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Christology and Deification in the Church of the East

Mar Gewargis I, His Synod and His Letter to Mina as a Polemic Against Martyrius-Sahdona

Bishara Ebeid

We should like, with our paper, to highlight another aspect of the Christological controversy that took place immediately after the 'nestorianization' of the Church of the East in 612 AD. We mean the controversy of Martyrius-Sahdona and the reaction of the catholicos Gewargis I. In Martyrius' Christology, the 'divinization' of the mystic is seen as a consequence of the 'divinization' of the human nature in Christ because of the union of the two natures that occurred in the one hypostasis and person of the Word, refuting in this way, the official doctrine of his Church, i.e. the two natures and hypostases united in the one person of Christ. Against this Christology, the catholicos Gewargis I attempted to intervene on two levels: canonical, through a synod convoked in Oatar in 676, and doctrinal, through a letter written in 679/680 and sent to Mina, a Corepiscope in Persia. In the synod, there was a controversy against certain 'false monks' and a focus on the importance of the Orthodox faith to counteract heretics; his letter, on the other hand, expressed a true controversy against those who taught the hypostatic union, i.e., Martyrius and his followers. In the letter, moreover, the catholicos proposes a doctrine of 'divinization', based, however, on the official Christological doctrine of his Church. Their Christologies will be studied and compared so we can illustrate better this important period of the history of this church. We will see also how the catholicos developed the Christology of the two-qnome so that the doctrine of 'divinization' could be applicable in its metaphysical system.

Keywods: Deification, Christology, Nature, Hypostasis and Person

1. Introduction

The Christological disputes within the Church of the East, known also as the Nestorian Church, can be seen under the prism of different spiritual models. The history of spirituality and monasticism in

Persia is always accompanied by controversies and struggles among several monastic communities¹. The controversy against *Ḥennana*, for example, also had a monastic dimension². The Christological model, in fact, is the basis of the spiritual doctrine and its finality. The condemnation of some East Syrian mystics who talked of God's vision and contemplation should also to be considered, in our opinion, as a condemnation of a different Christological doctrine and model³.

In this paper, we want to illustrate another Christological controversy that took place shortly after the 'nestorianization' of the East Church, the controversy against *Martyrius-Sahdona*. His Christology is developed against the official one of his Church expressed in the assembly of bishops in 612 AD, which consists in believing in one Christ, two natures $(kyan\bar{e})$ two hypostases $(qnom\bar{e})$ and one person (parsopā)⁴. Martyrius-Sahdona, in point of fact, with his Christology of one Christ, two natures $(kyan\bar{e})$ one hypostasis $(qnom\bar{a})$ and one person ($parsop\bar{a}$), claims to help the mystic better conceive his union with God. In other words, the divinization of the mystic is seen as a consequence of the divinization of the human nature in Christ because of the union of the two natures in His hypostasis and His person. This Christological model helps the mystic to continue on his way to perfection, that is to say, the contemplation of God and his divinization. Against this doctrine we have the reaction of some Catholicoi of the Church of the East, such as *Īšō'vhab* III. Another

¹ Cf. M. Metselaar, *The Mirror, the Qnoma, and the Soul: Another Perspective on the Christological Formula of Babai the Great*, in «Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum», 19 (2015), 331-336, here 331-344, 346-348, 364-365.

² According to A. Becker, the difference between *Ḥenana* and Babai was the level of the reception, by each one, of the thought of Evagrius of Pontus, which concerns the ascetic path they followed, cf. A. Becker, *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom. The School of Nisibis and Christian Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia*, Philadelphia 2006, 202-203. See our opinion in this regard: B. Ebeid, *The Christology of the Church of the East. An Analysis of the Christological Statements and Professions of Faith of the Official Synods of the Church of the East before A.D. 612*, in «Orientalia Christiana Periodica», 82 (2016), 353-402, here 377, 391; see also Metselaar, *The Mirror, the Qnoma, and the Soul*, cit., 337-352.

³ In this regard, see V. Berti, *Grazia, visione e natura divina in Nestorio di Nuhadra, solitario e vescovo siro-orientale* († 800 ca.), in «Annali di scienze religiose», 10 (2005), 219-257; Id., *Le débat sur la vision de Dieu et la condamnation des mystiques par Timothée Ier: la perspective du patriarche*, in *Les mystiques syriaques*, éd. par A. Desreumaux, (Études syriaques, 8), Paris 2011, 151-176.

⁴ Furthermore, there is a paragraph on this technical terminology with our translation of it.

adversary of this Christology of Martyrius', in our opinion, was the catholicos Gewargis I († 680/681). Indeed, he convoked a synod at Beth Qatrayē in 676 AD and sent a letter to a Corepiscope called Mina in Persia during the years 679-680 with a Christological explanation of the doctrine of the Church of the East. Both documents, that is to say, the letter and the acts of the synod, are preserved in the Synodicon orientale, which indicates their canonical and doctrinal importance for the same Church. In the synod, there is a polemic against certain 'false monks' together with a focus on the orthodox doctrine, while in his letter he expresses a true controversy against those who teach hypostatic union in Christ, that is to say, in our opinion, *Martyrius*, his followers and his monastic community. In the letter, furthermore, the catholicos proposes a doctrine of divinization, based, however, on the official doctrine of the Church of the East adopted in 612 AD, i.e. the Christology of the two natures, two hypostases and one person.

