

THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON **AND** **THE CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA**

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THE IMPORTANCE OF RESTUDYING THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

Nowadays it is very important to restudy and reexamine the Council of Chalcedon, not for the sake of reminding the world of wounds inflicted upon the Church of Alexandria by her sisters, the apostolic Churches, but in order to clarify the position of the Church of Alexandria. From the seventh century the Church of Alexandria had lost communication with other churches because of unwilling political circumstances. Through this long period she was accused of the following charges:

- 1. She is Eutychian!, and is called "Monophysite!" This title means that she believes in one nature of Jesus Christ, that the human nature was absorbed totally in the divine nature. This idea differs from our own belief and from our Fathers' belief; and our church never accepted it.**
- 2. Dr. J. Tager [1] states that Christianity was foreign to Egypt until the fifth century, and that Egyptians accepted Christianity for political reasons. When their Patriarchs felt sympathy of the Christian world and the world-wide respect to their education, they found a chance to get rid of the emperor's authority, and did their best to exercise their religious thoughts which differed from those of their direct principal, i.e. the Roman Pope!**

This picture is too far from reality with regard to the Coptic Church. History witnesses that Christianity was not foreign in Egypt, hundreds of thousand of Copts had been martyred in the Roman age. In Egypt all forms of the evangelic monastic movements originated, and in Egypt the School of Alexandria was established and its Fathers were well known all over the world. I think that there is no need to argue this accusation that the Patriarchs of Alexandria used to oppose their leader, the Roman Pontiff, for history reveals the relations of mutual respect between Alexandria and Rome!

It is not true that the Coptic Church was separated from the Universal Church because of its desire to flee from Byzantium, but the truth is that the emperors wanted to solve the theological disputes by force, and the Melkite (royal) Patriarch, who was appointed by the emperor, used to persecute the Copts using the power given to him. These elements created a kind of revolution within the souls of the Copts against the rulers.

- 3. Some scholars accused St. Dioscorus of violence, looking upon his exile as a penalty for his violence. There is a new trend amongst scholars that attributes violence to all Alexandrian Fathers, such as SS. Athanasius and Cyril, looking to their spiritual struggle for keeping fast the true faith of the Church as a kind of violence.**

Now, I do not ignore the efforts which the Church in the East and West offered for the cause of unity, especially when many of the theologians acknowledge our true belief concerning Christology. I have already written about this matter [2].

Here I present in brief the theological point of view to clarify the Coptic Church's opinion in the Council of Chalcedon.

THE ALEXANDRIAN AND ANTIOCHENE CHRISTOLOGICAL THOUGHTS[3]

Many scholars attribute the problem of the Christological formula concerning the nature of Christ to the ontroversy between the Alexandrian and the Antiochene theology. While the Alexandrian School adopted

the "hypostatic union" or "natural union" of the Godhead and manhood to assert the oneness of Jesus Christ, the Antiochene School accepted the "indwelling theology," that is the Godhead dwell in Manhood, as if Jesus Christ were two persons in one, to assert that no confusion had occurred between the Godhead and manhood and to avoid attributing human weakness to His divinity. The basis of the point of view to the Alexandrian School was John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh," while that of the Antiochenes was Colossians 2:9 "For in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

I would like to make clear the following points:

1. There was a controversy between the two schools, but they agreed on many points.
2. The problem has risen because of those who misinterpreted these Schools' concepts. Apollinarius of Laodicea, who denied that the Lord Jesus had a human soul, and Eutyches of Constantinople denied the humanity of Christ, both did wrong to the School of Alexandria. It is noteworthy that they accepted the Alexandrian formula concerning the one nature of Christ (mia-physis), they were not Alexandrians, nor had they studied the Alexandrian system of theology. On the other side Nestorius, Theodoret of Cyrus, Theodore of Mospuestia and Ibas of Edessa who insisted to divide the Lord Jesus Christ in two persons, did wrong to the School of Antioch.
3. The imperial and church politics played their role in this controversy to create a huge gap between the leaders of these schools.

THE ALEXANDRIAN HYPOSTATIC UNION

St. Cyril, in his struggle against Nestorius explained the "hypostatic union" as a "personal union," "natural union" and "real unification." He conserves at least two ideas:

1. The Logos, an eternal hypostasis, united Himself to manhood, which had no existence before the incarnation and could not be separated from the Godhead. He became individuated by receiving its hypostatic status through His union with the Logos. Manhood was not an independent hypostasis apart from the Logos, but became a hypostasis through union with the Logos.
2. The union of the natures was inward and real. St. Cyril rejected the Antiochene theory of "indwelling," that is the Godhead of Christ dwelt in His manhood, or the theory of "conjunction" or "close participation" as insufficient to reveal the real unification but permits the division of the natures of Christ as Nestorius taught.

