and of the same substance as us according to his humanity; for there was a union of two natures. Therefore, we confess one Christ, one Son, and one Lord. In accordance with this understanding of the unconfused union, we confess the holy Virgin to be the Mother of God, because God the Word was incarnate and became man, and from the very conception he united the temple taken from her with himself.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ G. Gould, 'Cyril of Alexandria and the Formula of Reunion', *Downside Review* 106 (1988), 235–52, esp. 235. See generally, S. Alexopoulos, 'An Example of Ecclesial Reconciliation in the Early Church: Three Homilies by Paul of Emesa and Cyril of Alexandria', *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 45/4 (2001), 339–58; *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad Cyrillum* (CPG 6309), *ACO* I. I. 7, pp. 151–2.

⁵⁵ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Iohannem Antiochenum* (CPG 5339), *ACO* I. I. 4, p. 17 ll. 9–17.

⁵⁶ Translation adapted from *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Ser. 2 ed. H. R. Percival, xiv. 250–1.

Written to appease both parties, the statement, known as the Formula of Reunion (433), contained all the christological phrases that directly addressed the most contentious doctrinal issues in the dispute. Cyril had earlier understood the divine and human natures of Christ to be united in a natural or hypostatic union.⁵⁷ But in the Formula of Reunion, Cyril subscribed to the Antiochene view that '[t]here was a union of two natures (*δύο γὰρ φύσεων ἔνωσις γέγονεν*), which is why we confess one single Christ, one single Son, one single Lord.'⁵⁸ He had been willing to concede to the 'union of two natures in Christ' because the Formula also contained an affirmation of a singular Christ, a teaching that Cyril had embraced since his early episcopacy. To demonstrate his acceptance of the two-nature doctrine, which John and the Antiochenes had proposed, and to assure them that he departed from the single-nature teachings of Apollinarius, Cyril denied any admixture of God the Word with the flesh. But he made a more profound concession as well. He accepted the Antiochenes' sorting out of biblical sayings between the deity and the humanity of Christ,⁵⁹ even though the distribution of dominical sayings had been at the very centre of Cyril's disagreement with the Antiochene party.⁶⁰ That Cyril conceded

⁵⁷ This was the third of Cyril's twelve anathemas, which were appended to his third letter to Nestorius. *Epistula iii (synodica) Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium* (CPG 5317), ACO I. I. 1, pp. 33–42; Cyril defended that anathema in *Cyrilli apologia xii anathematismorum contra Theodoretum* (CPG 5222), ACO I. I. 6, pp. 110–46; *Cyrilli apologia xii capitulorum contra Orientales* (CPG 5221), ACO I. I. 7, pp. 33–65; *Cyrilli explicatio xii capitulorum* (CPG 5223), ACO I. I. 5, pp. 15–25. Prior to 433, Cyril believed that to confess that the union was anything less than a true union, a natural union, would be to loosen the property of that union and divide the one Son in two. *Cyrilli apologia xii capitulorum contra Orientales* ACO I. I. 7, p. 38 ll. 28–32. However, the Antiochenes feared that Cyril had disparaged the divine union by calling it 'natural', for they subscribed to the view that the union had come about through grace and divine mystery. *Ibid.* 38 ll. 2–12.

⁵⁸ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Iohannem Antiochenum*, ACO I. I. 4, p. 17 ll. 14–15.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* ll. 17–20.

⁶⁰ In his fourth anathema, Cyril anathematized all those who assigned the biblical sayings concerning Jesus to his human and divine natures. Cyril defended his christological view by stating that the dominical sayings in Scripture must be assigned to one and the same Son in order to preserve the union and to confess one Son, Christ, and Lord. *Cyrilli apologia xii capitulorum contra Orientales*, ACO I. I. 7, p. 43 ll. 1–6.

such a contentious point provides good evidence that he was firmly committed to reconciling the churches. He acknowledged as much when he wrote to John that Paul of Emesa had found him ready to form an alliance for peace.⁶¹

Not all the doctrinal affirmations in the Formula of Reunion required Cyril and his party to concede so heavily. When Cyril professed his strict adherence to the teachings of Athanasius and to the faith of Nicaea, he reintroduced longstanding convictions that had shaped the early years of his episcopacy as well as the proceedings of the majority council at Ephesus. According to both sides of the christological debate, Athanasius and Nicaea were the touchstones of orthodoxy. This common perception surely facilitated the reconciliation.

Although John of Antioch was equally committed to reconciling the churches, he made fewer doctrinal concessions than did Cyril. He agreed that the designation *Theotokos* was appropriate for the Virgin Mary because Cyril had already conceded that the union of the two natures had taken place at the conception of Christ, thereby assuring the Antiochenes that the title did not imply that the Incarnation consisted in the Godhead's merely adopting a pre-existing manhood.⁶² John and his party therefore acknowledged Nestorius' deposition and dropped their demand that Cyril repudiate his *Twelve Chapters*.⁶³ By confirming his belief in a singular Christ, 'we confess one single Christ, one single Son, and one single Lord',⁶⁴ John assured Cyril that the two-nature language included in the Formula of Reunion did not in any sense revive the heretical two-Sons doctrine so abhorred by Cyril and the Alexandrian school. Once John's language of 'one single Christ, Son, and Lord' was in place, only a few small changes to the profession of faith were needed before both sides could fully subscribe to the reconciliation between the churches.⁶⁵

⁶¹ *Epistula Cyrilli Alex. ad Iohannem Antiochenum*, ACO I. I. 4, p. 16 ll. 13–17. Gould observes that Cyril, in his letter to John, did not engage himself in the dual-nature language of the Formula, thereby suggesting that Cyril had not fully accepted it: 'Cyril of Alexandria . . .', *Downside Review* 106, p. 238.

⁶² Gould, 'Cyril of Alexandria . . .', 236.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 236.

⁶⁴ *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad Cyrillum* (CPG 6310), ACO I. I. 4, p. 91. 2.

⁶⁵ *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad Cyrillum* (CPG 6311), ACO I. I. 7, p. 155 ll. 6–9.

After so many years of infighting, however, both parties needed to assure each other and themselves that an acceptable settlement had been reached before ecclesiastical peace could be openly declared. That is why they so vigorously denied that any christological differences remained between them. John of Antioch expressed the prevailing sentiment when he wrote to pope Xystus in Rome, the successor of pope Caelestine, that all parties to the controversy shared a common and traditional understanding of Christ, namely, that the one Christ, Son, and Lord, consisted in a union of two natures.⁶⁶ John similarly assured the emperors, '[God] has given a union in which there is no disagreement (*οὐκ ἄλλος ἄλλο τι φρονεῖ*) on the ecclesiastical dogmas, but in which the same belief (*φρόνημα*) is held on the Incarnation of Christ.'⁶⁷ In addition to declaring doctrinal harmony in the present, John also claimed that the statement of faith was consistent with the orthodox traditions of the past. Not only did both parties subscribe to a single vision of Christ, John said, but that doctrine also conformed to the entire body of orthodox beliefs transmitted by the fathers. Such grand claims were part of the arsenal of ecclesiastical language meant to assure the emperor that a reconciliation between the parties had finally been reached.

The prevailing doctrine of imperial theology offers one reason why this demand for concord was such a crucial component in the declaration of peace within the churches: even the slightest divergence of christological opinion was thought to threaten the stability of the empire. John's underlying metaphor of a singular Christ implicitly addressed that issue, for just as a uniform, orthodox doctrine implied a strong empire undivided, so did divergent beliefs presage instability and weakness, rendering the empire vulnerable to attack at its borders. John could finally reassure the emperor that the cities, peoples, and countries of the empire would enjoy peace and security.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad Xystum papam* (CPG 6336), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 159 ll. 6–12.

⁶⁷ *Relatio Iohannis Antiocheni ad imperatores* (CPG 6333), *ACO* I. I. 7, p. 157 ll. 29–31.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 158 ll. 22–4.

THE RESPONSE TO THE SETTLEMENT

It remained for both sides to convince their followers that no undue concessions had been made for the sake of ecclesiastical peace.⁶⁹ When John of Antioch informed the Eastern bishops that Cyril fully embraced the terms of the reconciliation, he, John, was careful to note that the agreement was an equitable one that attempted to resolve the doctrinal disputes troubling the churches. '[It was] not in shame or servility,' wrote John of Antioch to the Eastern bishops, '. . . that we came to this blessed agreement.'⁷⁰ Cyril's account of the reconciliation was much more circumspect. He told bishop Dynatus that some of the Eastern bishops had demanded that he renounce all he had written against Nestorius and subscribe only to the Symbol of Faith defined by the fathers at Nicaea.⁷¹ Having refused to disavow his writings, Cyril insisted that John and his bishops anathematize the doctrines of Nestorius, consider him deposed, and assent to the ordination of Maximian as the new bishop of Constantinople.⁷² The Antiochene party accepted Cyril's terms. But, as we have already seen, Cyril, too, made concessions. Accused of Arianism and Apollinarianism for mingling the divine and human natures of Christ, Cyril now subscribed to the view that Christ consisted in a union of two natures, even though he himself probably imagined Christ as being 'a composite or mixture of the two natures which are acknowledged before the union'.⁷³ Cyril also agreed to the Eastern solution to the Arian problem, ascribing some biblical expressions to Christ's human

⁶⁹ Cyril announced the Reunion to his own congregation in a sermon dated the 28th day of Pharmouthi, i.e. 23 April, probably in 433. Only a fragment of the sermon remains. *Homilia xvi. De concordia ecclesiarum* (frag.) (CPG 5260), ACO I. I. 7, p. 173.

⁷⁰ *Epistula Iohannis Antiocheni ad episcopos Orientales*. (CPG 6346), ACO I. I. 7, p. 157 ll. 16-17.

⁷¹ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Dynatum* (CPG 5348), ACO I. I. 4, p. 31 ll. 16-19; *Epistula Cyrilli ad Acacium Melitenum* (CPG 5340), ACO I. I. 4, p. 21 ll. 22-5.

⁷² *Epistula Cyrilli ad Acacium Melitenum* (CPG 5333), ACO I. I. 7, pp. 147-50.

⁷³ Gould, 'Cyril of Alexandria . . .', 240. Gould notes that Cyril himself denied holding such a view, by making assertions rather than arguments to the contrary. *Ibid.* 241.

nature and others to his divine nature.⁷⁴ Defending his new acceptance of this Eastern position, Cyril told Acacius of Melitene that the doctrinal difficulty first arose when the Arians ascribed the human expressions of Jesus to Christ himself, in order to prove that Christ's nature was inferior in essence to that of the transcendent Father.⁷⁵ To guard against this Arian teaching, the Eastern bishops insisted that the two natures be differentiated with respect to the biblical expressions of Christ. Thus did Cyril ground his understanding of Antiochene Christology in the history of the Arian dispute, and, in the process, defend the dual-nature language as a potent anti-Arian measure.⁷⁶ At least, that was how Cyril explained its inclusion in the Formula of Reunion, even though he himself never fully came to terms with the Antiochene view, and the way in which it distinguished the natures of Christ as separate subjects of the biblical expressions.⁷⁷ All the same, Cyril's most ardent supporters, who viewed the language as little more than a restatement of Nestorius' heretical doctrine, were dismayed.⁷⁸

How, asked the sceptics in Egypt, could Cyril tolerate this

⁷⁴ Nestorius had explained that the New Testament never attributed death to God, only to Christ, the Son, or the Lord. The words 'Christ', 'Son', and 'Lord' therefore signified the two natures, sometimes referring to the deity, sometimes to the humanity, and sometimes to both. For Nestorius, the proper exegesis of the term depended on a thorough examination of its scriptural context. Nestorius, *Sermo x. Ad eos, qui propter coniunctionem aut deitatem vel societatem filii mortificant aut humanitatem in deum transferunt* (frag.), *Nestoriana*, ed. Loofs, 269 ll. 14–28. In the early stages of the controversy, Cyril had explicitly denied the necessity of distributing the dominical sayings to two *prosopa*, *hypostases*, or Sons. He believed that that would improperly divide the unity of the one Son, Christ, and Lord. *Cyrilli apologia contra Orientales* (CPG 5221), *ACO I. I. 7*, p. 43 ll. 1–6.

⁷⁵ *Epistula ad Acacium Melitenum* (CPG 5340), *ACO I. I. 4*, p. 29 ll. 6–15.

⁷⁶ Some modern scholars have accepted Cyril's explanation of the controversy in its entirety, failing to take into account that Cyril was attempting to defend his position against virulent criticism. Instead, I suggest that Cyril made a genuine concession for the sake of ecclesiastical peace when he accepted the dual-nature language.

⁷⁷ Gould, 'Cyril of Alexandria . . .', 246.

⁷⁸ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Acacium Melitenum* (CPG 5340), *ACO I. I. 4*, p. 23 ll. 15–18. Nestorius himself complained that Cyril distorted the meaning of the Eastern Christians' distribution of dominical sayings. Nestorius, *Le Livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, trans. Nau, 281[438]. See L. R. Wickham (ed.), *Cyril of Alexandria Select Letters* (Oxford, 1983), 42–3 n. 16.

two-nature language?⁷⁹ The question would ultimately cause much consternation and dissent during the next twenty years, eventually culminating in the separation of what would later become the Miaphysite churches from the Chalcedonians. In the meantime, Cyril's critics demanded that he distinguish his own understanding of the two-nature Christology from Nestorius' 'heretical' doctrine.⁸⁰ Cyril complied. First, he said that Nestorius' sermons were an elaborate pretence. Nestorius merely feigned one Son and one Lord, but, in fact, he attributed the Sonship and Lordship to the Word of God alone, and ascribed to another Lord the events of the dispensation. Cyril's next move was to distinguish Nestorius' faulty doctrine from the 'orthodox' Eastern position. He accomplished this difficult task by subtly distorting the positions of both parties. He claimed that Nestorius allotted some sayings to God the Word and others to a distinct, woman-born Son, while the Eastern church recognized only a single, identical person as the author of all the dominical expressions recorded in the Bible.⁸¹ The reality was of course much more complex. Nestorius later defended his doctrinal position in the *Book of Heraclides* and declared that while the divinity and humanity of Christ each contained its own *ousia* (οὐσία) and nature, both elements were intimately and definitively joined together through the single *prosopon* (πρόσωπον).⁸² In fact, the Eastern position was not all that different from Nestorius', for it generally consisted in an actual and permanent

⁷⁹ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Eulogium presb.* (CPG 5344), ACO I. I. 4, p. 35 ll. 4-7. See also, Isidorus Pelusiota, *Epistulae* (CPG 5557), Epist. lib. I, 323, *Cyrillo Archiepiscopo Alexandrino*, PG 78. 369B. Similar charges were allegedly made by Acacius of Melitene and Valerian of Iconium, and by several persons at the imperial court. Liberatus Diaconus Carthaginensis, *Breviarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutychianorum*, c. 8 (CPL 865), ACO II. 5, pp. 106-8.

⁸⁰ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Eulogium presb.* (CPG 5344), ACO I. I. 4, pp. 35-7. Cyril also responded to his critics in his letters to bishop Acacius of Melitene (ep. 40, CPG 5340; ep. 68, CPG 5368; ep. 69, CPG 5369), in a letter to Valerian of Iconium (ep. 50, CPG 5350), and in two letters to bishop Successus or Succensus of Diocaesarea in Isauria (ep. 45, CPG 5345; ep. 46, CPG 5346).