In this paper, therefore, we shall try to present briefly the historical circumstances of Gewargis' synod and the purpose behind it, which reveals the will to organize the Church and, especially, to subdue the monks under the control of bishops. We shall focus on Canon 12 of the synod, which condemns some 'false monks', and attempt to understand its necessity and who those monks might be. In addition, we shall try to shed some light on the probable relationship between those monks and the focus on orthodoxy in other Canons of the same synod. We shall then present and analyse the Christological section of the catholicos' letter and discuss the development he made in Nestorian Christology in order to affirm a doctrine about divinization. Our purpose is to show how Gewargis tried to solve the consequences of Martyrius' controversy on two levels: 1) a legal level, through his synod and its Canons; and 2) a doctrinal level, pointing out that the Nestorian Christology allows for the doctrine of divinization. To do so we shall start by explaining main elements of the doctrine of the assembly of bishops of 612 AD and present briefly the Christology of Martyrius, which was a rejection of that of the assembly, after which we shall focus on his doctrine on deification.

Before beginning our analysis, however, we need to make some remarks concerning terminology. When we use the term Nestorian Church, we mean the Church of the East after 612, i.e. after applying in its Christology the two hypostases doctrine. We cannot say, in fact, that this Church had accepted a 'Nestorian' Christology before the

year 612⁵. We call this event 'nestorianization', even if it is clear that such doctrine was not a true nestorianism, i.e. teaching two Christs and two sons. In fact, there is a tendency today not to call either this Church or its doctrine 'Nestorian' due to the negative connotation this term had acquired over the centuries. The texts of this Church, however, adopted this title themselves, attributing it an honorable character as a synonym of orthodoxy⁶, and for this reason we also use the same term, for both the Church and its doctrine. We accept, however, the distinction that scholars make between Miaphysites, i.e. the Severians and moderate Monophysites, and the radical one, calling the latter Monophysites, even if in its texts the Church of the East did not distinguish between them as two different groups.

It is clear, in addition, that scholars today avoid translating the Syriac term $qnom\bar{a}$ appearing in Christological texts of the Church of the East, especially after 612 AD, with hypostasis⁷. But, we think it is not incorrect to translate it with hypostasis for various reasons. First of all, the same term was used in the Trinitarian doctrine to express the three divine hypostases⁸. In addition, the three confessions, Chalcedonian, Miaphysite and Nestorian, use the same Syriac term $qnom\bar{a}$ in Christology, and we believe that the three confessions take and translate this term from the Greek $\mathring{v}\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\iota\zeta$, even if each confession attributes a different metaphysical meaning and function to the Greek word. It is also clear that for Matyrius, for example, the term hypostasis means something different from what it signifies for the assembly of 612, or for the catholicos Gewargis I. For this reason,

⁵ See our article and its conclusions in regards, Ebeid, *The Christology of the Church of the East*, cit. See also W. Baum, D. Winkler, *The Church of the East. A Concise History*, London-New York 2003, 38-39.

⁶ As an example, we read in the assembly of the bishops in 612 the following: «كلية المعالمة المعال

⁷ Cf. Baum, Winkler, *The Church of the East*, cit., 39; see also S. Brock, *The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries: Preliminary Considerations and Materials*, in *Aksum-Thyateira: A Festschrift for Archbishop Methodius of Thyateira and Great Britain*, ed. by G. Dragas, Athens 1985, 125-142, here 131.

⁸ Cf. Y. P. Patros, La cristologia della Chiesa d'Oriente, in Storia, Cristologia e tradizioni della Chiesa Siro-orientale. Atti del 3° Incontro sull'Oriente Cristiano di tradizione siriaca. Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 14 maggio 2004, a cura di E. Vergani, S. Chialà, Milano 2006, 27-42, here 29-31.

2. Nestorianism: the Doctrine of the Synod of 612

The assembly of bishops of the Church of the East held in 612 under the guidance of Babai the Great, the interpreter of Theodore and Nestorius, adopted a 'Nestorian' Christology¹⁰. For the first time the term $qnom\bar{a}$, the traditional Syriac translation of the Greek $\mathring{v}\pi\acute{o}\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\varsigma$, was officially applied in Christological doctrine. This means that two natures and two hypostases, united in one person, exist in Christ. Our aim in this paper is to underline some points of the Christology of this assembly that are related to our topic, i.e. the union of the two natures and the status of the humanity of Christ thanks to this union.