MIA-PHYSIS OR ONE INCARNATE NATURES

Sellers states that the majority of bishops who attended the Council of Chalcedon believed that the traditional formula received by St. Athanasius was the "one incarnate nature of the Word of God." This formula differs from that of Eutyches concerning the "one nature."

I have already clarified the meaning of the one nature (of Alexandria) as "mia-physis," through the writings of St. Cyril and the non-Chalcedonian Fathers, such as SS. Dioscorus, Severus of Antioch and Philoxenus: We can summarize the meaning in the following points:

1. We mean by "mia" one, but not "single one" or "simple one," but unity, one "out of two natures" as St. Dioscorus states.
2. St. Cyril insisted on "the one nature" of Christ to assert Christ's oneness, as a tool to defend Church's faith against Nestorianism.
3. According to the Nestorians "one nature" of Christ means only one of two probabilities: the natures had been absorbed or a confusion between the divine and human nature happened to produce one confused nature. St. Cyril confirmed that no confusion or absorption had occurred but a real unity.
4. Jesus Christ is, at once, consubstantial with God the Father and consubstantial with us, men.
5. He is at once God and man (Incarnate God).
6. St. Severus states that in the incarnation "the divine nature of the Word was not changed into what it was not," but He remained what He was.
7. The Word became truly man.

8. Jesus' manhood was perfect, He had a body and also a soul.

9. Manhood of Christ was not formed before the incarnation, i.e. the manhood did not exist then the Godhead dwelt in it afterwards.

Some scholars tried to attribute the Alexandrian theological system to the Egyptian attitude of asceticism, saying that Copts concentrated on the "deification" or "divination" of believers, ignoring the body. I have discussed this wrong idea before⁶.

THE ANTIOCHENE "DYO PHYSEIS" (TWO NATURES)⁷

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

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

2. St. Athanasius confirmed the unity of Godhead and manhood, repeating the church's belief in one person; and "Christ's body" was His own body and not a strange element (of Christ). Thus Jesus Christ is one Person and not two, had one nature without rejecting the dynamic presence of His Godhead and manhood.

3. Apollinarius of Laodicea used the Alexandrian formula "one nature" in his own theological system. In his eagerness to defend the church's faith against the Arianism he believed that the Logos was united with a mere human body and that the Logos replaced the soul that was united to the body received from the Virgin Mary. In other words to realize the hypostatic union he believed that the manhood of Christ is incomplete (body without soul).

4. The Antiochene leaders treated the "hypostatic union" of Cyril with suspicion as if it were Apollinarian. They adopted the theory of the "indwelling" of the Logos in the manhood, to assert Christ's manhood and to confirm Him as a real and perfect man. Nestorius declared this theory when he refused to call St. Mary

"Theotokos" and rejected the Alexandrian statement: "the Son of God died." In fact the Antiochenes desired to assert three facts in the incarnation:

a. The manhood of Christ was real and perfect.

b. There was no confusion between the natures of Christ.

c. The Godhead is impassable, God did not suffer, nor did He die.

But at the same time they speak of Christ as two persons, two sons [Son of God and Son of Man].

The "Dualism" of the Person of Christ is very clear in the statements of the Antiochene leaders, but as they used to deny it to defend themselves, some modern scholars state that they did not intend to dualism, but rejected it, as well as Nestorius himself.

Today some scholars wonder whether Nestorius himself was truly a Nestorian, but the majority of scholars still believe that the Antiochene Christology divides the natures of Christ.

1. Dr. Tager: Copts & Moslems (in Arabic, ch. [1].

2. For more details see:

**Christology according to the Non-Chalcedonian Churches, 1986.*

**The Term Physis & Hypostasis in the Early Church, 1986.*

**The Coptic Orthodox Church as a Church of Erudition & Theology, 1986, ch. 14.*

3. See: The Terms Physis & Hypostasis... p. 10f.

4. Ibid 11,12.

5. Ibid 12-19.

6. Ibid 19f.

7. Ibid 25f.

EVENTS PRECEDENT TO THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON[1]