⁸¹ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Eulogium presb.* (CPG 5344), ACO I. I. 4, p. 36 l. 16 to 37 l. 2.

⁸² Though Theodoret believed that Cyril was orthodox, he also firmly believed that Nestorius was orthodox, and completely innocent of the charges against him. Theodoretus Episc. Cyri, *Ad Nestorium* (CPG 6270), ACO I. 4. pp. 149-50.

distinction of natures in Christ.⁸³ But that did not stop Cyril from alleging that the one doctrinal position had nothing to do with the other. He contended that only the Easterns' dual-nature Christology was consistent with the teachings of Athanasius. In support of his assertion, Cyril referred to Athanasius' letter to Epictetus, in which he said that the body of Christ was not consubstantial with the Word.⁸⁴ Extrapolating from Athanasius, Cyril argued that this necessarily implied two mutually different natures joined together into one single, unique Son.⁸⁵

Concessions had been made by both parties for the sake of ecclesiastical peace, and Cyril's careful defence of the dual-nature language contained in the Formula was crucial to secure its acceptance by the churches of Egypt.⁸⁶ Although some scholars argue that Cyril's theology after 433 was consistent with his earlier writings,⁸⁷ Cyril's most loyal supporters at the time perceived a clear difference from his early christological statements. They had reason to be puzzled. When Cyril affirmed a single-nature Christ in his encyclical letter of 428, he informed the monks of Egypt that the Word born of God, and the flesh born of Mary, came together in perfect and complete unity.⁸⁸ Likewise, Cyril told the monks that the perfect commingling of God and man ultimately enabled humanity's complete salvation.⁸⁹ Not until his second letter to Nestorius did Cyril use christological language that was much more amenable to the dual-nature resolution that was to be accepted at Chalcedon. The difference between the natures of Christ was not abolished by their union, said Cyril.⁹⁰ Still, his position after 433 required

⁸³ Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria Select Letters*, 66 n. 6.

⁸⁴ As in Athanasius' letter to Epictetus, to which the Easterns subscribed. *Epistula ad Epictetum*, PG 26. 1049–69, 1068C–1069A.

⁸⁵ *Epistula Cyrilli ad Eulogium presb.* (CPG 5344), *ACO I. I.* 4, p. 36 ll. 3–12.

⁸⁶ On Cyril's concessions for the sake of ecclesiastical peace, see H. J. Schultz, 'Ökumenische Relecture der Konziliaren Christologie', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 120 (1998), 184–97.

⁸⁷ See e.g. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 112.

⁸⁸ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad monachos*, *ACO I. I.* 1, p. 18 ll. 4–16.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 22 ll. 19–22.

⁹⁰ οὐχ ὡς τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνηρημένης διὰ τὴν ἔνωσιν. *Epistula ii Cyrilli Alex. ad Nestorium*, *ACO I. I.* 1, p. 27 ll. 2–3. See the formula of the Council of Chalcedon: οὐδαμοῦ τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνηρημένης διὰ τὴν ἔνωσιν. 'In no way was the difference between the two natures abolished on account of the union.' This is the same as Cyril's formula in *ACO II.* 1, p. 325 l. 3, cited by Wickham,

explanation and interpretation in order to make it logically consistent with his earlier works and comprehensible to the monks and bishops of Egypt.

Surprisingly, though, Cyril's Festal letters composed for each of his remaining eleven years as bishop of Alexandria contained little direct teaching on the two-nature christological language included in the Formula of Reunion in 433.⁹¹ Never mentioning Nestorius or any of the Antiochene bishops by name, Cyril only alluded to the christological settlement contained in the Formula when he told his churches that Christ was paradoxically both God and man: He was the true light, yet fully human, and from the seed of Abraham.⁹² Part of Cyril's Easter sermon, this christological statement was meant to refute the claim of the Jews who had crucified Jesus that he, though only a simple man, had blasphemously made himself God. Within the broader context of Christ's crucifixion, Cyril thus demonstrated to his churches that to accept fully the paradox of Christ's humanity and divinity was to keep the Christian faith secure against the heresy of the Jews. Those who refused to embrace a Christ who was perfect God and man combined were thought to be like the Jews who crucified Christ, blind to the paradox of Christ's true nature. Dissenters from the union were none the less unwilling to embrace the dual-nature language included in the Formula. They remained ready to raise the charge of Nestorianism against anyone who threatened their single-nature vision of Christ.

Cyril of Alexandria Select Letters, 7 n. 3. Wickham states that 'elsewhere [Chalcedon is] indebted mostly to the Formula of Reunion', *ibid.*

⁹¹ In the period after 433 Cyril composed several treatises that did not so much explain the Formula of Reunion as oppose Nestorius' teacher, Theodore of Mopsuestia, in the harshest of terms. See *Quod unus sit Christus* (CPG 5228), PG 75. 1253–361; *Ad Anastasium, Alexandrum, Martinianum, Iohannem, Pargorium presb. et Maximum diac. ceterosque monachos Orientales* (ep. 55) (CPG 5355), ACO I. I. 4, pp. 49–61; *Three Books to the Monks*, extant only in fragments.

⁹² *Homilia Paschalis XXIV Cyrilli Alexandrini*, PG 77. 893A–B.

CONTROVERSY ERUPTS REGARDING THE
INTERPRETATION OF CYRIL

By the Formula of Reunion (433), the Cyrillians and the Antiochenes had, less than perfectly, reconciled their christological differences. In 444, Cyril died and Dioscorus, who had been one of Cyril's deacons, rose to the position of bishop of Alexandria.⁹³ Four years later, doctrinal controversy stirred once again.

The archimandrite Eutyches, superior of a large monastery of three hundred monks outside the walls of Constantinople, sent a letter to all the monasteries in Constantinople, claiming that he could find nothing in Scripture to support the dual-nature understanding of Christ promulgated in the Formula of Reunion. Since monastic faith was closely tied to the Bible and to basic credal formulations, particularly that of Nicaea, even the slightest indication that a doctrine was not thoroughly grounded in Scripture was enough to incite the monks to rebellion.⁹⁴ And indeed, Eutyches' letter urged the monks towards rebellion and sedition.⁹⁵

⁹³ Only a few Coptic and Syriac fragments remain of Dioscorus' writings. See e.g. *CPG* 5452–61.

⁹⁴ Thirty-five of the 300 monks from Eutyches' monastery lent their support to his anti-Nestorian cause, accusing Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, of unjustly condemning their archimandrite for refusing to violate the tenets of Nicaea. Mansi, vi. 861–7. For a complete discussion of the monks' role in the controversy, see H. Bacht, 'Die Rolle des Orientalischen Mönchtums in den kirchenpolitischen Auseinandersetzungen um Chalkedon (431–519)', in A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* (Würzburg, 1953), ii. 193–314 esp. pp. 197–231; Dagron, 'Les Moines et la Ville', 229–76.

⁹⁵ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro), *ACO* II. I. 1, p. 126 ll. 32–3. Eusebius of Dorylaeum, *Libellus ad Flavianum episc. Constantinopolis et synodum* (*CPG* 5941), *ACO* II. I. 1, pp. 100–1; *Epistula monachorum qui sub Eutyche, ad concilium Ephesinum secundum* (*CPG* 5952), *ACO* II. I. 1, pp. 186–8. On Cyril's generally positive relationship with the monks of Constantinople see Ch. 2 above, and on the procession of monks during the Council of Ephesus see Ch. 4 above. It is likely that Eutyches joined Dalmatius in this great procession in Constantinople against Nestorius. Pope Leo wrote to all the archimandrites of Constantinople, explaining that he did not believe that they followed the heresy of Eutyches. *Epistula Leonis ad Faustum et Martinum presbyteros et reliquos archimandritas* (13 Jun. 449) (ep. 32) (*CPG* [8926]), *ACO* II. 4, pp. 11–12.

The monks of Constantinople required some kind of explanation that would let them accept the two-nature language contained in the Formula of Reunion, just as Cyril had given them an acceptable explanation seventeen years earlier by pointing out that several orthodox fathers, including Athanasius himself, had used the epithet *Theotokos* for Mary even though it could not be found in Scripture.⁹⁶ Instead, they received the seditious urgings of their archimandrite Eutyches,⁹⁷ who, along with bishop Dioscorus of Alexandria and the emperor Theodosius, refused to accept anything but the most literal interpretation of Cyril and the Nicene Creed. Even after the priest Mamas had argued, as had Cyril in 433, that the orthodox fathers' interpretation and explication of Scripture was consistent with the Formula's dual-nature doctrine, Eutyches stubbornly adhered to his literal interpretation.⁹⁸

Eutyches however had based his understanding exclusively on Cyril's earlier writings, failing to take into consideration the letters Cyril wrote after the council met at Ephesus. These more recent letters supported the view that Christ was 'from two natures' after the Incarnation. Reluctant to subscribe to the Formula, Eutyches offered only qualified acceptance: he was willing to confess that Christ was 'from two natures' before the union, but that Christ was only 'one nature after the union'.⁹⁹ To make matters even worse, Eutyches presented evidence from

⁹⁶ *Epistula Cyrilli Alexandrini ad Monachos* (CPG 5301), *ACO* I. I. 1, p. 11 l. 27 to 12 l. 11. Cyril explained to the monks that Athanasius had used the term *Theotokos* in his *contra Arianos* when he wrote, 'having taken flesh from the Virgin Mary *Theotokos*, he became man'. Athanasius *Alex.*, *Apologia contra Arianos* (CPG 2123), 3. 29, Opitz, ii. I. 87–168.

⁹⁷ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro), *ACO* II. I. 1, p. 144 ll. 14–15. Zealously anti-Nestorian, Eutyches informed pope Leo that Nestorians were still numerous in the Imperial City. Eutyches, *Libellus appellationis ad Leonem papam* (CPG 5948), *ACO* II. 2. 1, pp. 33–4. Pope Leo was cautious in his response, however, and said that more information was needed. *Epistula Leonis papae ad Eutychem* (ep. 20) (CPG [5953]), *ACO* II. 4. p. 3; Versio graeca, *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 45. Leo eventually responded that Eutyches' allegations of rampant Nestorianism were unfounded. *Epistula Leonis ad Iulianum episc. Coi* (13 Jun. 449) (ep. 35) (CPG [8929]), *ACO* II. 4. pp. 6–8; Versio graeca, *ACO* II. I. 1, pp. 40–2.

⁹⁸ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro), *ACO* II. I. 1, p. 135 l. 29 to 136 l. 16.

⁹⁹ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, i. 524.

both Cyril and Athanasius that lent support to this doctrinal assertion.¹⁰⁰

The ensuing confusion demanded the attention of someone who was well equipped to explain and consolidate the twists and turns of developing doctrine in a manner consistent with doctrine accepted in the past.¹⁰¹ This task fell to Cyril's successor Dioscorus. But Dioscorus was unwilling to continue using Cyril's broader interpretative methods, preferring instead to subscribe to the single-nature vision of Christ that was consistent with Cyril's early writings. Dioscorus' conservatism left a wide chasm between the methods needed to make acceptable the dual-nature doctrine promulgated in the Formula of Reunion, and to integrate it with the Miaphysite doctrine Eutyches and Dioscorus promoted, and eventually transmitted to the monasteries of Egypt and Constantinople and its environs.¹⁰²

In an informal synod at Constantinople in the year 448, bishop Eusebius of Dorylaeum charged Eutyches with heresy. The trial of Eutyches, however, did little to resolve the doctrinal controversy. Nor did the formal ecclesiastical synod that Dioscorus called at Ephesus in 449.¹⁰³ There, vociferous pro-Cyril, anti-

¹⁰⁰ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro), *ACO II. I. 1*, p. 139 ll. 13–25; 143 ll. 10–11: 'Eutyches: I confess that our Lord is from two natures before the Incarnation, but I confess that he is one nature after the Incarnation.'

¹⁰¹ Aetius, archdeacon of Constantinople, testified that when the present controversy erupted Cyril, Caeclestine, and Leo sent letters interpreting the creeds of Nicaea and Ephesus, but did not articulate a faith or dogma. *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio IV* (17 Oct. 451) (de fide) (*CPG* 9001), *ACO II. I. 2*, p. 119 ll. 1–7. It was in part Cyril's rhetorical skill that allowed him to make interpretations that did not sound like innovations to the creed.

¹⁰² H. J. Sieben asserts, 'Insofern sich Eutyches nicht auf diese "erweiterte" fides Nicaena, sondern bloß auf die ursprüngliche Formulierung beruft, stützt er sich auf ein häretisches Glaubensbekenntnis!' *Die Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche* (Paderborn, 1979), 252.

¹⁰³ Basic bibliography: E. Schwartz, *Der Prozeß des Eutyches, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, München, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Abt. 5* (Munich, 1929); G. May, 'Das Lehrverfahren gegen Eutyches in November des Jahres 448', *AHC* 21 (1989), 1–61; T. Camelot, 'De Nestorius à Eutychès: L'Opposition de deux christologies', in *Das Konzil von Chalcedon I* (Würzburg, 1951), 213–42; J. P. Martin, *Le Pseudo-synod de 449* (Paris, 1875); E. Honigmann, 'The Original Lists of the Members of the Council of Nicaea, the Robber-Synod, and the Council of Chalcedon', *Byzantion* 16 (1944), 22–80; T. E. Gregory, 'The Latrocinium: Constantinople and Ephesus', in *Vox Populi* (Columbus, 1979), 129–61.

Nestorian parties charged several prominent bishops with Nestorianism. Known formally as the Council of Ephesus II, this synod was later called the Brigandage of Ephesus, or the Robber Synod, a name given to it by Pope Leo, the successor to pope Xystus, who coined the phrase as an apt description of its sometimes violent suppression of so-called Nestorians.¹⁰⁴

At these proceedings, inhabitants of the city of Edessa testified against their bishop Ibas of Edessa, alleging that he was guilty of subscribing to the views of Nestorius. But this inflammatory language was far removed from the reality of Ibas' doctrinal confessions. In a letter addressed to Maris the Persian, Ibas had recounted the history of Cyril's conflict with Nestorius, saying that Nestorius' refusal to name Mary 'the Mother of God' invited the accusation that Nestorius followed the heretic Paul of Samosata, who said that Christ was merely a man. As for Cyril, said Ibas, he had failed to distinguish the Temple from him who dwells in it, and that was why he had been charged with Apollinarianism. Ibas believed that the controversy was resolved, however, when Cyril and John of Antioch reached an agreement of peace, 'for no man ventures to affirm that there is one nature only of the divinity and humanity'.¹⁰⁵ Ibas' view was a plausible interpretation of the Formula of Reunion. By subscribing to the Formula, Cyril had in fact acquiesced to the dual-nature language reminiscent of the Antiochene school, and that Formula left plenty of room for the divergent interpretations of critics and followers alike.¹⁰⁶ But at Ephesus II, Cyril's successor Dioscorus was not prepared to follow Ibas' expansive interpreta-

¹⁰⁴ Pope Leo coined the phrase *latrocinium* to describe the brutal proceedings of Ephesus II. *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (20 Iul. 451) (ep. 95) (CPG [8995]) (CPL 1656), *ACO* II. 4, pp. 50-1.