The Church of the East tried to find some answers to the open question of the Christological debate, especially regarding the relationship between the general nature and the concrete one, i.e. between nature (kyanā-) and hypostasis (qnomā-). The nature cannot exist without the hypostasis (qnomā-) . The nature cannot exist without the hypostasis is the most important philosophical position upon which the Church of the East developed its Christology. The hypostasis is of a singular () nature. This means that numerous hypostases can exist within one general nature, and, at the same time, that more than one nature cannot exist in one hypostasis, unless these natures become one, and consequently the uniqueness of the nature provides the hypostasis with uniqueness of the Church of the East, the latter fact means confusion and a change in the natures that composed the one resulting nature, and this, according to such a metaphysical role, is the Monophysites' and Miaphysites' doctrine.

God is uncreated, immutable and impassible, and the human nature is created, composed and passible. These properties are natural

⁹ Cf. Patros, La cristologia della Chiesa d'Oriente, cit., 31.

¹⁰ Cf. Baum, Winkler, *The Church of the East*, cit., 39-40.

[&]quot;א «השבי הל הססיו המתם ה ילה ייד הנים», Synodicon orientale, cit., 578.

and through them each nature can be distinct from the other. To conserve this distinction in Christology means that we must affirm for the one Christ two natures and two hypostases¹³. The Church of the East also offers its interpretation of this doctrine in the same synod. The natures in Christ are perfect, meaning that each nature has its own hypostasis. Furthermore, affirming that there are two hypostases in Christ means that not all of the Trinity, but only one hypostasis of the Trinity (תאמאלאז השמש), which is God the Word (המאר) הבאה), was united, not to all humans, but only to one hypostasis of the human nature, i.e. an individual and singular man¹⁴. This alone could affirm that Christ is perfect God (תשלבה השלה) and perfect man (ביא מבורנא) 15, i.e. two perfect, concrete natures, that is two hypostases, and not two general natures i.e. all of divinity and all of humanity. Another consequence of such a doctrine, according to the interpretation of the same synod, is that the humanity and the divinity in Christ are real¹⁶ since they can conserve their natural properties (ملتمره ميدية) 17, as the double consubstantiality or the double births¹⁸.

^{15 «}Kisles Kerkisa Kisles Kolk, mashk Klk», ibidem, 566.

^{16 «}mharir ray ha rda mhamle ref ha rda», ibidem, 566.

 $^{^{18}}$ « $_{\sim}$ $_{\sim}$

the will (בניביבה). This kind of union is in opposition to the natural (מביביה) and the hypostatic (ביביה) union, which is the doctrine of the Monophysites and Miaphysites, or the hypostatic union of the Chalcedonians²⁰. That the union is personal and according to the will means that the result is one subject, one person in two natures and hypostases, united inseparably. In addition, according to the doctrine of the same synod, it could now be affirmed that Christ is perfect God, perfect man in one sonship (ביביבה), one lordship, one authority, one will (ביביבה) and one economy (ביביבה)²¹. In our opinion, in using the expression 'one economy' the bishops of the synod wanted to say one salvific action, i.e. one operation.

According to this doctrine, the humanity in Christ could not be changed, even when it ascended with the divinity to heaven. It remained created even if it had participated in the glory of the divinity. Christ will come back in the last days with this humanity united to the divinity to judge people²². This Antiochian background regarding the immutability of the nature and the refutation of the divinization of the human nature, which could mean a change in, and transformation of, the nature²³, was the basis of the bishops' explanation for

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 $^{^{21}}$ «המשלבש הפינים המשלבש, המלה המלה ביש השלם האמינים בל ל הפלש המש השלם המשלבש האמינים המשלבש אין ibidem, 574.

^{22 «}Kon aluker ra, iker ra reset alkor ra eri L celr biril rano on it ran con in ration, in ration on it ran mander in manara manara ranocela ration, masan ration ration, social ration, masan ration, masan ration, social ration,

²³ The Antiochian Christology, in fact, was not able to talk about divinization because, according to its ontological system, a real division between the created world and the uncreated world should be maintained, and these two worlds cannot be mixed or united by essence or nature, cf. F. G. McLeod, *The Roles of Christ's Humanity in Salvation. Insights from Theodore of Mopsuestia*, Washington 2005, 67-68. In other words, God cannot become a creature, nor can the creature become a god. This is clear, in fact, in the way the Antiochians interpreted Gen 1: 26-27, which treats the creation of the human being as in the 'image of God'. For Diodor and Chrysostom, man having been made in the image of God means that he has the power to rule the material world. God, however, rules and governs the spiritual and the material worlds, thus the entire universe, cf. Id., *The Image of God in the Antiochene Tradition*, Washington 1999, 59-61. This is a notable ontological difference between God and human beings. The same could be said about the anthropological vision of Theodore of Mopsuestia, even if he differs from the other Antiochians in considering

the non-addition of hypostasis in the Trinity (אנאהאלא), because it might then become a quaternity (הביבאלא). According to the synod's text, the humanity cannot be considered a divine hypostasis, i.e. similar to the three divine hypostases, and, therefore, it cannot be counted as an additional hypostasis in the Trinity²⁴. In also applying this thought to the Miaphysites' and Monophysites' doctrine, the fathers of the assembly were able to attribute the accusation of the quaternity to them²⁵.