DISPUTE OVER THE PERSON OF CHRIST REOPENED

In the third Ecumenical Council in Ephesus in the year 341 A.D, Nestorius was deposed from his See and excommunicated, his doctrines were condemned, the creed of Nicea reaffirmed, and formal approval was given to the title "Theotokos." The Antiochene side attacked these decisions. On the arrival of John of Antioch, joined by Theodoret of Cyrus and other bishops, a rival meeting was held at which St. Cyril and Memnon of Ephesus were excommunicated and deposed as guilty of violence and heresy... Every Party had its supporters in the court, and the Emperor, more or less uncertain, did not know which side to support. St. Cyril was put into jail for two months and was then permitted to return to his see, but Nestorius was exiled into Egypt where he died in Upper Egypt. A

reconciliation between John and Cyril was finally effected in A.D 433. John sent Paul of Emesa to Alexandria with credentials for Cyril and a profession of faith that was to serve as the basis of an agreement. St. Cyril accepted it and sent back to Antioch his famous letter "Laetentur caeli" i.e., the "Formulary of reunion." The problem was externally solved, but the "Reunion" itself was being taken in a different way by the Alexandrian and the Antiochene sides. St. Cyril accepted it just as to lead the Antiochenes to accept the Council of Ephesus (431) unconditionally. The Antiochenes also were not satisfied by the reunion, and they were angry for the exile of Nestorius. Neither of the great parties was as a whole content with the term of the Union Symbol. Now, the circumstances had been changed and the controversy returned in a more severe form which created a bitter schism in the Church, through the Council of Chalcedon in A.D 451. We can summarize the events in the following:

At Edessa, in A. D 435 a newly elected bishop Ibas turned out to be a zealous disciple of Theodore of Mospuestia (an Antiochene leader), and the dogmatic controversy now began to concentrate on Theodore's writings. John of Antioch was replaced in A. D 443 by his nephew Domnus, who had a weak and unstable character, a man only capable of sensible decisions when he had Theodoret of Cyrus at hand to advise him. In the year 444 St. Cyril died and was succeeded by Dioscorus. At Constantinople Proclus was succeeded (A. D 446) by Flavian. He seemed to believe in "one incarnate nature of the Word of God out of the two," but Theodoret of Cyrus changed his mind.

According to church tradition St. Dioscorus sent letters to his brothers the bishops. Theodoret of Cyrus replied with a kind letter, wherein he praised his modesty and decency. Theodoret declared his enmity to St. Dioscorus, for the

latter sent a letter to Domnus of Antioch, blaming him kindly and openly for his encouragement to Theodoret to preach the people with the Nestorian dualism of the Person of Christ, despising the Council of Ephesus and declaring that Nestorius was not a heretic. Domnus sent a kind reply to St. Dioscorus, telling him that he enjoyed his letter because of his love and openness.

ST. DIOSCORUS AND EUTYCHES

Eutyches (c.378-454) was an Archmandrite of a monastery at Constantinople. He was an old ascetic, endowed with eloquence but he was not a true theologian. Eutyches had widespread fame throughout the see of Constantinople, within the monastic circles, the imperial court and among the people. As a friend of St. Cyril, he received from him a copy of the decisions of the Council of Ephesus in A.D 431. He accepted the Alexandrian Christological formula "one incarnate nature of the Word of God..." In his eager opposition to Nestorianism, he defended the formula "one nature" against that of the "two natures," but without sound theological basis, as he inferred that the Godhead absorbed the manhood of Christ.

Until today scholars cannot understand the character of Eutyches and his theology, for he sometimes used orthodox statements, against his main ideas. Perhaps because he was shaky in the theological knowledge, or because he was a deceiver, or even because he was cautious not to lose his fame or his position and priesthood.

A struggle occurred between Eutyches and Theodoret, the latter accused St. Cyril of Apollinarianism, and published a long attack against St. Cyril and Eutyches.

Eusebius of Dorylaeum tried to agitate Flavian of Constantinople to condemn Eutyches. The Patriarch Flavian asked Eusebius to treat this matter with wisdom but the latter insisted on the condemnation of Eutyches before a council. The Council of Constantinople was held in A.D 448, but Eutyches refused to

appear before the council till the seventh session. He denied ever having said that Jesus' flesh came from heaven. He repeated that Christ took flesh of the Virgin Mary, and added that it was a complete incarnation, but he refused to conclude that His flesh was consubstantial with us.

Eusebius insisted on answering these two questions:

Was Christ consubstantial with us?

Were there in Him two natures after the Incarnation?

Concerning the first question he was hesitating, but he assured that the holy Fathers of the Church spoke of the "one nature."