¹⁰⁵ J. Flemming (ed. and trans.), *Akten der ephesinischen Synode* (Berlin, 1917), 52; S. G. F. Perry (ed. and trans.), *The Second Synod of Ephesus, together with certain Extracts relating to it from Syriac Manuscripts preserved in the Brit. Mus. and now first edited* (Dartford, 1875/81), p. 119; J. P. Martin (trans.), *Actes du Brigandage d'Ephèse. Traduits sur le texte syriaque contenu dans le ms. 14530 du Mus. Brit.* (Amiens, 1874).

¹⁰⁶ In fact, Cyril, in his letter to bishop Valerian of Iconium, had earlier responded to those who claimed that the Formula of Reunion was consistent with Nestorianism. *Ad Valerian episc. Iconii* (ep. 50) (CPG 5350), *ACO* I. I. 3, pp. 90-101. See also his letters to bishop Acacius of Melitene (ep. 40, CPG 5340; ep. 68, CPG 5368; ep. 69, CPG 5369), and to bishop Successus or Succensus of Diocaesarea in Isauria (ep. 45, CPG 5345; ep. 46, CPG 5346).

tion of Cyril. He therefore condemned and deposed Ibas and several of his followers for their so-called Nestorianism.

Ephesus II was even more remarkable, however, for its explicit view of Cyril as the architect of the one true, orthodox faith. The inhabitants of Edessa, who opposed their own bishop before the synodal assembly, shouted a series of anti-Nestorian, pro-Cyrrillian acclamations: 'Ibas has corrupted the faith of Ephesus; Ibas has corrupted the true faith of Cyril;' 'Ibas has prevailed—Simon has prevailed—Musarias the Magician has prevailed. Ibas has debased the writings of Cyril the orthodox.'¹⁰⁷ It is safe to say that, by this time, Cyril was well on his way to becoming 'one of the orthodox fathers', so that his letters had the authority of being the orthodox interpretation of Nicaea. Indeed Flavian, who had become bishop of Constantinople after Nestorius' successor Maximian died, drew specific doctrinal inferences from Cyril's letters.¹⁰⁸

Thus had Cyril risen to fame posthumously. But he in his person was no longer available to provide an interpretation of the Formula of Reunion that would persuasively reconcile its blatant contradictions with his early writings to the satisfaction of the monasteries. That both the Miaphysites and those who subscribed to Chalcedon were to turn to his writings within five years of his death is a mark of how vividly he had conveyed his beliefs through his adoption of Athanasian orthodoxy and his skilful combination of secular and Christian rhetoric within the homiletic genre.

DIOSCORUS' THEORY OF THE COUNCILS

One ardent proponent of a strict Miaphysite interpretation of Cyril was, of course, his successor Dioscorus. He charged that, in the Eastern church under the jurisdiction of Domnus bishop of Antioch, a large number of persons had 'drunk the poison of

¹⁰⁷ *Ephes. (449) Gesta* (CPG 8938), *Actio secunda* (Syriac), Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 18, 27; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 50, 51, 69, 70

¹⁰⁸ See e.g. *Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro), *ACO II. I. I*, p. 113 l. 33 to 114 l. 10; *Versio latina, ACO II. 3. I*, p. 93 l. 19 to 94 l. 2. See Sieben, *Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche*, 245.

the impious Nestorius, which they did not hesitate to vomit by their teachings in the church'.¹⁰⁹ These strong convictions certainly fuelled his aggressive campaign to remove any bishops, including Flavian of Constantinople, whose teachings did not adhere to his staunchly Alexandrian, single-nature vision of Christ. Several of Dioscorus' opponents from Ephesus II later claimed that Dioscorus had physically intimidated them into agreeing that Flavian should be deposed.¹¹⁰ But Dioscorus had gone too far in his violent campaign to rid the churches of any last vestiges of Nestorianism, for the findings of Ephesus II in 449 were largely overturned at Chalcedon in 451.

More influential in the long run than Dioscorus' anti-Nestorian witch-hunt, however, was his interpretative theory of the councils. Dioscorus claimed that Ephesus I was the sister and consentient council of Nicaea.¹¹¹ He asserted that it was impossible to condemn Ephesus yet simultaneously adhere to Nicaea, for the two synods were thought to be one and the same, 'equal contenders for the glory of Christ'.¹¹²

In making that claim, Dioscorus was deploying a tactic of Cyril's. To Acacius of Beroea, Cyril had said that Ephesus I confirmed the faith of Nicaea, and did not in any sense destroy its creed. Once Cyril had established that Ephesus I was a simple reaffirmation of the well-settled doctrinal principles determined at Nicaea, then assuring the condemnation of Nestorius required little more than alleging that he plainly contradicted the tenets of Nicene orthodoxy. Nestorius was deposed, said Cyril, because he did not hold fast to the symbol, but rather destroyed it.¹¹³ This conciliar theory had not been lost on the emperor, who later

¹⁰⁹ Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 135; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 329.

¹¹⁰ Gregory, 'The Latrocinium', 129–61, esp. 149. As Basil of Seleucia put it, 'You imposed much force upon us, both from outside and from inside, as well as from the church and the monks . . . After the deposition of the blessed Flavian you forced us [to commit] such a crime by threatening us with a large crowd', *Chalc. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (*de Dioscoro*) (CPG 9000), ACO II. I. 1, p. 179 ll. 25–6, 32–4.

¹¹¹ Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 135; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 329.

¹¹² Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 143; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 347.

¹¹³ *Ad Acacium Beroensem* (ep. 92) (CPG 5392), ACO I. I. 7, p. 142 ll. 6–14.

declared that Nestorius had committed such a grievous violation of the most fundamental Christian precepts, the principles of faith agreed to by the fathers at Nicaea, that he should be deprived not only of the company of Christians but of the very name itself.¹¹⁴ Thus did Theodosius give Nestorius the disparaging name, 'Simonian', after the heretic Simon Magus.¹¹⁵ This epithet was reminiscent of the slanderous designation 'Porphyrian' that the emperor Constantine had bestowed upon the Arians.¹¹⁶ The parallel was no accident, for it revealed Cyril's strategy for using conciliar ideology to convict an opponent of heresy. If Ephesus I was a straightforward confirmation of the doctrines established at Nicaea, then Cyril, as the architect of Ephesus I, was the newest champion of Nicene orthodoxy. He was, in other words, the new Athanasius, a title that was given to him shortly after the proceedings at Ephesus. Nestorius was by implication the new Arius, and Theodosius II was similar to Constantine.¹¹⁷ All of these typological comparisons were implied by the simple statement that Ephesus I merely restated and confirmed Nicaea. In a culture that defined itself by its

¹¹⁴ Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 151; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 364. By this edict, Theodosius II, along with those in the provinces of Egypt, Thrace, and Palestine, aligned himself with Dioscorus and Ephesus II. Syria, Pontus, Asia, and the West generally sided with Flavian. Liberatus, *Breviarium causae Nestorianorum et Eutyichianorum* (CPL 865), c. 12, ACO II. 5. pp. 117–19. *Epistula Leonis ad Flavianum CPolitanum* (Tomus) (13 Jun. 449), ACO II. 2. 1, pp. 24–33; ACO IV. I. pp. 167–72; versio graeca, ACO II. I. 1, pp. 10–20. See also Theodoret's letters to pope Leo, in which he expressed his support for Leo's *Tome*. Y. Azema (ed.), *Théodoret de Cyr. Correspondance III*, SC 111 (epp. 113, 116, 118) (Paris, 1965).

¹¹⁵ Mansi, v. 413. The prefects then introduced a decree to ensure obedience to this imperial command, *ibid.* 415. See also *CTh* 16. 5. 66 (3 Aug. 435).

¹¹⁶ Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 153; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 365–6. For the imperial legislation to that effect, see *CTh* 16. 5. 66 (3 Aug. 435).

¹¹⁷ Cyril was asked by Theodosius II to accompany his wife Eudocia on her pilgrimage to Jerusalem, during which she made ecclesiastical donations and gathered relics like a new Helena. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 119; see also Cyrillus Alex., *Ad Lamponem presb. Alexandrinum* (ep. 70) (CPG 5370), PG 77. 341; E. Schwartz, *Codex Vaticanus gr. 1431, eine antichalkedonische Sammlung aus der Zeit Kaiser Zenos* (Munich, 1927), 16–17; Versiones latinae, ACO I. 4, p. 228 (e coll. C); ACO IV. I. p. 86 (e Gest. Const.). *St. Cyril of Alexandria Letters 51–110*, trans. J. I. McEnerney (Washington, DC, 1987), 69 n. 3.

relationship to the past, these bold assertions of the ways in which types were re-embodied in the present brought legitimacy to the controversial findings enunciated at Ephesus I.¹¹⁸

Dioscorus used conciliar ideology for the same purpose. He sought to establish Ephesus II in strict relationship to Ephesus I and Nicaea. So just as Cyril had implied that Nestorius was the new Arius, Dioscorus' conciliar theory made an analogous connection: 'one excommunicated Arius and the other Nestorius', wrote Dioscorus to the bishop Domnus at Antioch.¹¹⁹ That was also the plan of Theodosius, who declared at Ephesus II that no one shall add or subtract a single word from the creed of Nicaea. By this statement, Theodosius reiterated an abstract principle adhered to by both sides of the ecclesiastical debate.¹²⁰ When he strictly forbade any interpretation of the creed, however, Theodosius condemned an interpretative method that Athanasius and Cyril had openly practised.¹²¹ Athanasius, for example, had defended the insertion of the word *homoousios* (same essence) into the creed, despite its absence from Scripture, just as Cyril had defended the non-biblical term *Theotokos*. And Cyril's earlier writings had made clear his reluctance to construe the bible literally, for he believed that the figures and types of Scripture signified Christ's sacred mystery. Rejecting Athanasius' and Cyril's interpretative method, Theodosius forbade any and all credal interpretation at Ephesus II. He nevertheless asserted that both Dioscorus and Cyril faithfully upheld the tenets of Nicene orthodoxy, while Nestorius and his adherents openly trampled upon the creed.¹²² So Dioscorus, with his literal understanding of the creed, won this round in the ecclesiastical debate.

¹¹⁸ For the view that the authority of the ecumenical councils is grounded on the infallibility of the church, see Florovsky, 'The Authority of the Ancient Councils and the Tradition of the Fathers', in *Bible, Church, Tradition*, 93–103. On mimetic types, see Part II, Introduction above.

¹¹⁹ Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode*, 143; Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 348.

¹²⁰ Flemming, *ibid.* 153; Perry, *ibid.* 369.

¹²¹ Flemming, *ibid.*; Perry, *ibid.*

¹²² In other words, Theodosius wrongly equated Dioscorus' interpretative method with Cyril's.

CYRIL'S RISE TO ORTHODOX STATUS AT
CHALCEDON

But Dioscorus' so-called Nestorians returned in full force at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which again turned the tables by condemning Dioscorus for his single-nature view. There, at Chalcedon, the majority of bishops gave their overwhelming support for the two-nature christological formula that pope Leo expressed in his *Tome*.¹²³ According to Leo, Christ was at once both God and man, his two natures united in a single person.¹²⁴ Though Leo's conception of a single 'person' in Christ offered ample protection against the most extreme christological dualism attributed to Nestorius and the Antiochene school, the strictest Cyrillians, Dioscorus and the Egyptians, found Leo's Diphysite language in the *Tome* too similar to that of Nestorianism. For these staunch Miaphysites that similarity was simply too disturbing to ignore. Dioscorus, who was a Cyrillian fundamentalist, had earlier rejected the *Tome* outright, that being one of the reasons the conciliar bishops at Chalcedon deposed and condemned him. At the same time, the council unambivalently embraced Cyril's orthodox legacy and held his doctrine to be synonymous with the faith of the popes of Rome, including

¹²³ *Epistula Leonis ad Flavianum CPolitanum (Tomus) XXVIII* (13 Jun. 449), ch. 3, *ACO* II. 2. 1, pp. 24–33; *ACO* IV. 1, p. 167–72; Greek, *ACO* II. 1. 1, pp. 10–20. The bibliography on Chalcedon is extensive, and only a few will be listed here: Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, iii; Grillmeier and Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon I–III*; J. Meyendorff, 'The Council of Chalcedon and its Aftermath', in *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions. The Church 450–680 AD* (New York, 1989); R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon* (London, 1953); E. Schwartz, 'Das Nicaenum und das Constantinopolitanum auf der Synode von Chalkedon', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 25 (1926), 38–88; H. Chadwick, 'The Chalcedonian Definition', *Cahiers d'orientalisme* 10 (1984), 7–16; E. Muhlenberg, 'Das Dogma von Chalkedon: Angste und Überzeugungen', in J. van Ort and J. Roldanus (eds.), *Chalkedon: Geschichte und Aktualität: Studien zur Rezeptionen der christologischen Formes von Chalkedon* (Louvain, 1997), 1–23. For additional bibliography, see de Halleux, 'Le Concile de Chalcedoine', 3–18.

¹²⁴ On Leo's *Tome*, see generally, H. Arens, *Die christologische Sprache Leos des Grossen. Analyse des Tomus an den Patriarchen Flavian, Freiburger Theol. Stud.* 122 (Freiburg, 1982).

Caelestine, Xystus, and even Leo himself.¹²⁵ ‘Leo has spoken like Cyril,’ claimed the bishops at Chalcedon, in affirmation of the *Tome* and its two-nature doctrine. To the Cyrillians of Egypt, however, nothing could have been further from the truth. They remembered Cyril’s early christological formula, which had been based on Apollinarian texts that he had unwittingly used because he believed that Athanasius had written them.¹²⁶ From the early stages of the Nestorian controversy until Ephesus I ended in 431, Cyril had thus been unwavering in his single-nature views. Repeatedly, he had declared, ‘There is one incarnate nature of God the Word (μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη).’¹²⁷ But Leo put it another way: ‘There is one single, only begotten Son, confessed in two natures without confusion (ἀσυγχύτως), change (ἀτρέπτως), division (ἀδιαιρέτως), or separation (ἀχωρίστως).’¹²⁸ For the strict Cyrillians of Egypt, Leo had not spoken like Cyril.

But to the bishops at Chalcedon, Leo’s *Tome* indeed sounded like Cyril. That was because Cyril, during the years intervening between Ephesus and Chalcedon, had defended two simple notions: of Ephesus as an uncompromising affirmation of Nicaea, and of Nestorius as the new Arius. He had defended them so successfully that anything less than the claim that Leo’s *Tome* complied with Cyril’s powerful vision would have been grounds for rejecting the *Tome*.¹²⁹

Of course, the Cyrillians of Egypt *did* reject the *Tome*. To

¹²⁵ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio V* (22 Oct. 451) (de fide) (CPG 9005), *ACO II. I. 2*, pp. 121–30, esp. 124 ll. 28–30 (317–26) [320]. Latin, *ACO II. III. 2*, pp. 128–38 (387–97). See P. Galtier, ‘Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie et saint Léon le Grand à Chalcédoine’, in Grillmeier and Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon I*, i. 345–87.

¹²⁶ H. M. Diepen, ‘Strategèmes contre la théologie de l’Emmanuel. À propos d’une nouvelle comparaison entre S. Cyrille et Apollinaire’, *Divinitas* 1 (1957), 444–78; P. Galtier, ‘Saint Cyrille et Apollinaire’, *Gregorianum* 37 (1956), 584–609; Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 473–8.