the 'image' as the human being composed of soul and body, so that human nature becomes a bond which unites the spiritual and the material worlds, cf. *Ibidem*, 64-65. Furthermore, the human being made in the 'image' of God, assumes a cultic role or function, cf. ibidem, 64, as well as a revelatory function, cfr. Ibidem, 65. These functions of the human nature, according to Theodore, who became the interpreter of the Church of the East, were lost when human nature fell into sin, cf. *Ibidem*, 66-67. For the Antiochians, then, and especially for Theodore of Mopsuestia, salvation in Christ is based on the typology of Adam as a type for the One to come, Christ's humanity, cf. Id., The Roles of Christ's Humanity, cit., 66. The salvation of human nature, consequently, is effected by the participation in the human nature of Christ, which is His body, i.e. the Church. Christ for Theodore, is the πλήρωμα of Col 1: 19-20, which means that He took unto himself the task to re-create and recapitulate all things, i.e. to realize what the first Adam could not. Christ being the new Adam, the perfect image of God and the universal bond between creatures both material and spiritual, restored the harmony that once existed between human nature and the rest of creation, and between human beings and God, cf. Id., The Image of God, cit., 161. In addition, through the humanity of Christ, humanity received the knowledge of God. This means the entrance into eternal life, which is immortal and immutable, cf. *Ibidem*, 169-170. This role of the humanity of Christ is essential in the soteriological view of Theodore. Taking into consideration that the Church is the body of Christ, the human members of this body participate through the sacramental life. Through Baptism and the Eucharist, in the humanity of Christ, they are saved and enter the state of eternal life, which will be completed after the resurrection, and will then be similar to the humanity of Christ. This does not mean a transformation or change in human nature, but rather, it is a return to its true state of being the image of God, cf. Id., The Roles of Christ's Humanity, cit., 58-143. Theodore, in fact, with his soteriological doctrine, which is linked to his Christological one, refuted the mystical union with God, and the transformation of human beings into divine by grace, cf. Id., *The Image of God*, cit., 171.

²⁴ «ב האמשלה היה מים בים מלו הים היה הים הלהמלה בעה שה האמשלה בעה אמשלה בעה האמשלה בעה האמשלה האמשלה בע האמשלה להמשלה (ביבאים בה האמשלה האמשלה) (ביבאים האמשלה האמשלה) (ביבאים האמשלה האמשלה) הביבאים האמשלה האמשלה האמשלה ביב האמשלה האמשלה ביב האמשלה האמשלה האמשלה ביב האמשלה האמשלה האמשלה ביב האמשלה המשלה המשלה האמשלה המשלה המשלה המשלה האמשלה המשלה ה

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In our opinion, besides the Theodorian Christological terminology²⁶, the Church of the East's adoption of this Nestorian Christology shared the Antiochean anti-theopaschite and anti-apollinarian perspectives. It cannot be affirmed that this Church did not have a soteriological dimension in its Christological doctrine since Christology is always related to Soteriology, so that different Christologies have different soteriological points of view. The text of the synod affirms, therefore, that the one who wanted to save humanity is the Son of God, the Word (בוא האלה אלא), and for this reason He made himself human²⁷. In fact, the assumption of the human hypostasis by the Word and its union with it was for the salvation of humanity²⁸. This also means that for the Church of the East salvation is God's action²⁹. However, it is very important to understand that salvation, for the fathers of this assembly, does not mean that the created nature will become uncreated, because this means destroying (حيليح), not saving (حمنص), human nature³⁰, for when the fathers of the assembly said that the hypostasis of the human nature of Christ had ascended to heaven, they underlined that this does not mean that His humanity had changed, even if this human hypostasis will stay united to the

²⁶ The text of this synod, in fact, uses terms as 'the one who assumed' (מוֹם בּאַשׁה), 'the one who was assumed', (בבּץ), 'Temple' (מבלבי), 'to dress the humanity' (בבּץ), conjunction (מבבי) etc.

divine one without separation, sharing in the divine glory with which Christ will appear in the last days to judge all people³¹.

The latter affirmation seems to conflict with any idea of deification, whether of the human nature of Christ or of our human nature. However, as we shall see, based on this synod's doctrine and on the affirmation that the human hypostasis ascended to heaven, Mar Gewargis I was able to develop, with further modifications, a 'doctrine of deification', opposed to the one expressed by Martyrius-Sahdona, whose Christology we shall now analyse.