Many scholars.[2] state that according to this council discussions, Eutyches was not confirmed heretic, and that Eusebius did not aim at gaining Eutyches to the truth but to obliging him to accept the Nestorian dualism and that the condemnation of Eutyches by the Council was a hasty action.

THE SECOND COUNCIL OF EPHESUS IN 449 A D

Eutyches condemnation caused many troubles in Constantinople. His supporters accused Flavian and his supporters of Nestorianism. Flavian had to excommunicate some monastery leaders somewhat violently. Eutyches appealed to Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Thessalonica, and through his friend Chrysophius, the chief Chamberlain, he lodged a complaint to the emperor saying that those who judged him desired to accept the Nestorian dualism, and that the minutes of the Council had been falsified. Leo of Rome wrote to Eutyches, praising his zeal in opposing the Nestorian dualism, and at the same time wrote to Flavian to be kind to Eutyches.[3] But he changed his mind perhaps when he heard that the emperor wrote to St. Dioscorus, Pope of Alexandria, summoning him to a council to be held to discuss this matter. Leo, who had no real knowledge of the nature of the conflict between the Alexandrian and Antiochine Christology sent his tome (letter) to Constantinople on 13 June 449, not to work for the reconciliation of the parties but to deform the Alexandrian theologians. Tixeront's comment on this tome was : [This letter has always been regarded as a dogmatic document of exceptional value. Yet, it is decidedly inferior, in theological inspiration, to the work of Cyril, and strictly so-called speculation hardly finds any place in it at all. St. Leo does not discuss or demonstrate; he judges and settles difficulties[4].

Leo was occupied with "papacy" more than the dogma of the Church as we will see through the current events of the fifth century. J.W.C. Wand states: [Leo was one of the greatest of all ecclesiastical statesmen, and has been called the Father of Papacy.[5]

This attitude was clear, as he wrote back to the emperor that there was no need for a council, but that he was nominating Julius of Puteoli, presbyter Renatus and deacon Hilary as his delegates simply to satisfy the emperor [6] declaring that his tome was enough to offer the needed guidance. Emperor Theodosius II who was convinced with the necessity to hold a council, asked Dioscorus to exercise supreme authority over it as president, and asked

Juvenal of Jerusalem and Thalassius of Caesarea in Capadocia to be co-presidents with him.

The decisions of the council were:

1. The Rehabilitation of Eutyches: It was not the error of St. Dioscorus that this council rehabilitated Eutyches, for these reasons:

a. Leo of Rome wrote to Pulcheria, saying that Eutyches inclined into heresy because of his ignorance, if he repents then let him be treated kindly. Leo declared the same idea in his letters to Julius of Cios (448-458) and to Flavian [7].

b. Eutyches declared orthodox statements, like: [For He who is the Word of God came down from heaven without flesh and was made flesh from the very flesh of the Virgin unchangeable and inconvertible, in a way He Himself knew and willed.

And He who is always perfect God before the ages was also made perfect man in the end of days for us and for our salvation.]

2. Condemnation of the Nestorian leaders: Chadwick states in his book "the Early Church" that the council went on to depose the leading Nestorians, such as Ibas of Edessa, Daniel of Charrae, Irenaeus of

Tyre, Theodoret of Cyrus, Domnus of Antioch and Flavian of Constantinople. The minutes of this council in Syriac revealed their Nestorian dualism attitude.

Many Chalcedonians state that the schism which occurred through the council of Chalcedon was a reaction of what happened in the Second Council of Ephesus; first because Dioscorus omitted the Tome of Leo, and second because he was violent. But we shall argue these two charges.

THE OMISSION OF THE TOME OF LEO

The Roman bishop considered this omission as a despise for his Petrine authority, describing the council as "the Robbers' Council," a title which is still used by many westerns!

It is noteworthy that this "Tome" was not written as a document to the council, but as a letter to the emperor and a copy had been sent to the council and handed to the delegates. This document had been given wide publicity in the

East, even before the council was held. The bishops - and not Dioscorus alone - did not read it out of respect for the See of Rome. This Tome was read by Nestorius while he was in his exile and he declared his approval of it [8].

The Greek Prof. Florovsky says: [The tome of Leo, if taken alone by itself, could have created the impression of an excessive opposition of two natures especially by its persistent attribution of particular acts of Christ to different natures, without any adequate emphasis on the unity of Christ's Person, although the intention of the Pope himself was sound and orthodox.

However the interprets of the Tome by the Roman Catholic historians and theologians in modern times quite often transfer a certain quasi Nestorian bias, to which attention has been called recently by some Roman Catholic riters themselves.[9]

WAS ST. DIOSCORUS VIOLENT [10]?