¹²⁷ See J. S. Romanides, ‘St. Cyril’s “one physis or hypostasis of God the Logos incarnate” and Chalcedon’, in P. Fries and T. Nersoyan (eds.), *Christ in East and West* (Macon, Ga., 1987), 13–24.

¹²⁸ Read into the record, *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio V* (22 Oct. 451) (de fide), *ACO II. I. 2*, p. 125 ll. 17–19 ll. 23–5.

¹²⁹ On Ephesus I as an interpretation of Nicaea, see *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio I* (8 Oct. 451) (de Dioscoro), *ACO II. I. 1*, p. 121 l. 27 to 122 l. 15; 122 l. 20 to 123 l. 8.

them it sounded so little like their Alexandrian understanding of Christ that Dioscorus would not under any circumstances subscribe to it as orthodox. The pro-Eutychian monks of Egypt, ever faithful to Cyril's teachings, likewise refused to embrace the *Tome*. When asked to subscribe to the definition of faith proposed at Chalcedon, the Egyptian monks at the council simply repeated their unflinching devotion to the definitions that had been agreed to by the 318 fathers gathered at Nicaea and by the fathers at Ephesus I. Without Cyril to interpret Chalcedon to the satisfaction of the monastic community, the monks were unwilling, and simply unable, to assimilate Chalcedon's Diphysitism into their creed. From the monks' point of view, the doctrine was too reminiscent of the Antiochene dualism that the Council of Ephesus had rejected. Failing to grasp the christological subtleties of Leo's Diphysitism, the monks retreated into the familiarity of their monastic faith, which was centred upon a seemingly straightforward understanding of Nicaea and its creed. Cyril had well understood this fact about monasticism, and had used it strategically to persuade the monks of his views. Had he lived to see Chalcedon, he would surely have explained and reinterpreted Chalcedon's dual-nature formula so that his monks understood it. But Dioscorus was left with the task, and he saw no common ground between Leo's *Tome* and Cyril's single-nature Christology. Without Cyril to interpret Chalcedon in the light of Nicaea and Ephesus, therefore, the monks were simply unconvinced that the faith of Chalcedon was anything more than an unnecessary modification to their well-settled creeds.

Unlike the Egyptian bishops, the majority bishops at Chalcedon had apparently absorbed more of the interpretative freedom so characteristic of Cyril's public teachings. In a series of anti-Nestorian, pro-Chalcedonian affirmations, the bishops shouted, 'Mary is Mother of God (*θεοτόκος*) . . . Let one add Mary Mother of God to the definition. Cast out the Nestorians! Christ is God!'¹³⁰ They thereupon condemned Dioscorus for his single-nature views. 'Christ is God' had been the rallying cry of Cyril's attack on Nestorius for his Diphysite, dual-nature vision

¹³⁰ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio V* (22 Oct. 451) (de fide) (CPG 9005), *ACO II*. I. 2, pp. 121–30, esp. 124 ll. 11–13.

of Christ. They perceived no contradiction between these simple affirmations drawn from Cyril's public sermons twenty years earlier, and the dual-nature formula that Chalcedon proposed. They did not seem to care that the same christological slogan, 'Christ is God,' which Cyril had used in all his conciliar sermons sufficed to condemn both the Miaphysites at Chalcedon and the Diphysites at Ephesus!

The bishops of the council at Chalcedon were unmistakably pro-Cyril. Though some modern scholars claim that Chalcedon's dual-nature solution was a significant triumph for Nestorius and the Antiochene school, the modern scholar Gray believes, rightly, that the Chalcedonian majority adopted Leo's dual-nature language in order to combat the extreme Miaphysitism of Eutyches and his followers.¹³¹ The neo-Chalcedonian Nephalius had already anticipated that theory in the late fifth century, when he said that the struggle against Eutyches had resulted only in the unwieldy (*παχυμέρες*, lit. coarse) doctrine of Chalcedon.¹³² And indeed, the Chalcedonian majority reluctantly abandoned Cyril's 'out of two natures' formula in favour of pope Leo's 'in two natures', because they believed that Cyril's formula did not adequately guard against the Miaphysitism of Eutyches and Dioscorus.¹³³ The majority at Chalcedon was therefore willing to sacrifice Cyril's two-nature language of 433 in favour of the two-nature language of pope Leo's *Tome* in 451. In no way a vindication of Nestorianism, however, Chalcedon's rejection of Cyril's formula was paradoxically a defence of Cyril's understanding of the Nicene creed. When the bishops at Chalcedon shouted, 'Cyril was orthodox!

¹³¹ Gray, *The Defense of Chalcedon in the East*, 2. For the view that Chalcedon was a triumph of Antiochene Christology, see C. Moeller, 'Le Chalcédonisme et le néo-chalcédonisme en Orient de 451 à la fin de la siècle', in Grillmeier and Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon I*, 638–720.

¹³² Severus of Antioch (Nephalius), *Contr. Gramm.*, iii. 48. ll. 27–32. Severus Antiochenus, *Liber contra impium Grammaticum* (Syriac) (CPG 7024), *Severi Antiocheni liber contra impium Grammaticum*, ed. J. Lebon, CSCO 93–4, 101–2, 111–12 (Louvain, 1952), repr. of the 1938 Paris edn. Cited by C. Moeller, 'Nephalius d'Alexandrie', *RHE* 40 (1944–5), 128.

¹³³ Gray, *The Defense of Chalcedon*, 13–14. The bishops at Chalcedon believed that Cyril's formula 'from/out of two natures' implied a commingling of Christ's human and divine natures, while pope Leo's 'in two natures' more clearly acknowledged the difference between the natures.

Cyril thinks like Leo! there was no doubt for the Chalcedonian majority that this was, indeed, a pro-Cyrrillian council. They expressed their pro-Cyrrillian sentiments many times throughout the sessions by erupting into joyous affirmation of Cyril's orthodoxy.¹³⁴ After a reading of the Nicene Creed, the bishops exclaimed, 'Leo believes thus. . . . As Cyril believed, so we believe. Eternal memory to Cyril. As the letters of Cyril contain, so we think. . . . The archbishop Leo thinks so, believes so, has written so.'¹³⁵ To the bishops present at Chalcedon, there was no doubt that Cyril's teachings were the highest expression of Nicene orthodoxy, and that they were consistent with the teachings of the greatest orthodox fathers, including Athanasius, Caelestine, Hilary, Basil, Gregory, and finally pope Leo the Great.¹³⁶

The Chalcedonian bishops were eager to express their pro-Cyrrillian sentiments, even at the expense of doctrinal clarity and consistency. For example, Leo's assertion of two natures in one person seemed to affirm Cyril's later Christology, but it was not unambiguous. Indeed, Leo's Christology, which separated the two natures of Christ, each according to the activity proper to it, 'the Word performing what appertains to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what appertains to the flesh',¹³⁷ depended not on Cyril but on Augustine and Ambrose.¹³⁸ This doctrinal

¹³⁴ It is unlikely that the entire assembly was chanting these phrases in unison, for the acts often record that the 'bishops said . . .' when in actuality only one of them uttered the phrase. *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio II* (Textus gr. et Φ a III) (10 Oct. 451) (de fide) (CPG 9001), *ACO* II. I. 1, p. 170 ll. 34–6. This ecclesiastical practice was related to the tradition of mass acclamations in ancient Rome. On the use of formulas and rhythms in acclamations, see G. S. Aldrete, *Gestures and Acclamations in Ancient Rome* (Baltimore, 1999), pp. 129–47.

¹³⁵ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio II* (Textus gr. et Φ a III) (10 Oct. 451) (de fide), *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 81 ll. 9–13.

¹³⁶ *Chalced. (451) Gesta. Actio II* (Textus gr. et Φ a III) (10 Oct. 451) (de fide), *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 79 ll. 3–7. For the Chalcedonian bishops' understanding of the relationship between the doctrinal formula established at Chalcedon and the Nicene creed, see the *Codex Encyclius* (458), *ACO* II. 5, pp. 9–98.

¹³⁷ *Epistula Leonis ad Flavianum CPolitanum (Tomus)* (CPG [8922]), *ACO* IV. I, p. 169 ll. 32–4; see also Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, i. 530–6.

¹³⁸ S. Studer, 'Una persona in Christo. Ein augustinisches Thema bei Leo dem Grossen', *Augustinianum* 25 (1985), 453–87; A. C. Stewart, 'Persona in the Christology of Leo I. A Note', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 71 (1989), 3–5; B. E. Daley, 'The Giant's Twin Substances:

formula had, on the one hand, very little in common with Alexandrian Christology. Even after the Formula of Reunion, Cyril never subscribed to such a stark differentiation of the natures in Christ: 'After the union, we do not divide the natures from each other, and do not sever the one and indivisible into two sons but say "one Son" . . .'¹³⁹ But on the other, Leo subtly affirmed Cyril's anti-Nestorian slogan by claiming that Nestorius believed that Christ was born as an ordinary man.¹⁴⁰ Cyril had made similar exaggerated claims throughout the Nestorian controversy, and a clever interpreter could have extrapolated from Leo's assertion that Leo was, in fact, consistent with Cyril. To make that connection for the benefit of the Egyptian monks and clergy, however, demanded the interpretative skill of someone like Cyril or Athanasius. With no one to fill that void, the Egyptian bishops present at the council refused to subscribe to Leo's *Tome* unless they first received the assent of the new archbishop, the patriarch of Alexandria.¹⁴¹

The office of archbishop was the strong central authority that unified the Egyptian church. Cyril's great success in continuing that tradition was partly responsible for the Egyptian contingent's refusal to accept Leo's *Tome*, while the rest of the Chalcedonian bishops championed it. Well-established canon law demanded that ecclesiastics completely obey their archbishop.¹⁴² Fearing for their safety, the Egyptian bishops pleaded before the council that the bishops of the entire diocese of Egypt would physically attack them if they were to violate the law of obedience by subscribing to the *Tome* before a new archbishop

Ambrose and the Christology of Augustine's *Contra sermonem Arianorum*, in J. T. Lienhard, E. C. Muller, and R. J. Teske (eds.), *Augustine: presbyter factus sum* (New York, 1993), 477–95.

¹³⁹ This statement suggests that Cyril did not understand as marked a differentiation in the two natures of Christ as did pope Leo in his *Tome*. *Ad Successum I* (CPG 5345), *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 153; Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters*, 76. All the same, Cyril acknowledged in this letter that there are two natures in Christ, that existed without being merged, *ibid.* 74; *ACO* I. I. 6, p. 153.

¹⁴⁰ *Epistula Leonis ad Pulcheriam augustam* (13 Oct. 449), XXXI, *ACO* II. 4, p. 13 ll. 3–7.

¹⁴¹ *Actio IV* (17 Oct. 451) (de fide) (CPG 9003), *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 112 ll. 25–6.

¹⁴² *Ibid.* ll. 39 to 113 l. 5. Joannou, *Fonti*, I. I, Nicaea, canon vi, pp. 28–9. Canon vi gave the bishop of Alexandria authority over Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis.

could command them. The majority council reluctantly permitted the Egyptian bishops to await the appointment of a new archbishop before compelling them to acknowledge the orthodoxy of the *Tome*. The council also hastened to repeat the settled principle of conciliar theory that the decision of an ecumenical council had more authority than a decision of the diocese of Egypt.¹⁴³ But the diocese of Egypt and all that it implied exerted a strong hold on the Egyptian bishops. In a letter to the emperors read into the proceedings at Chalcedon, several Egyptian bishops declared their devotion to the orthodox faith of Athanasius, Theophilus, and Cyril, their firm adherence to the Nicene creed, and their anathematization of Arius, Eunomius, Mani, and Nestorius, along with those who declared that the flesh of Christ was from the heavens and not from the Virgin Mary.¹⁴⁴ But theirs was a statement of faith appropriate to the time of Cyril rather than of Dioscorus, for it failed to anathematize Eutyches. This omission disturbed the majority Chalcedonian bishops. The Eutychian monks of Syria who testified at the council were just as reluctant as the bishops of Egypt to affix their signatures to anything that seemed to do more than simply confirm Nicene orthodoxy.¹⁴⁵

The dissenting monks and bishops of Egypt nevertheless subscribed to the same basic ideological convictions as the majority bishops at Chalcedon.¹⁴⁶ Both parties agreed that Nicaea was the

¹⁴³ *Actio IV* (17 Oct. 451) (de fide) (CPG 9003), *ACO II. I. 2*, p. 113 ll. 8–10.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 110 l. 27 to 111 l. 12.

¹⁴⁵ Theodosius wrote to Dioscorus that he had learned there were many Eastern archimandrites who were opposing Nestorian bishops. Theodosius, therefore, ordered the priest and archimandrite Barsumas of Syria to appear as representative of his anti-Nestorian followers at the Council of Ephesus II. *Sacra Theodosii ad Dioscorum* (15 Maii 449) (CPG 8917), *ACO II. I. 1*, p. 71. Well known for his Miaphysite leanings, Barsumas was one of many supporters of Eutyches from the monastic community who offered testimony at the council (*Actio IV* (17 Oct. 451 *de fide*)), a group which included several archimandrites. Upon Barsumas' introduction at the council, bishop Diogenes of Cyzicus exclaimed, 'Barsumas killed Flavian . . . He brought confusion to all of Syria!' *ibid.* *ACO II. I. 2*, p. 116 ll. 26–8. Of course, the Egyptian monks were just as strictly Miaphysite in their interpretation of Nicaea. See e.g. the Egyptian monk Helpidius, who agreed to subscribe only to the creed of the 318 fathers of Nicaea, and its subsequent confirmation at Ephesus, *ibid.* 118 ll. 34–5.

¹⁴⁶ Aetius, archdeacon of Constantinople, attempted to regain control over the Eutychian monks when he explained, according to canonical law, that all

ideological centre of their faith, and each claimed that only its interpretation was consistent with that faith. The majority Chalcedonians thus firmly asserted that the two-natures-in-one-person formula of Leo's *Tome* was faithful to the tenets of Nicaea. Even the emperor Marcian, the successor of Theodosius II, declared that Chalcedon was a reaffirmation of Nicaea. As Marcian put it, only a gross display of arrogance would present doctrinal arguments on the generation of Christ that differed in any way from the orthodox faith of the 318 fathers at Nicaea.¹⁴⁷

Marcian's conciliar theory ensured, therefore, that Chalcedon upheld the tenets of Nicene orthodoxy. To make that parallel even more secure, Marcian explicitly placed himself in the line of the emperor Constantine: just as Constantine had affirmed the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, so Marcian sanctioned the measures taken at Chalcedon.¹⁴⁸ The comparison was joyfully acknowledged by the majority bishops at Chalcedon, who shouted, 'To Marcian, the new Constantine. Pulcheria, the new Helene.'¹⁴⁹ Theodosius II had made overtures in that direction, but Marcian succeeded in embodying the typology by crowning himself as the new Constantine. By legitimizing the Council of Chalcedon as the defender of Nicene orthodoxy, Marcian ensured that the majority Chalcedonian bishops, and not the dissenting Egyptians, were invested with the authority to interpret the Nicene creed.