3. Martyrius-Sahdona and His Reaction to the Assembly's Christology

There are numerous studies concerning the Christology of Martyrius-Sahdona³² (henceforth the Greek form of his name, Martyrius, will be used); what interests us here is to see 'why' he refused the official Christology of his Church, proclaimed in the assembly of 612AD? Is it because he belonged to the opposite Christological current within his Church, i.e. the 'one *qnomā-parṣopā*' Christological current? Or is it because the two-*qnomē* Christology cannot exist in harmony or be applicable to the monastic model he proposes?³³

Among the important studies on Martyrius-Sahdona's Christology are the following: A. de Halleux, La christologie de Martyrius Sahdona dans l'evolution du nestorianisme, in «Orientalia Christiana Periodica», 23 (1957), 5-32; L. Abramowski, Martyrius-Sahdona and Dissent in the Church of the East, in Controverses des chrétiens dans l'Iran sassanide (Chrétiens en terre d'Iran II), éd. par J. Christelle (Cahiers de Studia Iranica, 36), Paris 2008, 13-28; M. Nin, Martyrios/Sahdona. Alcuni aspetti del suo insegnamento cristologico, in La grande stagione della mistica siro-orientale (VI-VIII secolo. Atti del 5° incontro sull'Oriente cristiano di tradizione siriaca Milano Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 26 maggio 2006, a cura di E. Vergani, S. Chialà, Milano, 2009, 29-69; O. Ioan, Martyrius-Sahdona: la pensée christologique, clé de la théologie mystique, in Les mystiques syriaques, éd. par A. Desreumaux (Études syriaques, 8), Paris 2011, 45-61.

33 These questions were presented, albeit in other words, at the beginning of L. Abramowski's article on Martyrius-Sahdona, cit., 14. See also Ioan, Martyrius-Sahdona, cit., 53-54.

The biography regarding Martyrius is not very clear³⁴. Most information comes from controversial sources; however, a careful reading of such sources can help us to understand that Martyrius was a very important monastic figure who had experience as an eremite monk, and that he also had an influence on some monastic communities. These, we believe, are the reasons behind the desire of these monastic sources, which provide details about him, to present his 'heretic' Christology as something external, the result of a stay in a West Syriac monastic community, that is to say, he was influenced by either the Miaphysite or the (neo-) Chalcedonian doctrine. Even if his adversaries present his Christology as they understood and interpreted it, not as he really intended it, we possess his work 'Book of Perfection', albeit not in a complete and perfect form, and some of his letters³⁵, which are the sources of his spiritual doctrine and also of

34 We do not know the exact year of his birth, only that he was born in Halmon of Beth Nuhadra. He became a monk thanks to the influence of his mother and a saintly woman called Shirin and lived in the monastery of Beth 'Abe until his election as bishop of Beth Garmai between the years 635-640. Because of his Christological doctrine, he was deposed by the catholicos $\bar{l}\bar{s}\bar{o}'yha\underline{b}$ III and died in exile on an unknown date, cf. S. Brock, Sahdona (Martyrius), in Gorgians Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage, ed. by S. Brock, A. Butts, G. Kiraz, L. van Rompay, Piscataway 2011, 356. For more details, except the references we gave in the previous footnote, see also H. Goussen, Martyrius-Sahdona's Leben und Werke, nach einer syrischen Handschrift in Strassburg I/E. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Katholizismus unter den Nestorianern, Leipzig 1897; A. de Halleux, Martyrius-Sahdona. La vie mouvementée d'un 'hérétique' de l'église nestorienne, in «Orientalia Christiana Periodica», 24 (1958), 93-128; L. Leloir, Martyrius, in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: doctrine et histoire, Paris 1980, 737-742. 35 His 'Book on Perfection' and his letters were first found in one manuscript, edited and translated by A. de Halleux in Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium: Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, I. Livre de la perfection, Ie partie (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 200-201/Syr. 86-87), éd. par A. de Halleux, Louvain 1960; Id., Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7) (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 214-215/Syr. 90-91), éd. par A. de Halleux, Louvain 1961; Id., Œuvres spirituelles, III. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 8-14) (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 252-253/Syr. 110-111), éd. par A. de Halleux, Louvain 1965; Id., Œuvres spirituelles, IV. Lettres à des amis solitaires, Maximes sapientiales (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 254-255/ Syr. 112-113), éd. par A. de Halleux, Louvain 1965; Some fragments in other manuscripts that belong to Martyrius were also found, see in regards: G. Garitte, A. de Halleux, Le sermon géorgien du moine Martyrius et son modèle syriaque, in «Le Muséon», 69 (1956), 243-313; A. de Halleux, Un nouveau fragment du manuscrit sinaïtique de Martyrius-Sahdona, in «Le Muséon», 73 (1960), 33-38; S. Brock, A Further Fragment of the Sinai Sahdona Manuscript, in «Le Muséon», 81 (1968), 139-154; A. de Halleux, Un chapitre retrouvé du Livre de la perfection de Martyrius, in «Le Muséon», 88 (1975), 253-

his Christological one. The discovery of these works has changed the image we were given by his adversaries concerning the man himself and his teaching³⁶.