- 1. The Council was not held on the demand of Pope Dioscorus, and there were no previous letters between the Alexandrian Pope and the emperors. This means that St. Dioscorus demanded no personal benefit.**
- 2. The imperial letters did not describe St. Dioscorus with titles more honorable than others. This means that there was no previous agreement between the emperor and St. Dioscorus.**
- 3. The imperial letters revealed the increased theological troubles that spread in the See of Constantinople.**
- 4. Decisions were accepted through voting, and we do not hear that one of the bishops who were present resented or withdrew from the Council, except Flavian and Eusebius on giving a statement against them.**
- 5. In the opening word which Juvenal of Jerusalem addressed, he described Leo of Rome as a "saint" and "lover of God." These titles revealed the council's spirit.**
- 6. When Leo of Rome asked the emperor of the West, Valentinus, his mother and his sister Pulcheria to intercede before Theodosius II, to summon another council, the latter sent them a letter praising the Council of Ephesus, starting that it was controlled by the fear of God.**
- 7. In the imperial message at the opening of the Council, the emperor revealed the violence of Theodoret of Cyrus.**
- 8. In fact, until the last moment of this council, St. Dioscorus did not speak an evil word against Rome, while Leo in his epistles referred to our Pope as "that Egyptian plunderer," and "preacher of the devil's errors," who tried to force his "villainous blasphemies" on his brethren.**

1. *The Coptic Church.. as a Church of Erudition & Theology*, p.100-1; 115.

2. *Kelly: Early Christian Doctrines*, 1978, p. 333; *Jobland: The Life and Time of St. Leo the Great*, p.216.

3. *Gregorius B. Behnam: Pope Dioscorus of Alexandria, Defender of the Faith, Cairo 1968 (in Arabic)*, p. 93.

4. *History of Dogmas vol. 3, p. 81.*
5. *A History of the Early Church to A.D. 500, 1965, p. 237.*
6. *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum (ACO), Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1933, II, i, p. 45:10.*
7. *Mgr. Hefele: Histoire de Conciles, Paris 1969, t2, p. 555-8.*
8. *Henry Chadwick: The Early Church, 1974, p.202 [See Methodios Fouyes, Archbishop of Theateria..., heological and Hist. Studies, v.8, Athens 1985, p.15].*
9. *Methodois Fouyes, p.12,13.*
10. *The Coptic Church ... as a Church of Erudition & Theology, p.122.*

THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

LEO OF ROME AND THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

The delegates of Rome returned to their bishop declaring their failure to protect Flavian and his company. Leo wrote to Theodosius II against St. Dioscorus, and the Church of Constantinople and lastly asked Valentinian III, through his wife Eudoxia and his mother Galla Placidia, to write to his brother Theodosius concerning Dioscorus and the council of Ephesus of 449, but Theodosius refused his demand praising St. Dioscorus and the council of Ephesus.

Leo realized his aim with the help of the following events:

1. Leo received appeals from those who opposed the council of Ephesus (449), to attack the Alexandrian theology, calling the Second Council of Ephesus: "The Robbers' Synod."
2. The death of Flavian was an event which elicited sympathy for the cause of Leo, particularly in Constantinople. This incident came to be interpreted in later times by the opponents of the council of 449 as having been caused by physical injuries inflicted on Flavian at the council.
3. On July 28, 450 Theodosius died and his sister Pulcheria and her consort Marcian were declared emperors on 28 August 450. Pulcheria denied her vow as a virgin. She was a woman of remarkable ability and indomitable will. She removed Chrysophius - the grand Chamberlain - from her way by a sentence of death, and banished Eutyches to Doliche in north Syria. Now, she supported "Rome" against "Alexandria." She and her husband gathered signatures on the "Tome" of Leo, to be introduced as a basic paper at Chalcedon against Alexandrian theologians. At the same time she decided not to let Rome enjoy supreme authority in the Church; she refused Leo's demand to hold a council in Italy, but insisted that it would be held in the East. When she saw that matters were turning out well and that it was impossible to hold the desired council in Italy, he expressed a wish that no council be held at all, but Marcian and Pulcheria were bent on having one. Leo sent a letter to declare that he would send delegates to the council. For the first time Leo describes Eutyches as being malicious and wicked like Nestorius. This sudden change means nothing but that a conspiracy was atched against St. Dioscorus.