The Chalcedonians thereby claimed Cyril as well, for their conciliar ideology affirmed that Cyril was the new Athanasius who successfully protected Nicene orthodoxy from the doctrinal assaults of Nestorius, the new Arius.¹⁵⁰ The doctrine they

clergymen and monks were obligated to accept guidance from the bishops. (Aetius read the fifth Antiochene ordinance from a collection of canons before him) *ibid.* ll. 3–15.

¹⁴⁷ *Actio VI* (d. 25 m. Oct. a. 451) (disceptatio de fide) (*CPG* 9007), *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 139 l. 34 to 140 l. 8. See also *Actio II* (Textus gr. et Φ a III) (10 Oct. 451) (de fide), *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 78 ll. 17–34, in which the bishops exclaimed that the canon forbids any innovation to established doctrine.

¹⁴⁸ *Actio VI* (25 Oct. 451) (disceptatio de fide) (*CPG* 9007), *ACO* II. I. 2, p. 140 ll. 10–13.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 155 ll. 25–6.

¹⁵⁰ This typology was compelling in the post-Chalcedonian period as well. For example, the Latin Chalcedonian Vigilius made the connection between Athanasius' fight against the Arians and the anti-Nestorian controversy in his

created was, however, a mixture of beliefs that defied amalgamation. It simultaneously refuted the single-nature doctrine of Eutyches; condemned the dual-nature doctrine of Nestorius; expressed wholeheartedly pro-Cyrrillian sentiments; and affirmed the *Tome* of Leo. But the idea that Christ's two natures had been united without confusion, separation, division, or change was still unacceptable to most representatives of the Egyptian church. They were convinced that the Chalcedonian definition condemned their Alexandrian Christology. They were partly correct. Chalcedon surely did not affirm Alexandria's single-nature vision of Christ. By incorporating the later christological views of Cyril, it was, all the same, the majority bishops' attempt to preserve his orthodox legacy.

With this statement from Chalcedon, Cyril's victory was complete. It was won posthumously, and, as I have argued, by virtue of his skill in combining secular with Christian rhetoric. Afterwards, Cyrrillian parties emerged on both sides of the post-Chalcedonian debate determined to explain their christological doctrine in a manner consistent with their understanding of Cyril.

work entitled *Dialogus contra Arianos*, which was so named in imitation of Athanasius' *contra Arianos* (CPG 2123). Aimed at the Miaphysites, the treatise explained through the dialogues between Athanasius and the Arians that it was possible for the church to make additions to the formal creed, by adding the non-scriptural term *homoousios* to it, without innovating doctrine. Vigilius Episcopus Thapsensis, *Contra Arianos, Sabellianos, Photinianos dialogus* (CPL 807), PL 62. 192B-C, 194A-D; M. Schanz, C. Hosius, and G. Krüger, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur bis zum Gesetzgebungswerk des Kaisers Justinian* (Munich, 1927-35), iv. pt. 2. 569. See Sieben, *Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche*, 266-7.

Epilogue

Cyril occupies a unique position in the history of Eastern Christianity. His early utterances of a single-nature Christ in 420, nearly a dozen years before Ephesus I, forever identified him with a christological controversy that took a paradoxical turn seven years after his death when Chalcedon in 451 affirmed the dual-nature doctrine expressed in Leo's *Tome* as being Cyrillian. So both sides of the christological debate embraced Cyril as the source of their views in a controversy that was not resolved for the Greek and Latin churches until the Sixth Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 680/1. Cyril was therefore seen as the orthodox father *par excellence* who deserved to be interpreted and reinterpreted for more than two hundred and fifty years. I have been intent on uncovering the cultural as well as the historical processes that were involved in Cyril being celebrated as an orthodox father of the church, and in Nestorius being slandered as a heretic, condemned to live the remainder of his life in exile because of his religious views.

One compelling explanation that emerges from my study rests upon the historical person of Cyril and his success at constructing an image of himself that evoked the entire history of orthodoxy as the Council of Nicaea had expounded it and that Athanasius had later defended. Two factors ensured Cyril's elevation to orthodox status: his use of Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse, and his adoption of Athanasius' interpretative principles. Cyril was so successful at implying that he was the legitimate heir to Athanasius' reputation for orthodoxy, and at distancing himself from the divisive politics of his uncle Theophilus, his predecessor as bishop of Alexandria, that already by the seventh century Cyril was known as the 'seal of the

fathers' and, later in the Coptic liturgy, as the courageous young lion, in every way equal to Athanasius, the Apostolic.¹

Cyril aimed for and reached this pinnacle of comparison by paraphrasing Athanasius' discourse against the Arians in the early years of his episcopacy. Later, Cyril did not merely paraphrase but used outright Athanasius' anti-Arian language to cast his opponent Nestorius as Arius, who had been excommunicated as the archetypal heretic a century earlier. Cyril's strategy for using this language can be seen most strikingly in his *Homily IV*, which he delivered when Nestorius was deposed from the bishopric of Constantinople during the summer of 431. There Cyril said that Nestorius' villainy was similar in scope and magnitude to that of Arius. He thus compressed into one swift rhetorical blow much of the anti-Arian discourse he had used intermittently when the Nestorian controversy was beginning. Cyril was repeating an assertion he made early on that Nestorius' failure to accept the title *Theotokos* (Mother of God) for the Virgin Mary implied that Jesus was not God, a plain restatement of the charges raised against the Arians nearly a century before. It is unlikely none the less that Cyril genuinely believed his opponent was guilty of Arianism, for he freely admitted when the controversy began that Nestorius could never have meant to subscribe to the tenets of Arianism.²

Cyril's use of Athanasius' anti-Arian discourse was also a strategy for ensuring that he and his partisans would be remembered as the next great defenders of Nicene orthodoxy. In other words, the legacy Cyril inherited by using Athanasius' language in new but comparable circumstances secured his authority as the quintessential protector and interpreter of Nicaea. Cyril's supporters readily embraced Cyril as the new Athanasius against Nestorius as the new Arius, even while Nestorius was accusing

¹ *Anastasiū Sinaitae Viae Dux*, ed. K.-H. Uthemann, CCSG 8 (Turnhout, 1981), vii. 1 l. 101; Coptic Liturgy: (1) The Book of the *Glorification of Saints* (5), 34: 'That is to say, Athanasius the Apostolic and Cyril the courageous lion cub.' (2) The Book of *Al-Absalmudiyat al-Mukaddasat al-Kiyahkiah* (7), 634: 'Listen to the lion cub, our wise Cyril.' Cited by Y. 'Abd Al' Massih, 'Saint Cyrille dans la liturgie de l'église Copte', *Kyrilliana* (Cairo, 1947), 306, 307.

² See e.g. Cyril of Alexandria, *Libri V Contra Nestorium* (CPG 5217), ACO I. I. 6, p. 31; Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 245 ll. 15-17; see also Marius Mercator, *Sermo XI (Nestorii) Adversus Arianos*, PL 48, 830-1, who gives a fuller rendition of the passage cited by Cyril.

Cyril of Arianism.³ Cyril's appropriation of Nicene orthodoxy was so complete that, well after the Council of Ephesus, he remained the touchstone of orthodoxy for both the Miaphysite opponents to the christological position adopted at Chalcedon, and for the Diphysite Chalcedonian bishops and their neo-Chalcedonian supporters for at least the next one hundred years.⁴

While Cyril's relationship to Athanasian orthodoxy partly explains his elevated status in the Byzantine church, his theology alone does not. Even the Byzantine commentators who were most ready to preserve Cyril's orthodoxy were deeply troubled by his doctrinal inconsistencies. In particular, the anonymous author (perhaps there was more than one) of the *Doctrina Patrum* in the eighth century was concerned about several of Cyril's more controversial statements, especially his interchangeable use of the terms 'nature' (*φύσις*) and 'hypostasis' (*ὑπόστασις*) and his repeated use of the Apollinarian phrase, 'one incarnate nature of God the Word' (*μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη*).⁵ But Cyril had not only used the language of anti-Arianism to great effect but had also adopted Athanasius' interpretative method as his own. Just as Athanasius urged the orthodox interpreter to consider the intent (*διάνοια*) of the sacred texts in order to combat the misinterpretations of the Arians, so Cyril exhorted the faithful interpreter to consider the entire scope of the divine mystery as the only context in which the sacred texts could be properly understood. The author of the *Doctrina Patrum* adopted this method as his own and urged his readers to examine the intent of Cyril's phrases (*ἔρευνᾶν τὸν νοῦν τῶν λεγομένων*) when deciphering Cyril's ambiguous use of the words 'nature' and 'hypostasis'.⁶

³ *Epistula Caelestini Papae ad Clerum Populumque Constantinopolitanum* (10 Aug. 430) (CPG [8641]), ACO I. I. 1, p. 88; *Epistula Alypii ad Cyrillum Alex.* (CPG 5779), ACO I. I. 3, p. 75. Nestorius had accused Cyril of Arianism in his letter to pope Caelestine. See Nestorius, *Ad Caelestinum Papam I*, ACO I. 2, p. 13.

⁴ See e.g. the Cyrillian *florilegium* compiled by a neo-Chalcedonian who argued that Cyril asserted a distinction of natures in Christ. R. Hespel, *Le Florilège Cyrillien réfuté par Sévère d'Antioche. Étude et édition critique*, Bibliothèque du Muséon 37 (Louvain, 1955).

⁵ *Doctrina Patrum de Incarnatione Verbi*, ed. F. Diekamp (Munster, 1981), 141-4, 151-3.

⁶ *Ibid.* 138 ll. 17-23.

Athanasius' interpretative method had been to imagine the broader intent and scope (*σκοπός*) of Christian faith as providing the context for correct interpretation. When Cyril borrowed this method, he thus understood it to mean that difficult words and phrases should be interpreted according to the truth of the Christian message that the creed of Nicaea preserved and that the credal formulations of his early episcopacy contained, and not according to the literal words of the scriptural text. Both theologians understood that the method left ample room for interpretative freedom. Cyril's orthodoxy was Athanasian in that he skilfully used anti-Arian language against Nestorius. Just as that strategy helped ensure Cyril's elevation to canonical status, his use of Athanasius' interpretative method rendered that victory secure. We have already seen how the author of the *Doctrina Patrum* also used this method strategically when he tried to reconcile Cyril's inconsistent doctrines, considering them within the context of the Nicene principles that Cyril had inherited from Athanasius. Later Byzantine commentators were to follow suit. Even the Greek liturgy recognized the remarkable way in which Cyril's writings, which exemplify his liberal interpretative method, have been reinterpreted just as liberally to illuminate doctrinal controversies long after the councils at Ephesus and Chalcedon: 'If we meditate on all your philosophical writings, we are astonished at how you safeguard us against future heresies, refuting them before they happen, like one of the prophets.'⁷

Writing in the 560s, the emperor Justinian had used this same method of interpretation in defending Cyril's puzzling phrase, 'one incarnate nature of God the Word', against the doctrinal claims of the Miaphysites. Ever since Chalcedon, orthodox Christians, in accordance with pope Leo's *Tome*, confessed two natures of Christ after the fleshly union in order to safeguard against the dangers of Eutyches' Miaphysitism. All the same, Cyril's one-nature doctrine, which he repeated many times before the Formula of Reunion in 433, remained a bone of contention for more than one hundred years, as Miaphysites who dissented from Chalcedon tried to claim Cyril's orthodoxy as

⁷ Byzantine Liturgy: *Μηναίων τοῦ Ἰανουαρίου* (Athens, 1905), 32, cited by J. Tawil, 'Saint Cyrille dans la liturgie Grecque Byzantine', *Kyrolliana*, 299.

identical to their own.⁸ Justinian rejected their claims, declaring that they misinterpreted Cyril's phrase 'one incarnate nature of God the Word', because they had improperly lifted the phrase from its context, 'running over the expressions that came before, and cutting out those that followed', in order to reach conclusions that suited them.⁹

Justinian proposed a fresh interpretation that examined the expression within its proper textual setting. Cyril did not say 'one nature of flesh and divinity', Justinian remarked, but rather 'one nature of the incorporeal Word (ἀλλ' ὡς ἀσάρκου τοῦ Λόγου μίαν εἰπὼν τὴν φύσιν).' Only then, said Justinian, did Cyril add the term 'enfleshed' (σεσαρκωμένην) in order to distinguish between the incorporeal and human natures.¹⁰ Justinian thereby interpreted Cyril's phrase, 'one incarnate nature of God the Word', in temporal terms. To Justinian, the broader literary context indicated that Cyril had added the term 'enfleshed' to the phrase 'one nature of God the Word' in order that the sequence of his words, which is linear on the page and is read or spoken and heard in time, would display the same temporal sequence by which, when the single nature of the Word became flesh, two separate natures resulted—the divine and human natures of Christ. Though perhaps unconvincing to modern sensibilities, Justinian's argument demonstrates that the neo-Chalcedonians refused to give up any aspect of Cyril's writings to the Miaphysites.¹¹ As much as pope Leo's *Tome*, Cyril's writings had come to represent Chalcedonian orthodoxy.

⁸ See e.g. the works of the Monophysite Severus of Antioch (*CPG* 7022–32), esp. *Orationes ad Nephaliium ii* (*CPG* 7022), *Severi Antiocheni orationes ad Nephaliium*, J. Lebon, CSCO 119 (Louvain, 1949), 1–69 (text); CSCO 120, pp. 1–50 (trans.); *Philalethes* (*CPG* 7023), *Sévère d'Antioche, Le Philalèthe*, ed. R. Hespel, CSCO 133 (Louvain, 1952) (text); CSCO 134 (Louvain, 1952) (trans.); *Liber contra impium Grammaticum. Severi Antiocheni liber contra impium Grammaticum*, ed. Lebon, CSCO 111; CSCO 112 (trans.).

⁹ τὰ γὰρ ἔμπροσθεν τῶν τοιούτων φωνῶν παρατρέχοντες καὶ τὰ ἐφεξῆς ἀποτεμνόμενοι, Justinian, *Contra Monophysitas* (*CPG* 6878), E. Schwartz (ed.), *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians* (Munich, 1939; Milan, 1973), 10 ll. 19–20; PG 86. 1112D.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* ll. 24–7; PG 86. 1113A.

¹¹ Justinian's solution was none the less consistent with Cyril's understanding of the problem. He had grounded the fleshly, human nature of Christ in the divine reality of the Logos, both in its substance and in its hypostasis. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 480–3.

The Byzantine Greek liturgy remembers Cyril as the orthodox father who safeguarded the Incarnation of Christ against Nestorius' dual-nature doctrine.¹² As I have argued here, the Greek liturgy understood Cyril to have accomplished this task 'by [his] divine words, [which have] the power of Christ [in them]'.¹³ We have already seen how Cyril's liberal paraphrase of Athanasius' anti-Arian treatises early in his episcopacy provided him with the full arsenal of anti-Arian discourse for his later controversy with Nestorius. But the Greek liturgy tacitly acknowledges that Cyril's mastery of rhetorical argumentation was also responsible for elevating his status to orthodoxy.