According to A. de Halleux, the Christology of Martyrius reflects one Christological movement within the Church of the East, i.e. that of 'one *qnomā-parsopā*', and has nothing to do with any Chalcedonian or Miaphysite influence, as his adversaries claimed³⁷. He also maintains that Martyrius probably belonged to the school of *Henana* and was a student at Nisibis³⁸. Noting an influence of the Ps. Nestorian introduction to the *Liber Heraclides* in the form that contains two Chalcedonian manipulations, L. Abramowski arrived at the conclusion that one could find at least an indirect contact between Martyrius and the 'old-Chalcedonians', also refuting the hypothesis of A. de Halleux that Martyrius might have been a member of the school of *Henana*³⁹. O. Ioan has recently demonstrated that the Christological doctrine of Martyrius is related to his ascetic and mystic system, thus accepting the influence of the Ps. Nestorian introduction to the Liber Heraclides. According to this scholar, the doctrine of Martyrius on the hypostatic and personal union in Christ, which allows a real Communicatio Idiomatum, is the basis of the mystic doctrine on deification. Moreover, he also underlined the importance of the place of Martyrius' education as one of the reasons behind his Christology. Accepting the opinion of L. Abramwski, he finds it difficult to see a relationship between Martyrius and the school of Nisibis during the *Henana* controversy⁴⁰.

295; Id., *Das Martyrius-Fragment der H. Hiersemann 487/255b=500/3*, in «Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft», Suppl. 3,1 (1977), 202-204; B. Outtier, *Martyrius, Barsus, Tarnus ou Martyrius? Nouveax fragments arabes et géorgiens de Sahdona*, in «Revue des études géorgiennes et caucasiennes», 1 (1985), 225-226; S. Brock, *New fragments of Sahdona's Book of Perfection St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai*, in «Orientalia Christiana Periodica», 75 (2009), 175-178; P. Géhin, *Un feuillet oublié de Martyrius/Sahdona à Milan (Ambr. A 296 inf., f. 87 = Chabot 51)*, in *Sur les pas des Araméens chrétiens. Mélanges offerts à Alain Desreumaux*, éd. par F. Briquel-Chatonnet, M. Debié, (Cahiers d'études syriaques, 1), Paris 2010, 195-205.

³⁶ Cf. de Halleux, *La christologie de Martyrius Sahdona*, cit., 5-8; Nin, *Martyrios/Sahdona*, cit., 39-40.

³⁷ Cf. de Halleux, La christologie de Martyrius Sahdona, cit., 14, 31-32.

³⁸ Apart from the reference in the previous footnote, see also de Halleux, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 125-128.

³⁹ Cf. Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 20-25.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ioan, Martyrius-Sahdona, cit., 49-58.

As we have said, our interest is not to effect a detailed analysis of Martyrius' Christology. It is very important, however, to note that, even if Martyrius had some contact with the Ps. Nestorian introduction to the *Liber Heraclides*, this does not necessarily imply any Chalcedonian influence. In our opinion, he simply uses the sources of his Church and his tradition to support the Christology of his monastic community, which is the 'one *qnomā-parṣopā*' Christology: in the tradition of the Church of the East we can note a true development of Christological thought, influenced by diverse East Syrian monastic communities. We have already demonstrated that the Christological confessions and professions of the *Synodicon orientale* preserved in the acts of the synods before the one of 612 AD reflect such a development, and have also revealed the existence of two different Christological currents within this Church, which we have called 'one *qnomā-parṣopā*' and the 'two-*qnomē*' Christological currents⁴¹.

To return to Martyrius, it is not necessary to see a contact between his Christology and that of Ḥenana, who was accused of having proclaimed the neo-Chalcedonian's ὑπόστασις σύνθετος, in order to affirm that Martyrius belonged to the same 'qnomā-parṣopā' Christological current. Moreover, we are not sure about the exact doctrine of Ḥenana himself, that is to say, whether he really considered the one hypostasis in Christ as synthetos or whether this was his adversaries' interpretation⁴². We are of the opinion that the concept synthetos in him, if he really taught it, is different from the neo-Chalcedonian one; it is a development and interpretation of the Christology of the Church of the East when it encountered the arrival of Miaphysism in the Sassanid land⁴³. For us, therefore, Ḥenana belonged to the 'qnomā-parṣopā' Christology and developed it in a different way from that of Martyrius, who also belonged to the same Christological current⁴⁴. What is clear is that they were both spiritual

⁴¹ Cf. Ebeid, *The Christology of the Church of the East*, cit.; in this article we tried to demonstrate the correctness of A. de Halleux' opinion as he expressed it in de Halleux, *La christologie de Martyrius Sahdona*, cit., 29.

⁴² It is highly complicated to discover what exactly the Christology of *Henana* was since the information we have regarding it comes from his adversaries; for a complete picture concerning this topic, see Becker, *Fear of God*, cit., 197-202; see also Metselaar, *The Mirror, the Qnoma, and the Soul*, cit., 334-335.