Although the Council of Chalcedon is believed to have condemned Eutyches, the man whom it really dealt with was not the old monk, but Pope Dioscorus of Alexandria, for Eutyches was not present at the council but he was away in north Syria, where he had been exiled even before the council was held. In fact, St. Dioscorus was condemned not because of theological heresy but due to political circumstances which played the principal role in this council. Some of the leaders of this council, such as Anatolius of Constantinople considered him quite Orthodox. Many of the scholars confirm his orthodoxy [1].

SESSION 1 (8TH OF OCTOBER 451)

When the judges started to declare the order of the acts of the council, Paschasinus said, "We have orders from the most blessed and apostolic man, the bishop of the city of Rome, who is the head of all churches, enjoining that

Dioscorus should not have a place in the synod. If this is violated, he should be cast out. We are obliged to obey this injunction. Your excellency may order, therefore, that either he goes out or we depart [2]". When the judges asked if what Dioscorus had done was against the laws, the other Roman delegate replied: "He had seized the office of judge, and dared to conduct a council, without the authorization of the apostolic See, a thing which has never happened and which ought not to have happened [3]."

Now I will discuss all the charges which were brought against our Pope.

1. HIS PRESIDENCY OVER THE EPHESIAN COUNCIL

It is clear that it was not in fact a charge against Dioscorus but it was an attempt to give the Roman bishop a supreme authority over the Universal Church. It was not Dioscorus who had summoned the Ephesian Council but the emperors, and their letter still survives. It is astonishing that Leo protested against the Ephesian Council as being illegal because he had not given permission for it, while we find him sending his delegates to the council, and they were angry as Leo's Tome was not read. It was not Dioscorus alone who was president of the council, but there were two co-presidents (Juvenal and Thalassius) attending according to an imperial order.

2. THE STORY OF THE BLANK PAPERS

Stephen of Ephesus said that they were forced to sign blank papers, through violence. This story was fabricated for many reasons:

a- Eusebius of Dorylaeum who was present at Ephesian Council did not mention the story of the blank papers in his petitions to the emperor.

b- If this story was true why did they wait for over two years to hear it for the first time on October A.D. 451 from the men who had signed the tome of Leo and agreed to support it?!

c- When St. Dioscorus asked them about the recording of the acts of the Ephesian Council, they confessed that every bishop was accompanied by a clerk and there were many copies of the acts recorded by the clerks of Juvenal, Thalassius, Elesuis of Coronth etc. How then had they signed blank papers?!

d- When the bishops were asked about the excommunication of Flavian they did not say that they had signed blank papers, but said twice: "We all have sinned, we ask for pardon."

e- Throughout the acts of the Chalcedonian Council, the bishops' discussions reveal that this story was fabricated, as everyone told a different story.

f- St. Dioscorus openly blamed the bishops who said that they had signed blank papers because it is the bishop's duty to be brave especially when he signs what concerns the precious Faith [4].

3. THE REHABILITATION OF EUTYCHES

When they discussed the words of Eutyches, his accuser said that Eutyches was a liar. St. Dioscorus explained that his concern is not persons but the apostolic faith.

4. THE CONDEMNATION OF FLAVIAN AND EUSEBIUS

The commissioners asked how Eutyches who had not accepted the Formulary of Reunion of A.D. 433 was acquitted, while Flavian and Eusebius who had accepted it were excommunicated. Here the main problem was raised, when St. Dioscorus explained how St. Cyril - confirmed by St. Athanasius - refused the formula "two

natures after the union" as unlawful, but used "one incarnate nature of God the Word". On hearing "one nature," some bishops shouted, [Eutyches says these things! Dioscorus says these things!] Here St. Dioscorus clarified the

Alexandrian point of view, saying: [We do not speak of confusion, neither of division, nor of change. Let him who says confusion, change or mixture, be anathema [5]. St. Dioscorus tried to make his position clear, that he did not

accept "two natures after the union," but he had no objection to "From two natures after the union."

The verdict of the Commissioners was announced:

Dioscorus of Alexandria, Juvenal of Jerusalem, Thalassius of Caesarea in Copadocia, Eusebius of Ancyra, Eustathius of Berytus and Basil of Seleucia in Insuria - these were the men who had been really responsible for the decisions of the second council of Ephesus, and should as such all be deposed. At the close of the first session - and contrary to what Pope (Leo) had planned should be the main business of the council - the commissioners decided that a discussion on the question of the true faith should take place at the following meeting, and that every delegate should produce in writing a statement of the faith, bearing in mind that the emperor believed in accordance with the decrees of Nicea and Constantinople, together with the writings of the holy Fathers, Gregory, Basil, Hilary, Ambrose and the two letters of Cyril which had been approved at the first council of Ephesus, besides the tome of Leo.