That Cyril was a master of rhetoric does not imply, however, that he adopted all the forms of secular rhetoric. Cyril knew the writings of educated Christians, including the Cappadocians and John Chrysostom, and he was familiar with the stylistic features that appeared in the handbooks of late antiquity. His achievement was that he combined that knowledge with the truth claims appropriate to the Christian homily to produce a kind of discourse that his adversary was, for various reasons, incapable of defending himself against. An instinctive rhetorician, Cyril knew how to use the rhetorical examples he gleaned from the church fathers to portray his opponents in the harshest of terms, using short, pithy phrases and memorable concepts that would appeal to the learned and simple alike. Nestorius was well trained in the secular rhetorical traditions and Christian interpretative methods of his native Antioch. He used logical demonstrations based on his scrupulous research into the

¹² Byzantine liturgy: *Λόγου σαρκωθέντος δι' ἡμᾶς τοῦ παντεχνήμονος, σὺ τὴν ἀπόρρητον διδασκεις ἔνωσαν Κύριλλε, ἀδιαίρετον ἀσύγχυτον, τὰς ἐφ' ἑκάτερα ροπὰς, ἴσως ἐκκλίνας βοῶν. ΩΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ, Grottaferrata (Rome, 1932), 155, cited by Tawil, 'Saint Cyrille dans la liturgie Grecque Byzantine', 299. 'In as much as the Word, the maker of all, became incarnate for our sake, you taught us, O Cyril, by declaring the ineffable union, inseparable, without mixture, and you equally weighted the balance of each.'*

¹³ Byzantine liturgy: *Τὰς τῶν αἰρέσεων πλοκάς διαρρήξας—ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ Χριστοῦ θείοις λόγοις—τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, Κύριλλε, ἐπλούτισας—πάντα τὰ ζιζάνια—Νεστορίου ἐκκόψας,—ᾗθεν καὶ παρίστασαι—σὺν Ἀγγέλων χορείαις*

'You [Cyril] have destroyed the web of heresies—by your divine words, [which have] the power of Christ [in them],—you enriched the church—you dealt a blow to the evil of Nestorius, and for that reason you are with the chorus of angels.' *ΩΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ, Grottaferrata*, 616, cited by Tawil, 'Saint Cyrille dans la liturgie Grecque Byzantine', 300-1.

biblical text to instruct his audience that his christological claims were sound. He obviously believed that sound reasoning was in itself persuasive, and that only sound reasoning should be persuasive, and so his homiletic discourse avoided the tropes and figures of Cyril's lively homiletic style. That is why Nestorius did not succeed in working his way into his listener's minds to persuade them that his view of the controversy was the correct one.

That Nestorius' rhetorical approach failed is apparent in the decision by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which did not vindicate even the slightest component of his belief, even though pope Leo's *Tome* contained language reminiscent of Nestorius' dual-nature doctrine. The majority Chalcedonians refused to see Nestorius' Diphysitism as being in any way capable of combating Eutyches' extreme Miaphysitism. Cyril's doctrine was held to be synonymous with pope Leo's *Tome*, and Cyril was ultimately declared the guardian of Nicene and Chalcedonian orthodoxy.

Cyril's complete rhetorical victory implies that his success was not simply a political accomplishment based on political alliances he had fashioned as opportunity arose. Nor was it a dogmatic victory, based on the clarity and orthodoxy of Cyril's doctrinal claims. Instead, it was his strategy in identifying himself with the orthodoxy of Athanasius in his victory over Arianism, in borrowing Athanasius' interpretative methods, and in skilfully using the tropes and figures of the second sophistic that elevated Cyril to orthodox status. When both the Miaphysites and the Chalcedonians laid equal claim to Cyril, both sides of the controversy were placing themselves within the trajectory of Eastern Christianity that reached all the way back to the Council of Nicaea. Both sides of the Chalcedonian debate wished to claim the anti-Arian, pro-Nicene legacy that had enabled Cyril to secure his own position among the orthodox fathers. The formation of Eastern Christian doctrine thus proceeds not according to the ineluctable structures of dogmatic history but according to a complex historical and cultural process fuelled by the claims of adversaries competing to appropriate the Christian past.

APPENDIX

The Homilies that Cyril of Alexandria Delivered in Ephesus During the Summer of 431

HOMILY V

*Homily of Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, delivered in Ephesus, while the assembly was in session, and Nestorius was deposed.*¹

We should, on the one hand, be satisfied with the spiritual teachings² of the teachers of the past and quench³ our thirst, replenishing ourselves from the holy streams.⁴ Since I notice, however, that you have an insatiable desire to listen, let me say a few [words] consistent with [the teachers] of the past.⁵ The splendid chorus of saints undoubtedly glories in acclaiming Christ, and boasts their genuine love for him. Indeed, the blessed prophet Isaiah says to him, somewhere, *Lord, My God, I will glorify you, I will sing hymns to your name, because you have done wonderful things.*⁶ And the blessed prophet David says, *My tongue shall tell of your righteousness, and of your praise, all day long.*⁷ This, in

¹ *Homilia V. Ephesi dicta, deposito Nestorio (CPG 5253), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 92–4.* This homily was delivered shortly after Nestorius was deposed at Session I on 22 June 431. On dating the homilies see S. Wessel, ‘Nestorius, Mary, and Controversy’, *AHC* 31/1 (November 1999), 6–8.

² *μυσταγωγία*: veiled or mystical teachings. See Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 891, s.v.

³ *τιμάω*: in this context, it is an idiom meaning ‘to quench’ or ‘to satisfy’.

⁴ Refers to the holy streams of the sacred Scriptures.

⁵ The passage can also read, ‘consistent with what has been said before’.

⁶ Isa. 25: 1. All such references are to the *Septuagint*. My translations of Scripture are based on Cyril’s text. When Cyril’s text is close to that of the *Septuagint*, I shall italicize it; when Cyril simply echoes the *Septuagint*, I shall cite only the biblical reference.

⁷ Ps. 34: 28.

fact, is the intent⁸ of the saints. However, the base and wicked men, who do not know the great, sacred, and profound mystery of the Incarnation of the Only Begotten, readily commit blasphemy, speaking with an untempered and unrestrained tongue. Therefore, let them hear the prophet Isaiah when he speaks to them, *But you, draw near hither, illegitimate sons, seed of the adulterer and prostitute. Of whom are you making sport, and against whom do you open your mouth? Are you not children of transgression, an illegitimate seed?*⁹ For those who deny the Lord who redeemed them are truly children of transgression and an illegitimate seed, for we were redeemed for a price, not with perishable things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.¹⁰ But how can the blood of a common man, of one who is similar to us, be [sufficient] ransom for the world? And how, also, did one man die on behalf of all, that he may enrich all? How did we become his, we who declare him the true God by nature? How do we venerate him, we who refuse to worship the creature rather than the Creator?¹¹ But, as I just said, some are ungrateful for the kindness of our Saviour; they deny the Lord, they shake off the yoke of service, so that Christ says about them through the voice of the prophet, *Woe to them, for they have strayed from me. They are wicked, because they have rebelled against me. I redeemed them, but they spoke lies against me.*¹² For those who imitate the moral perversity and impiety of the Pharisees belie the glory and pre-eminence of our Saviour, wrapping themselves in a Christian demeanour, but adopting the spirit¹³ of Judaism, and exercising such a bitter and venomous tongue, that Christ also says this about it through the voice of Jeremiah, *Behold, I am against you, O proud one, says the Lord.*¹⁴ The Jews long ago attacked Christ, Saviour of us all; they assaulted him like beasts. They assailed their benefactor and Saviour with stones. Then, the Saviour declared to them, *I have shown you many good works from my Father. For which good work of these do you stone me?* And they said to him, *We do not stone for a good work, but for a blasphemy, because you, though only a human being, make yourself God.*¹⁵ These are the accusations of the ancient Jews against our Saviour; and those who emulate their impiety and desperate folly bring an accusation once again, saying, ‘Why do you, though a human being,

⁸ σκοπός refers to the intent, meaning, or significance of Scripture, depending on the context.

⁹ Isa. 57: 3–4.

¹⁰ 1 Pet. 1: 18; 1 Cor. 6: 20.

¹¹ Rom. 1: 25.

¹² Hos. 7: 13.

¹³ διάνοια: purpose, intention, meaning (of a word or passage).

¹⁴ Jer. 27: 31.

¹⁵ John 10: 32–3.

make yourself God?' O witless and loathsome one, you have not grasped the mystery! For he did not make himself God from a human being, but being God by nature, he became a human being, immutably and without confusion. The One generated ineffably by God the Father endured generation in the flesh from a woman, and became Son of Man, that he may save us. He became like you for your sake, and he remained what he was for himself. Know, therefore, the Only Begotten who came into being in the flesh. Confess that the One who became incarnate for our sake is God. He presents himself to you saying, *I myself who speak am present*.¹⁶ For he declared the law to the men of old through Moses, and he became present in the flesh. Accept the holy prophets who bear witness. What does Baruch say, who portrays Emmanuel so vividly that he seems present?¹⁷ *This is our God. No other can be compared to him. He found the whole way of knowledge, and gave it to Jacob his servant, and to Israel whom he loved. Afterward, he appeared upon earth and lived among people*.¹⁸ The blessed David sings psalms about him. *Our God will come manifestly*.¹⁹ Do you wish to call as witnesses the heralds of the New Testament as well? Listen to John the Baptist who says, *Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight the paths of our God*.²⁰ Do you also require another assurance, in addition to these? God promised to the blessed David, *that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne*.²¹ And David, although he rejoiced much because of this, he also enquired into the manner itself of generation.²² Therefore, one can hear him when he says, *I will not climb into my bed, I will not give sleep to my eyes, and slumber to my eyelids, and rest to my temples. Until you find what? Until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the God of Jacob*.²³ Do you delve into the manner [of generation], O blessed David? I approve of your zeal, I praise your perseverance. But if you have learned something else, then announce it to us as well. Listen to the one who says clearly where the generation will be and into what place it will come into being. *Look, we heard it in Ephratha, we found it in the fields of the forest*.²⁴ When he says, 'Ephratha', it signifies Bethlehem. God bears witness to this through one of the holy prophets, saying, *And you, Bethlehem, house of Ephratha, are least among the clans of Judah. For from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origins are from the beginning of time*.²⁵ Do you hear that he affirmed that the Bethlehemite,

¹⁶ Isa. 52: 6.

¹⁷ The phrase is an idiom: *μόνον οὐχὶ καὶ χειρὶ*. Lit. 'not only by hand'.

¹⁸ Bar. 3: 36-8.

¹⁹ Ps. 49: 2.

²⁰ Luke 3: 4.

²¹ Acts 2: 30.

²² i.e. generation from the Virgin.

²³ Ps. 131: 3-5.

²⁴ Ps. 131: 6.

²⁵ Mic. 5: 1.

although he became a human being, had his origins from the beginning of time? For *In the beginning was the Word*.²⁶ 'But I am ashamed', he says, 'to confess that God was begotten of a woman.'²⁷ Tell me, do you rebuke therefore the divine plans? Do you deny the dispensation? Do you reprove the will of the Lord? This was how he wanted to save the entire world. Are you wiser than wisdom? O incredible deed! A lamp contends with the sun. The Lord of all knows the way of his own works. Accept, therefore, the dispensation. Honour the mystery with faith. Do not meddle in affairs that are beyond comprehension.²⁸ Do not enquire into matters beyond discourse.²⁹ Believe with us. Even if you remain unbelieving,³⁰ he remains faithful and cannot deny himself. To him be the glory, and the power with the Holy Spirit; forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY I

*Homily by the same, in Ephesus, very beautiful.*³¹

Those who devote themselves to the sacred Scriptures have a wise heart, are knowledgeable in good works, and resplendent in the right faith. The love of true knowledge, moreover, constitutes the purpose of life. And the Saviour himself fully assures us of this when he says the following to the Father and God in Heaven, *And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent*.³² Therefore, knowledge of the Son is joined with knowledge of the Father, and so this whole matter is life-giving. Whenever one is separated from the other, knowledge is, in all circumstances, imperfect. So also our Lord Jesus Christ addressed the Jewish people when he said, *You know neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father also*.³³ And still, the Jews believed that their fathers had seen God on the mountain, both in nature and in truth, when he descended onto Mount Sinai in the form of fire, for they truly thought that they had heard his voice. For that reason they marvelled at the teacher of sacred truth, Moses, but belittled our Lord Jesus Christ because of his

²⁶ John 1: 1.

²⁷ Instead of ἐν, I emend the text to read ἐκ (γυναικὸς γεγεννημένον.) The reference, of course, is to Nestorius and his refusal to call Mary Θεοτόκος.

²⁸ comprehension: νοῦς.

²⁹ discourse: λόγος.

³⁰ ἀπειθής: also means 'disobedient', and alludes to Nestorius' refusal to respond to the three invitations made to him as canonical law required.

³¹ *Homilia I, Ephesi habita, valde pulchra* (CPG 5245), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 96–8. This homily was delivered sometime during the summer of 431.

³² John 17: 3.

³³ John 8: 19.

human nature, saying impiously, *We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man we do not know where he comes from.*³⁴ What then does Christ say to these [statements]? Truly, I say to you; *his form you have never seen, his voice you have never heard; and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe him whom he has sent.*³⁵ But the truth, in all circumstances, proves true. For it was not the nature of God that was perceived on Mt. Sinai, but rather fire (and there were trumpet blasts and smoke was wafting), and the types³⁶ of truth that foreshadow the truth. For the God of all descended onto Mt. Sinai in the form of fire. And why [did he descend] in the form of fire? Since he intended to define the law for them, it was especially appropriate that he appear, at that time, to have descended in the form of fire, so transgressors would know that fire [awaits them.] So also the blessed Moses, to chasten the sinners with fear, often declared, *Our God is a fire that consumes.*³⁷ Smoke and darkness came to pass; darkness aptly suggests to us the impossibility of knowing God, while smoke teaches through enigmas³⁸ that tears will always, and in every case, come to those who despise the divine laws. For the eye of the body must weep in smoke. Therefore, the Jews did not see the form³⁹ of the father, but we saw it in Christ. For he is that purest beauty of the One who begot him, the impress⁴⁰ and radiance.⁴¹ Even though the Word, being God, assumed flesh and blood (and did not assume an inanimate and mindless body as the mad and heretical Apollinarius claims)⁴² and became Son of Man, he nevertheless remained God.

In this way, he revealed his own mystery to the holy fathers from time to time; and there were very many proofs of such things in the holy prophets. But since it is necessary to analyse in detail, come and let us demonstrate, with [an excerpt] from the book of Genesis, the Son who appeared as a human being and who was named God. And the blessed Jacob fled Mesopotamia, hastening once again to the household of his father; and he even took the two daughters of Laban along with the

³⁴ John 9: 29.

³⁵ John 5: 37–8.

³⁶ *τύποι* refer to biblical symbols, generally from the Septuagint, that are interpreted as foreshadowing some aspect of Christ's dispensation.

³⁷ Deut. 4: 24.

³⁸ *αἰνιγματωδώς*: *αἰνιγμα* refers to the hidden meaning contained in scriptural words and phrases. 'Smoke' and 'darkness' therefore represent a more spiritual meaning.

³⁹ *εἶδος*: material shape, form. See Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 408, s.v.

⁴⁰ *χαρακτήρ*: impress, stamp.

⁴¹ *ἀπαύγασμα*: radiance, i.e. to illustrate the generation of the Son as eternal, and the consubstantiality of Father and Son. See Heb. 1: 3.