⁴³ Cf. Ebeid, *The Christology of the Church of the East*, cit., 382.

⁴⁴ We expressed our opinion about the relationship between *Ḥenana* and Martyrius in the conclusion to our article Ebeid, *The Christology of the Church of the East*, cit., 399-400; see also footnote 171 on p. 400.

leaders with a notable influence on monastic communities⁴⁵ and wanted, with their Christologies, to underline the real *Communicatio Idiomatum* between the two natures in Christ and the consequences that this *communication* had upon humanity. Such a doctrine, in fact, is the condition of the deification of human nature. For both of them, such a Christology, as a spiritual model, permits the mystic to contemplate God and leads him to a union with Him. This by itself, according to us, demonstrates that they both belonged to the same Christological current within the Church of the East; they used common but also different sources; and each expressed his Christology in his own way in a different context, trying to answer common, yet ultimately different, questions.

In his development, Maryrius used several sources from his tradition in an attempt to support his doctrine. His aim was to underline that a true Communicatio Idiomatum is the condition of the divinization of Christ's humanity. One of these sources, which he undoubtedly did not share with Henana, is, as L. Abramowski noted, the Liber Heraclides of Nestorius in the form we have it today. Martyrius probably learnt of this source, and of others, during a stay he made in one monastic community that belonged to the two-*qnomē* Christological current⁴⁶. The same L. Abramowski noted that Martyrius was conscious of the differences between the authentic part of Nestorius and the Ps. Nestorian introduction to it, using it, however, against the Christology of Nestorius and his followers, one of whom was Babai the Great⁴⁷. We must, therefore, agree with L. Abramowski's opinion that Martyrius did not belong to the school of *Henana*. However, this does not mean that he was indirectly influenced by the 'old-Chalcedonian' Christology. His thought is another development of the same Christological current to which Henana belonged, which is a Christology, as A. de Halleux correctly noted, based on the tradition of the Church of the East and

⁴⁷ Cf. Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 24-25.

⁴⁵ For the influence of *Ḥenana* see M. Tamcke, *Der Katholikos-Patriarch Sabrīšō* ' *I* (596-604) *und das Mönchtum* (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Serie 23, Theologie, 302), Frankfurt 1988, 33-34; see also Metselaar, *The Mirror, the Qnoma, and the Soul*, cit., 338-339.

⁴⁶ P. Bettiolo maintains that Martyrius was a monk in the same monastery where the catholicos *Īšōʻyhab* III was also a monk, i.e. *Beth ʻAwe* monastery, cf. P. Bettiolo, *Un vescovo in una età di torbidi: Ishoʻyahb III e la Chiesa Siro-orientale nel VII secolo*, in *La grande stagione della mistica siro-orientale (VI-VIII secolo). Atti del 5° incontro sull'Oriente cristiano di tradizione siriaca Milano Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 26 maggio 2006*, a cura di E. Vergani, S. Chialà, Milano, 2009, 71-90, here 78-80.

has nothing in common, at least directly, with the other Christian confession of the time.

Martyrius then tried to answer the question as to why the doctrine of the 612AD is not acceptable from his spiritual point of view and, in opposition to Babai's Christology and spiritual Christological model⁴⁸, he proposes his own. We are not going to discuss and analyze this Christology in detail here but will do so in a future publication⁴⁹. Based on the second part of his *Book of Perfection*: Chapter II *On the Orthodox Faith* and Chapter IV *On Perfect Love*⁵⁰, we present a brief description of Martyrius' Christology, and how this Christological model permitted the doctrine on deification either of Christ's humanity or that of the one of mystics.

According to Martyrius, Christ is two natures, divine and human, united without confusion in the one person and one hypostasis of the eternal Word and Son:

The Word God uniting, in a sublime way, to this nature of our humanity from the beginning of its formation and forever, He made it with Himself one hypostasis (*qnomā*) and one person (*parṣopā*) in a admirable and ineffable union; He filled it with the glory of His divinity and made Himself visible to the creature through the likeness [of the slave]; and we see His glory, glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

^a Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 16.

⁴⁸ That the Christology of Babai reflects a different spirituality see the study M. Metselaar, *The Mirror, the Quoma, and the Soul*, especially 352-366.

⁴⁹ We are preparing a paper on the Christology of Martyrius-Sahdona; most of our affirmations here are based on our research and analysis of Martyrius' thought, and they might be better understood after we have published that paper.

⁵⁰ The English translation we give is our own, based on the Original Syric text, taking into consideration the French translation of A. de Halleux.