V. C. Samuel notices here that they refer to the two canonical letters of Cyril, i.e. the Second and Third letters addressed to Nestorius, but in fact the last one with its anathemas was not read at Chalcedon.

THE SECOND SESSION (On 10th October)

This session did not produce better results, despite the absence of the heads of Ephesian Council whose deposition was announced the day before. The assembly most strongly protested against the suggestion that they should dare to draw up "another exposition of the faith in addition to what had been taught by the Fathers and set down in writing [6]". Although many bishops signed the tome of Leo before holding the council, when it was read at this session there were men who raised objections to three passages in the Tome (especially the bishops of Illyricum and Palestine). Atticus of Nicopolis asked for a time to compare it with the third letter of St. Cyril to Nestorius.

The Illyrians pleaded that mercy should be shown to the heads of the Ephesian Council, but no attention was paid to them. At the close of the session the commissioners declared that the following session would be held after five days in order that those who had doubts about the tome may meet with Anatolius of Constantinople and clear their misgivings.[7]

THE THIRD SESSION (on 13th of October)

Suddenly the five-days recess was not respected, but on the 13th October the council met under the presidency of the Roman legate Paschasinus, and it was attended neither by the commissioners nor the six condemned men. Rev. V.C. Samuel states that the minutes contain no mention of the number of bishops who attended this meeting, which does not even deserve to be counted as a session, but it is clear that their number was small, and that it was held in the martyrion of St. Euphemia [8] (a small chapel) instead of the Church of Euphemia.

As they desired to realize the formalities so that their statement would be canonical, they summoned Pope Dioscorus who told them that he was in custody, thus he could not accompany them to the meeting unless he was given permission by the authorities, and he put conditions for his attendance: The presence of the commissioners and those who were condemned with him. In his absence, it was not difficult to incite persons to accuse him of many charges for example that his life was desolate, there was such disaffection against him in Alexandria, he prevented sending corn to Libya etc. These charges were false, for history itself witnesses how he was most warmly loved and honored by a vast majority of the people of Egypt. Even his adversaries didn't accuse him of any wrong conduct

in his personal life. As for the story of the corn, it was a way to turn the emperor against him. They also accused him of excommunicating Leo. It is worthy to note that the word of the Roman legates at the end of the session declared that his disposal had been issued by Leo, and the assembly merely had to approve the decision... In fact it was not a statement for theological dogma but for defending the Roman Papal supremacy. The Contemporaries were confused in giving reasons for his deposal, but the majority did not attribute heresy to him, nor was he excommunicated.

THE FOURTH SESSION (17th of October)

A new formula of faith concerning the nature of Christ was not discussed except after the deposal of St. Dioscorus. Even while Aloys Grillmeier states: [It was only under constant pressure from the emperor Marcian that the Fathers of Chalcedon agreed to draw up a new formula of belief. Even at the fourth session of the council, on October 17th 451, the delegates of the emperor heard the synod once again endorse its purpose to create no new formula over and above the creeds of Nicea and Constantinople [9]. Tixeront also states: [Most of the Fathers were opposed to a new form of faith, but wished merely to approve certain documents, the contents of which would express their own belief [10]. It was the emperor's favor that the council had to draw out Alexandria and declare a new formula to bring the entire church in the east under the leadership of Constantinople. Emperors - for political reasons - wished to bring down Alexandria from the hegemony which it enjoyed in the east and to set up Constantinople in its place. They used Leo as a tool to realize their desire exploring his enmity to Alexandria, that seemed to him an obstacle in spreading his papal supreme authority over the church world-wide.

EVENTS OF THE 22ND OF OCTOBER

The eastern bishop came to the meeting with a draft statement of the formula to be adopted by the Council. According to Tixeront [its text is lost. All we know for certain is that it asserted that Jesus Christ is "of" two natures "ek dus phuson" on script. The expression was accurate, but ambiguous, and in a particular way, unsatisfactory, since Dioscorus himself had declared that he held it. However, the formula was accepted by most of the members of the council, except the papal legates and some Orientals (who held Nestorian attitudes)[11].

This comment explains how the majority of the bishops were holding fast the Alexandrian formula of faith, and it is important to study why this draft had been lost.

Under the threat of the Roman legates the commissioners asked a new statement, but the bishop insisted that this was the definition of the Orthodox[12]. Kelly states [Only by dint of consummate skill and diplomacy was the assembly induced to accept the necessary amendments[13].