⁴² Cyril responds to the charges of Apollinarianism made against him.

children they bore him and transported them over Jabok, which is the name of a 'torrent'.⁴³ But as the God-inspired Scripture says, when the women and children were transported across, *Jacob was left alone and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and he paralysed the hollow of Jacob's thigh as he wrestled with him. Then he said, he says, the man who was wrestling with Jacob, 'Let me go, for dawn is breaking.' But [Jacob] said, 'I will not let you go, unless you bless me.'*⁴⁴ *And he blessed him there and Jacob called the name of that place, 'the form of God', 'for I have seen', he says, 'God, face to face, and yet my soul was saved.'*⁴⁵ O hallowed Wisdom! The patriarch sees a man wrestling with him and exclaims, 'I have seen God face to face, and my soul was saved.' For he immediately understood the mystery of the Incarnation that was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. Pay attention to that. He wrestled with him the entire night; but as daybreak came, 'Let me go,' he says, 'for the dawn breaks.' What then does the enigma signify? Christ fights and wrestles those who have the mist of ignorance in their mind and in their heart, and live as though in darkness and night, for he considers them enemies. But whenever the intelligible⁴⁶ morning-star sheds light upon their mind, whenever some such day radiates the light of the true knowledge of God on them, then he ends the battle. For he wrestles and fights with those who have an unenlightened, unilluminated heart as though in night and darkness. But he does not do battle with those who are in the light, those who have the intelligible dawn in their mind. Receive therefore, people, the intelligible morning-star; let the light of truth radiate upon you; stop doing battle with Christ. He does not know defeat, but eternal and everlasting victory. Although the Only Begotten Word of God has now become a human being, he, nevertheless, did not cease being God by nature, who is immutable and unchanging. The same one, therefore, is both from the Father as Word, and from a woman, a human being according to flesh. For there is one God the Father, from whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things,⁴⁷ and one Holy Spirit, in whom are all things. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

⁴³ Gen. 32: 23.

⁴⁴ Gen. 32: 25-7.

⁴⁵ Gen. 32: 30-1.

⁴⁶ νοητός: 'intelligible' (as opposed to the perceptible, αἰσθητός) refers to that which is apprehended by the mind, i.e. the spiritual realm. The 'morning-star' therefore is a type of a greater spiritual reality.

⁴⁷ 1 Cor. 8: 6.

HOMILY VI

*The same, against John of Antioch*⁴⁸

We were taught the power of love towards God from the divine Scripture; the Saviour himself taught us no less when he said, 'Let the one who loves me *follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also.*'⁴⁹ For we must always be with, love, and follow the Saviour of us all, Christ, and in no way separate from him; and we will observe this by wanting the same things as he does. This splendid, great assembly of priests fulfilled this, concerning which the prophetic voice might very rightly say, *There the deer gathered together and saw each other's faces. They arrived in a herd and not one of them perished. They did not seek one another out, because the Lord commanded them and his spirit gathered them.*⁵⁰ For the meeting of intelligible⁵¹ stags did not occur there because of some ordinary act or, indeed, because of some earthly matter. Since, in fact, a terrible and recalcitrant serpent appeared as though in a beautiful and flowering garden, I mean the church of our Saviour, with not one but many heads on one body, the gathering and presence of the intelligible stags becomes most useful and necessary, so that the Lord's garden may be freed from the moral decrepitude of the venomous ones.⁵² Therefore, the Spirit of God gathered them together and the Lord commanded them. What did he command? *Where I am, there let my servant be also.*⁵³ Surely then, my sermon now turns to you who come from the region of the East, you who raise a lofty brow against all. If we are all servants of the Saviour of us all, Christ, if we have been entrusted with the service of his kerygma, why are we not all with him, wishing to agree with him? The many-headed serpent, as you see, lifted its profane and unhallowed head, spitting the poison of its own impiety upon the children of the church. I come laying bare the sword of the Spirit against it;⁵⁴ I fight with the beast for the sake of Christ. Why do you not collaborate with me who wishes to work well? Why do you yourself not help too? Let him be struck by the hand of all. Let us con-

⁴⁸ *Homilia VI. Ephesi dicta in Iohannem Antiochenum* (CPG 5250), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 98–100. Perhaps Cyril delivered this homily soon after Cyril was deposed by John of Antioch's counter-synod on Friday, 26 June 431.

⁴⁹ John 12: 26. The New Testament text reads *ἐὰν ἐμοί τις διακονῆ* in place of *ὁ ἐμὲ ἀγαπῶν*.

⁵⁰ Isa. 34: 15–16.

⁵¹ *νοητός*: used here to signal Cyril's spiritual exegesis of the text.

⁵² 'one serpent with many heads', refers to Nestorius and the Antiochene party.

⁵³ John 12: 26.

⁵⁴ Eph. 6: 17.

sider the struggle a joint one, so that having conquered together, we may offer thanks to the Saviour, saying, '*You have humbled the arrogant like a wounded man.*'⁵⁵ *You crushed the heads of the serpent.*'⁵⁶ But we, the genuine ministers of the Saviour, stewards of his mysteries, we consider those who rail against his glory to be our worst enemies. But you do not do thus; how can it be?⁵⁷ The facts themselves prove that you do not come here sincerely. You see us preparing to struggle as in war, still dripping with sweat from the battle, requiring spiritual courage and solace—but rather, already victorious. Meanwhile, you who were one of our brothers, who registered Christ as your Master, who were obliged to serve as a fellow soldier, *you* raise arms against the dogmas of truth. O incredible deed! You did not partake in the battle.⁵⁸ You did not participate in the contest. You fled the time of battle by your late arrival. You stood observing from afar those who fought bravely. You saw the enemy fallen, his blasphemous tongue exhausted and chastened, and then you grieved. Tell me, why? Because Christ has conquered? Because he has prevailed against his adversaries? Because he has silenced a boastful tongue? Because the disease that strikes the children of the church has ceased? But it would be better to fight bravely with us, and to speak what was said through the voice of David. *Do I not hate them that hate you, Lord? And do I not loathe your enemies? I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them my enemies.*⁵⁹ But there is not a single word from you on such matters. Indeed, you shoot hostile arrows at those who have conquered and attempt to wound with arrows of jealousy those whom you should marvel at instead. Although you yourself attack us severely, we speak, fearing nothing. *Their blows were the arrows of children, their tongues brought ruin upon them.*⁶⁰ Although you attempt to war against the gathering of the Lord by surrounding yourself with military⁶¹ weapons, nevertheless, our weapons are not *worldly, but mighty in God*, as it is written, *the might to destroy strongholds.*⁶² You will find the soldiers of Christ more excellent than those on your side. They have the shield of faith, the armour of good repute, i.e. Christ. They have righteousness as a breastplate, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.⁶³ Even if you attack boldly and terribly, filled

⁵⁵ Ps. 88: 11.

⁵⁶ Ps. 73: 13.

⁵⁷ Cyril here speaks of John of Antioch and his support for Nestorius.

⁵⁸ A reference to John's late arrival and his absence from the proceedings of the majority council.

⁵⁹ Ps. 138: 21–2.

⁶⁰ Ps. 63: 8–9.

⁶¹ ἔξωθεν: i.e. outside the church.

⁶² 2 Cor. 10: 4.

⁶³ Eph. 6: 14, 16, 17. The lack of parallel structure suggests that the text is incomplete.

with contempt and, like boastful Goliath, puffed up with barbarian madness and ignorance against us, yet Christ will conquer; he will, indeed, conquer through his own champions. How did David conquer? There were five stones in a bag, and the stones were smooth, and this was a type of Christ.⁶⁴ What, indeed, is the bag of Christ? The church on earth, which contains many precious and select stones, concerning which the prophet says that *sacred stones roll upon the earth*.⁶⁵ Christ will prevail through the holy stones. But the stones were smooth, as I said, and the smoothness of the stones alludes to that which cannot be grasped. For that which is smooth can never be grasped; the conduct of the holy is blameless. Surely then Christ will conquer, even if you manage to wound, and so have I conquered.⁶⁶ Although you committed wrong with your craftiness, still you crowned Christ unwillingly. *For it has been granted to us that for the sake of Christ we should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake.*⁶⁷ *He who believes in Him is not condemned; he who does not believe in Him is condemned already.*⁶⁸

HOMILY IV

*By the same, to Nestorius, When the Seven Came Down to St Mary's*⁶⁹

I see a beaming assembly of saints,⁷⁰ who have all eagerly gathered together, called by the holy Mother of God, Mary, the eternal Virgin. For although I live in much grief,⁷¹ the arrival of the holy fathers has

⁶⁴ 1 Kings 17: 40.

⁶⁵ Zech. 9: 16.

⁶⁶ The text is problematic. Schwartz gives an alternative reading, 'even if you manage to crucify [Christ], so he conquered'.

⁶⁷ Phil. 1: 29.

⁶⁸ John 3: 18.

⁶⁹ *Homilia IV, De Maria Deipara in Nestorium* (CPG 5248), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 102–4. 'The Seven' is a secondary addition to the title, as M. Santer argued in 'The Authorship and Occasion of Cyril of Alexandria's Sermon on the Virgin', *SP* 12 (1975), 144–50.

⁷⁰ I follow PG 77. 992A: τὸ σύστημα τῶν ἁγίων. Πάντων . . .

⁷¹ Cyril said in another instance that they had convened 'in much grief' for the first session in the Church of St Mary. This homily makes reference to that first meeting, which suggests that it was delivered sometime *after* the first meeting of the council. Furthermore, this homily alludes to the arrival of the papal delegates from Rome. I suggest therefore that this homily was delivered shortly after the papal representatives arrived from Rome on approximately 10 July (when the council confirmed Nestorius' deposition). For further discussion on dating this homily, see S. Wessel, 'Nestorius, Mary, and Controversy', *AHC* 31 (1999), 6–8.

brought me joy.⁷² Now the sweet word of the writer of hymns, David, has been fulfilled in us: *Look how good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity.*⁷³ Hail from us, the holy, mystical Trinity, which convened us all in this holy church of Mary, Mother of God.⁷⁴ Hail from us, Mary, Mother of God, the venerable treasure of all the world, the inextinguishable flame,⁷⁵ the crown of virginity, the sceptre of orthodoxy, the indissoluble temple, the place for the infinite, the Mother and Virgin; through whom *the one who comes in the name of the Lord is called blessed* in the holy Gospels;⁷⁶ Hail, the one who contains the uncontainable in the holy virginal womb, through whom the holy Trinity is glorified and venerated throughout the world, through whom heaven is exalted, through whom angels and archangels are delighted, through whom demons are banished, through whom the tempting devil fell from heaven, through whom fallen human nature is assumed into heaven, through whom all of creation, possessed by the madness of idolatry, came to the full knowledge of truth, through whom holy baptism came into being for all the faithful, through whom is the oil of exultation, through whom the churches have been founded for all the world, through whom the nations are brought into repentance. And what more is there to say? Through whom the Only Begotten Son of God shined light for *those that sit in the darkness and shadow of death*;⁷⁷ through whom the prophets prophesied; through whom the apostles proclaim salvation to the nations; through whom the dead were revived; through whom kings reign, through the Holy Trinity. Is it even possible for people to speak of the celebrated Mary? The virginal womb;⁷⁸ O thing of wonder! The marvel strikes me with awe! Who ever heard of a builder who, after he constructed his own temple, was prevented from dwelling in it? Who is insulted for having summoned his own servant into motherhood?

Behold, therefore, all rejoice.⁷⁹ The sea, recognizing its fellow

⁷² This refers to the arrival of the papal representatives from Rome on approximately 10 July 431.

⁷³ Ps. 132: 1.

⁷⁴ The venue was a hostile one for Nestorius. See generally Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 164.

⁷⁵ Also: candle.

⁷⁶ Matt. 21: 9. This emphasizes Mary's descent from the line of David.

⁷⁷ Luke 1: 79.

⁷⁸ Translation of the final clause follows PG 77. 992C. A possible alternative translation based on Schwartz's edition reads: '... through whom kings reign. The virginal womb [came into being] through the Holy Trinity. (Who can even speak of the celebrated Mary?)' *ACO I. I. 2*, p. 103 ll. 3–4. In any case, the meaning is ambiguous. PG 77. 992C: δι' ἧς βασιλεῖς βασιλεύουσι διὰ τριάδος ἁγίας. Καὶ δυνατὸς ἀνθρώπων λέγειν τὴν πολυμήνητον Μαρίαν; Ἡ μήτρα ἡ παρθενικὴ.

⁷⁹ Translation follows PG 77. 992C: χαίρει τὰ σύμπαντα: θάλαττα δὲ ὑπετάγη.

servants, was subdued;⁸⁰ and while its stormy waves thrashed about, the passage of the saints transformed the sea into stillness. For the servant rising over [the waves] recalled the voice of the Saviour saying, *Peace! Be still!*⁸¹ And the journey of the fathers restored the earth, previously beset by robbers, into peace once again. *For how beautiful are the feet of those who preach peace!*⁸² What kind of peace? Our Lord Jesus Christ whom Mary bore as he himself willed it. For what value is it to me if I enquire into Scripture but do not honour it? But will you mention to me the denial of the Jews? The prophets denounced them from the beginning, for, having plotted to slay Christ on their own initiative, they were called to deny him.⁸³ But will you mention the bitter plague of Arius? He harboured a pestilential longing for episcopal office. What about the unspeakable and godless tenet of pagan licentiousness? That was the practice of ignorance. What else must one say? This man [Nestorius] exceeded with his wickedness every gentile who goes to the unlawful festivals. For the gentiles oftentimes in ignorance of Scripture unwillingly blaspheme God. But this man, with knowledge of the entire Scriptures,⁸⁴ I dare to say, perhaps having even practised the deceits of magic, did not delve sincerely into divinely inspired Scriptures, but plunged into silver and gold,⁸⁵ blinded and deceived by a madness for [material] things.⁸⁶ Wishing to alienate yourself from the episcopal throne by your blasphemy,⁸⁷ you have even deleted your name from the list of brethren, not recognizing the One who bestowed the office of High Priest on you.⁸⁸ Were you not persuaded by Paul when he said, *Even if an angel from heaven preaches contrary to that which we preached, let him be accursed?*⁸⁹ Paul did not stop your vain

⁸⁰ Translation follows Schwartz's alternative reading, *ACO* I. I. 2, p. 103, alternative reading l. 7: *τοὺς ἰδίους συνδούλους*. ⁸¹ Mark 4: 39.

⁸² Rom. 10: 15. Cyril uses the word 'peace' in place of 'good things'. This passage may refer to the journeys undertaken by the council participants as they made their way to Ephesus. The allusion to the calm sea may allude to the arrival of the Roman delegates.

⁸³ The translation could also read, 'they were enticed to deny'.

⁸⁴ The meaning is ambiguous here. The phrase could also mean 'all secular knowledge'. ⁸⁵ Cf. Acts 20: 33.

⁸⁶ See Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 1126, s.v. The translation is based on my editing of Schwartz's text: *ἀλλ' ἐνέκυψεν εἰς ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσίον, τυφλωθεὶς καὶ κεφλωθεὶς τῇ μανίᾳ περὶ πράγματα*.

⁸⁷ The translation is based on my editing of Schwartz's text: *δυσφημίᾳ σεαυτὸν βουλόμενος ἀλλοτριῶσαι τοῦ θρόνου . . .*

⁸⁸ Cyril changes person during the course of this passage, moving from a third-person assault on Nestorius, to one that takes place in the second person. This passage also alludes directly to Nestorius' deposition and even to bribes received by Nestorius, which was probably an attempt to deflect charges of bribery that had been made against Cyril.

⁸⁹ Gal. 1: 8.

arrogance. But did Isaiah, when he said, *Behold, a Virgin will conceive, and she will bear a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel, which is interpreted, God is with us?*⁹⁰ Neither did he! For yours was a mind of terrible perversity. Listen at least to the demons who say, *What do you have to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come before time to torture us?*⁹¹ Who advised you to proclaim this worthless argument? Who laboured with you in this inopportune affliction? You were not ashamed at making God similar to a Persian kingship. You were not embarrassed that you wished to deny the traditions of the fathers, evangelists, and prophets. And although you thought you ruled over all the churches, you did not remember the one who guided you from the dung heap to the heavenly heights; and intent on the creatures you did not recognize the creator.⁹² Wishing to turn the world upside down⁹³ with deceptive arguments, you made a mockery of the temple of God, and wished to divide him who was born of the Virgin Mary, (which is a wicked dogma, one that incites a raging madness in the world, one that can be neither resolved nor revealed unless it is investigated in the proper time.)⁹⁴ But imitating Beliar,⁹⁵ you thought you could persuade, by the chains of your lawless thoughts,⁹⁶ an emperor fond of orthodox doctrine, who worships the consubstantial Trinity, through which he reigns continuously, through which he crushes the hostile enemies, through which the chorus of perpetual virgins reigns,⁹⁷ through which he restores the world in peace⁹⁸—you thought you could make this man an apostate with your deceptive words. You even wished to corrupt the pious laity,⁹⁹ and you annoyed a group of fathers who happened to be taking a

⁹⁰ Isa. 7: 14; Matt. 1: 23.

⁹¹ Matt. 8: 29.

⁹² See Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 1126, s.v. Cf. above, 'Blinded and deceived by a madness for things (πράγματα)'.

⁹³ Cf. Acts 17: 6.

⁹⁴ Perhaps a reference to convening the council in a timely fashion.

⁹⁵ 2 Cor. 6: 13.

⁹⁶ Cf. Prov. 5: 22b and Gregory of Nyssa, *Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium* (CPG 3144), PG 45. 1232A, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera III, I. Opera dogmatica minora*, ed. F. Müller (Leiden, 1958), 206, in which the word *σειρά* has a negative connotation, as in Cyril's text. The Septuagint uses the word to describe sin, and Gregory of Nyssa uses it to condemn the unyielding logic of the Apollinarians' claims.

⁹⁷ A probable reference to the empress Pulcheria. See Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 143, discussing the fact that Pulcheria and her two sisters were called 'the ever-virginal chorus of princesses'.

⁹⁸ Cyril replays the emperor's own imperial ideology as expressed in his *Sacra ad Cyrillum Alex. et ad Singulos Metropolitanas*, ACO I. I. 1, pp. 114–16.

⁹⁹ Or: 'people'.

respite [from the conciliar proceedings].¹⁰⁰ You were not content to ruin yourself in blaspheming God, but you announced your blasphemy to the entire world. But behold, it has been fulfilled in you, *The sinner was ensnared in the works of his own hands*.¹⁰¹ You had the holy clergy of presbyters and deacons excommunicated for refuting your importunate madness, which is nothing else but thinking like Arius.¹⁰² And now I am neither striking down the fallen man, nor drowning one who is tossed about by waves;¹⁰³ rather I scoff at the empty sophistry of his lawless advisers. Who has seen a ship coming into a calm harbour in tranquil weather, having just suffered a shipwreck? Who has seen an athlete who, after falling in the sandpit, has not stood upright again? But when you had fallen and were shipwrecked in your faith, did we not lend a hand?¹⁰⁴ Accept as witness the honourable and holy Caelestine, archbishop of great Rome, for he continually wrote to you telling you to distance yourself from impious, useless, and incoherent doctrine.¹⁰⁵ Receive even our humble witness, as we exhorted you in like manner through brief letters to accept our speech about God. But you did not take us into account, clothing yourself in a sort of cruelty and madness, being arrogant in your wickedness, and, like an all-powerful one, disputing over lawless points. And you became a sharp razor¹⁰⁶ turned against yourself, planning to commit deceit. Because of this, God whom you defrauded, destroyed you and plucked your root from the land of the living.¹⁰⁷ For you did not think about God.

And let these words from us suffice as far as concerns this man, *God is judge and repays each according to his deeds*.¹⁰⁸ Let it be for us to revere and worship the unity,¹⁰⁹ and to be obedient to our most pious emperor,

¹⁰⁰ The meaning is unclear. It could possibly refer to Nestorius' telling a group of conciliar bishops that God was not a child 2 or 3 months old.

¹⁰¹ Ps. 9: 16.

¹⁰² Translation follows *ACO I. I. 2*, p. 104 n. 12, Schwartz's supplement to the lacuna in the text: *ὡς οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἶσαν εἶ . . .*

¹⁰³ Cf. Eph. 4: 14.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. 1 Tim. 1: 19.

¹⁰⁵ A reference to Caelestine's letter to Nestorius, *Epistula Caelestini papae ad Nestorium* (judgement of Roman synod) (10 Aug. 430. Nestorio tradita est 30 Nov. 430). *ACO I. I. 1*, pp. 77–83.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion (Adversus haereses)* (CPG 3745), 27. 5. 9, PG 41. 372A; Epiphanius, *I. Ancoratus und Panarion* (nos. 1–33, 27), ed. K. Holl, GCS 25 (Leipzig, 1915), 308.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Ps. 52: 5.

¹⁰⁸ Rom. 2: 6.

¹⁰⁹ Cyril spins a masterful pun. The use of the word implies at least three things: (1) the one Trinity, (2) the unity of the two natures of Christ (contrary to the division of natures taught by Nestorius), and (3) the unity of the church, which had been threatened by Nestorius' teachings.

and to be subject to the rulers and authorities,¹¹⁰ and to revere and worship the undivided Trinity while singing hymns to the perpetual Virgin Mary, namely the holy church [of God], and to her Son and undefiled bridegroom, for to him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY VII

*The same, before he was arrested by the comes, and imprisoned by the soldiers*¹¹¹

The blessed prophet David declares that those who place trust in God are the bravest. *Be brave, and let your heart be strong, all are hoping in the Lord.*¹¹² For, indeed, the plants in gardens grow and flourish and rise to great heights when [they receive] plenty¹¹³ of water. And the soul of man grows pious by the exhortations of the Holy Spirit, is strengthened in the faith, and acquires steadfast endurance, which the blessed Paul clearly admired more than all the other virtues, and says as follows, *More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us.*¹¹⁴ Therefore endurance is the cause and agent of all that is good in us, a path towards good repute, a nurse of hope for the future age. And how shall we achieve endurance? The divine Scripture teaches us, saying, *My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare your soul for temptation. Set right your heart and be steadfast.*¹¹⁵ But perhaps someone will say, 'Was it not possible for humanity to succeed another way? Was it not possible for good to prevail without labour?' Not at all, it says. And why? For very many people plot against the saints, and the war that envelops them is terrible. On account of this, the Saviour himself said, *In the world you have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.*¹¹⁶ Therefore, since everywhere there is much war against the saints, they must vigorously resist the bouts of temptation and remember the disciple who said, *Blessed be the man who endures temptation because, being righteous, he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him.*¹¹⁷ I wish to tell you one of the ancient deeds, so you may learn the purpose¹¹⁸

¹¹⁰ Titus 3: 1.

¹¹¹ *Homilia VII. Ephesi dicta, priusquam a comite comprehenderetur* (CPG 5251), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 100–2. This homily was delivered just before Cyril's arrest in early August 431.

¹¹² Ps. 30: 25.

¹¹³ Lit. a most bountiful irrigation of water.

¹¹⁴ Rom. 5: 3–5.

¹¹⁵ Sir. 2: 1–2.

¹¹⁶ John 16: 33.

¹¹⁷ Jas. 1: 12.

¹¹⁸ τῆλος.

of spiritual courage. The tyrants of Babylonia, those who occupied the thrones of the kingdom among them, were always inclined somehow to be arrogant and cruel, and, exceeding the limits of human beings, they wished to seize for themselves an honour appropriate only to the God of all. So, the accursed Nebuchadnezzar erected a golden image.¹¹⁹ He commanded the people subject to him to worship the image while the sonorous instruments played. In fact, it was not unusual for them to worship the creature rather than the creator God,¹²⁰ and they readily proceeded to do that, and *They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an image resembling a mortal human being.*¹²¹ After the Babylonians led the children of the Hebrews into the midst, namely, Ananias, Azarias, and Mishael, they commanded them to worship a golden image, and they forced the most noble and pious nation to sink down into sin equal to theirs and worship the golden image. But they accomplished nothing and, defeated by the piety of these people, they brought upon themselves punishment by fire. The charge, moreover, was an inevitable one for those who excel in the faith, a charge that was grounded in their piety, namely, their refusal to worship a human being and their unwillingness to accept views that insult the divine nature. After they were thrown into the furnace of fire, then came a great demonstration of the ineffable power. For the power of the elements was transformed into something contrary to nature, and the fire yielded to the will of the Creator, and the flame was changed into the rustling spirit of water.¹²² The young men, realizing [that they had received] aid from above, sang hymns in the furnace of fire and tamed the fire with hymns to God. The furnace of fire was a type of the church with a holy choir that consisted not only of people, but also of angels. Did you marvel at the virtue of men? Did you praise their endurance, knowing the greatness of their piety? Let us see in what [state] are our own matters. Those people were under barbarian tyrants, while we, under pious [imperial] sceptres have the most pious rulers over all affairs. How shall we give in to the enemies? For if they light the furnace of insidiousness, and ignite the flames of moral perversity, introducing man-worship to us, still we have God in heaven; let us worship him. For being God by nature, he became like us, not that he rejected being God, but that he honoured the nature of humankind. Therefore, he was able to deliver us. For we, following the faith of the most pious emperors, and knowing the magnitude of kindness existing in them, shall not tolerate the moral depravity of our enemies, but we shall confess that Emmanuel is God by nature. By saying this and by being so inclined, we shall enjoy the greatest recompense of all. What is this? He himself will

¹¹⁹ Dan. 3: 1–5.

¹²⁰ Rom. 1: 25.

¹²¹ Rom. 1: 23.

¹²² Dan. 3: 50–1.

teach us, saying, *So everyone who acknowledges me before others, I also shall acknowledge before my Father in Heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I shall also deny before my Father in Heaven.*¹²³ He confesses Christ who says that God is true and rebukes those who do not believe, but he denies Christ who does not say that God is true, but even fights with those who confess him. Therefore, the Saviour of all will acknowledge us and deny them; through whom and with whom be the glory and the power to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY II

*St Cyril's Exposition of the Gospel of John, Delivered at Ephesus*¹²⁴

Every discourse is inferior to the honour and glory of the saints. For *they shine with splendour in the world, holding fast to the word of life*, as it is written.¹²⁵ Whenever they speak of the divine mysteries, it would be appropriate for everyone to say to them, *You are not the ones speaking, but the spirit of the Father speaks through you.*¹²⁶ For they proclaimed Jesus to us, the true light, the eternal life, to whom we also say in the words of the blessed David, *All the earth worships you; and they sing praises to you, sing praises to your name.*¹²⁷ For while the commandment [given] through Moses still ruled, and the preachings of the gospels had not yet been introduced, *In Judaea God was known, in Israel his name was great.*¹²⁸ For *Moses was thin-voiced and slow of speech.*¹²⁹ That is why the law was heard only in Judaea. But when the true light shone for us and the Word, being God, shared equally in our flesh and blood,¹³⁰ everything was filled by him. Everywhere there were temples and altars; everywhere choir members and worshippers and good shepherds and flocks of spiritual sheep, making the hallowed courtyard [of the churches] crowded with their numbers. Before the advent of our Saviour, the people on earth were led astray; they were worshipping the creature rather than the Creator.¹³¹ They bowed down to the works of their own hands, and to each of those who erred God was whatever they

¹²³ Matt. 10: 32–3.

¹²⁴ *Homilia II. Ephesi habita in basilica s. Iohannis Evangelistae* (CPG 5246), ACO I. I. 2, pp. 94–6. This homily was delivered on the day of St John, 26 September 431. See A. J. Festugière, *Éphèse et Chalcédoine. Actes des Conciles* (Paris, 1982), 19 n. 3.

¹²⁵ Phil. 2: 15–16.

¹²⁷ Ps. 65: 4.

¹²⁹ Exod. 4: 10.

¹³¹ Rom. 1: 25.

¹²⁶ Matt. 10: 20.

¹²⁸ Ps. 75: 2.

¹³⁰ Heb. 2: 14.

considered [to be God]. But the Only Begotten Word of God, the good shepherd, the true lamb, whom the holy *Theotokos* and Virgin conceived for us as a life-giving product of her virginal womb, appeared to us, as I said, as the Incarnate God, as a free man in the form of a slave, as one like us for our sake and as one above all of creation for his, as one like us in lowliness and as Godlike in his glory, as one who humbled himself¹³² and reigned with the Father, as one who emptied himself¹³³ and distributed from his plenitude¹³⁴ goodness to the saints, as one who worships with us as a human being and who is worshipped as God, not only on earth, but also in heaven. For it says [in Scripture], *When he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, Let all God's angels worship him.*¹³⁵ Who is the one who entered into the world? In what manner was he actually introduced? Unfold its meaning, Evangelist, and tell us now, o blessed John. You were called 'son of Thunder',¹³⁶ you shouted something great and extraordinary to that which is beneath the heavens. Your voice is immortal, and oblivion and time yield to your words. Look, such a large gathering of shepherds has come to you. Roll away the stone for us, as the blessed Jacob did for the shepherds.¹³⁷ Reveal the well of life to us. Give, that we may draw now from the fountains of salvation, or rather grant your own fountain to us. Let us hear, then, the one who says, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.*¹³⁸ But we did indeed believe that the Only Begotten Word of God had an ineffable beginning from the Father, so tell us the rest, O Evangelist. Listen once again to the one who says, *And the Word became flesh,*¹³⁹ that is to say, a human being. The Only Begotten Word of God became a human being, not that he stopped being God, but that he remained what he was when he took on flesh. For the nature of the Word is unchangeable and immutable, and it cannot suffer even *a shadow of change.*¹⁴⁰ The blessed Evangelist taught us to be mindful of these things, the truly great and brightest star, the most beneficial star, not for those who cross the perceptible sea, but for those wayfarers of piety, lovers of truth, who wish to keep their faith correct and unerring. If someone desires to sail in this manner, let him keep in his thoughts the words of the theologian like a star. Thus will he sail lightly over the bitter waves of the heresies. Thus will they arrive at a calm harbour, and come to truth itself, that is to say, Christ, with whom be the glory and the power to the Father, with the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

¹³² Phil. 2: 8.¹³³ Phil. 2: 7.¹³⁴ John 1: 16.¹³⁵ Heb. 1: 6.¹³⁶ Mark 3: 17.¹³⁷ Gen. 29: 10.¹³⁸ John 1: 1-2.¹³⁹ John 1: 14.¹⁴⁰ Jas. 1: 17.

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