The diplomacy that the commissioners used appears from what Hefele¹⁴ states, that the minutes here seem incomplete; perhaps they refer to Leo's formula not s contrary to the faith of the church but as a defense for it against Eutychianism.

1. *The Coptic Orthodox Church as a Church of Erudition*, p. 129- 130.

2. *ACO II,i*, p. 65:5.

3. *Ibid* 65:9; *Mansi VI & 581*; *Benham* p. 134.

4. *Benham*, p.140-2.

5. *ACO II,i*, p. 112-263; *Mansi VI*, 676f.

6. *Sellers: The Council Of Chalcedon*, p.109, *Mansi VI*, 953.

7. *ACO II*, i, 279:31.

8. *Ibid* 199:2.

9. *Christ in the Christian Tradition*, London 1975, p.543.

10. *History of Dogmas*, vol. 3, p. 89.

11. *Ibid* [see *Mansi V II: 105-105*].

12. *ACO II*, i, p. 210:36.

13. *Early Christ, Doct.* p. 334.

14. *Early Christ. Doct.* p. 345.

COULD THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON REALIZE A RECONCILIATION ?

I do not wish to present detailed theological discussions, for I have presented them in brief, in the book: "The Terms Physis and Hypostasis in the Early Church." I only want to clarify that some scholars who feel that the majority of bishops of the Chalcedonian Council preferred the Alexandrian formula: "one nature of the Incarnation Word of God" or "one nature of two Natures." The Roman legates practiced pressure on the commissioners to offer a new formula: "in two natures (en dus fuzzes)", instead of "ek dus phuson" (of two natures), those scholars try to give a justification to the Council, that it did not reject the Alexandrian formula nor did it consider it heretical, but insufficient, therefore the new formula was issued just to clarify the old one.

We reject the Chalcedonian formula for the following reasons:

1. The formula: "one nature" has an evangelic base, and touches our salvation. H. H. Pope Shenouda III clarifies this argument in detail in his book "The Nature of Christ," of which I wrote a summary as mentioned in this book.
2. Some Chalcedonian Fathers and theologians stated that the Tome of Leo represents an insurmountable obstacle in the efforts made to unite with the non-Chalcedonians, for the latter believe that two "physeis and ousia" in one person is Nestorianizing. This is supported by the fact that Leo's Tome was praised by Nestorius himself [1], and that the Tome, if taken alone by itself could have created the impression of an excessive opposition of two natures, as Prof. Rev. Florovsky says[2].
3. Kelly states that, unlike, their brethren in the East, the Westerns were concerned with the organization of ecclesiastical matters more than theological ones. He also states that with the exception of Tertullian, the west made little or no contribution to christological theology[3].
4. We are in accord with the Tome in refuting Eutychianism and in confirming that Christ's manhood was real, Christ entered the mundane plane of existence and that the unity of Godhead and manhood had been realized without change... but the Tome consists of three statements, those which some of the Fathers of Chalcedon themselves rejected for their Nestorian attitude[4].
5. Leo speaks of "one person (prosopon)" of Christ but this term does not suffice, for the Nestorians used it to mean "mask," i.e. external unity. There was a need to confirm the unity as a true and "hypostatic" one...
6. The Council of Chalcedon adopted the Tome of Leo. In Egypt many believers were martyred for they refused to sign the Tome... The acceptance of the Tome as a principal document of faith disfigured the Council in the sight of the non-Chalcedonians.
7. The "definitions" of Chalcedon admits the phrase "one hypostasis." Some of the Nestorians objected on this addition, but they accepted it when the word "hypostasis" was interpreted to them as an equal to "prosopon" ...
8. We do not recognize this Council because it ignored all the traditional formulas of the Church, which confirm the oneness of the Person of Christ, as a true unity, such as: "one nature of two natures" and "one nature of the Incarnate Word of God."

I conclude my discussion of the Council of Chalcedon by referring to the words of Sellers who defends this council... [In the first place, it should be understood that the (Monophysite) theologians were not heretics, nor were they regarded as such by leading Chalcedonians.[5]

1. *Methodios Fouyas*, p.12,13.

2. *Christology according to the non-Chalcedonian Churches*, p. 12-3.

3. *Terms: "Physis & Hypostasis in the Early Church"*, p. 30-1.

4. *Ibid* 30f.

5. *The council of Chalcedon, SPCK 1961*, p. 269.

The term "monophysite" was not used during the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, but was used later in a specific way and in a polemic spirit on behalf of the Chalcedonian Churches.