משל אום המורז בעל איז המנוכת אמב לכלעוני.
הישיא לבי אים א המנוכת אמב לכלעוני.
הבאמברא הלת אולעו, כבלראה בה כיל בלא כח מים הלת בלא המנוכא המנוכא הישיב המים האולנים ביל אילויא הכולא אילו: מים השב המים האולנים

Since, in fact, God the Word clothed Himself with a human body, he joined the honor of His hypostasis (*qnomā*) to the visible. And in its form [of the body] He [God the Word] was seen in the world, manifested in it continually. For that, it is thought and said [regarding] the one who assumes and the one who is assumed, one person (*parṣpā*) and hypostasis (*qnomā*) of the Son.

In paragraph 21 of the chapter on Othodox faith, our author mentions the consequences of the union on the united natures: the Word, 1) filled humanity with the glory of His divinity; and 2) made Himself visible. In our opinion, Martyrius is talking here about the divinization of the humanity in Christ because of its union with the Word, who, because of the union with the humanity, could make Himself visible to creatures, and thus His glory was manifested by His humanity, i.e. in the likeness of the slave He assumed. We have the same idea in paragraph 22, expressed, however, in different way. Martyrius here affirms that the Word, by the union with humanity, joined the honor of His hypostasis to the visible, i.e. to the assumed body. Again we have the idea of the deification of Christ's humanity because of the union. Our author also remarks in this paragraph on the second consequence of the union: the invisible divinity was manifested through the assumed humanity⁵¹.

The union in the person of the Son is the condition that humanity be raised and exalted towards divinity, and be divinized without being changed or transformed; in the same way, it is the condition that divinity be manifested without being changed or transformed:

^b *Ibidem*, 16.

⁵¹ See also Ioan, Martyrius-Sahdona, cit., 54-55.

אבן ביו ביות הלת הכיניא מנו הי בביא ביל KIK . US . W MK Shers of but Keen من ماح ماح، من طعم برب من مه عد ובת לא אלא מכעות מח השחבת מכשחו בא تعنى معمد ملعل محلار تحدم ملم خلاساء KANDIK KLI JUML ALI KEO LIEI KIZK النمنه در مد بد للا للا ما معاديم مه حصیه شه جمالایه من ملک له قحه عیده הלה משאבע להא שואה אלא בלמות להא נשהכת who we and yell thous we keps או אוט אוט זיד שור יאבוץ אוט מוש זיר מפושאת להליוד מסא בו מיועם כן נשחכמי כמאמבין מסס מוץ פין ספין סמוץ בעיי. האמשה משלא המלה אמלו ישי ביו הצים הושליו עמטשיו ביי געטטקעי עסט ביים יבול עלאי מעו אישוסת, פוֹם מפא וכוֹא מלם ולוץ. און הל כבינא אלמא מכושא. עד גין כבוסאמ. ביוא כל מוים מפושים כהיונואא. פום מפא הם עד האה בבוחה. חבו לב פוש בבינהת, כהאמני وسيمهم حدلية هيسم عدله جهونع للانم

Although He has perfectly the nature of man, that is, body and soul, like each one of us, this same nature, however, is the temple of God the Word through which He manifests Himself. It [the nature of man] shows the one who assumed it and makes His person (parsopā) perceptible. And never withdraws from Him and manifests itself to those who look at it as having its own person (parsopā), without the divinity that inhabits in it. Indeed, although the one who is assumed is perfect according to his nature, he does not appear to those who look at him in his dimensions, but in Him everything is raised towards the one who assumes him, like the dress to the one who wears it and like purple to the king. If, in fact, the [assumed one] was recognized by himself, separately, i.e. separate from the one that assumes him, it could be said two persons $(parsop\bar{e})$ and two sons. But since he, [the assumed on] is raised to God through the union, the person $(parsop\bar{a})$ of divinity is manifested by the likeness to a slave and therefore the person $(parsop\bar{a})$ of the Son is one and not two. [He is] two, in fact, according to nature, God and man, one, however, according to His sonship. The natures $(kyan\bar{e})$ are two, and they are distinct through [their] properties, person (parṣopā), however, is one and equal in sonship. And, although He is distinct according to His natures, it is said that He is in each one of them through the union without being divided in two [persons].

^c Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 16-17.

In paragraph 23 Martyrius affirms that the assumed humanity, being the temple of God the Word, is different from our humanity, even if it is perfect and composed of body and soul. As he says above in paragraph 21, i.e. that humanity was not separated from the Word from its formation, this means that it cannot manifest itself separate from the Word as an individual human like us; it is the temple where the Word inhabits. The consequences of this inseparable union in the person of the Son, expressed by the anti-

ochene image of temple and inhabitation and the one of the assumer and the assumed⁵², is the following: 1) there is just one Son and not two, since the natures cannot be manifested separately; 2) since the person is of the Son, this perfect humanity does not appear to those who look at it in its *dimensions*, since everything in it is raised towards the assumer's Word.

Humanity in Christ, according to our authors' thought, is not manifested in its dimensions, i.e. is not recognized as individual human nature separate from the Word. This humanity, instead, and because of the union, is divinized. To underline, however, that divinization does not occur according to nature, he uses the expression 'raised' (حطحات) and 'not changed': everything in the assumed humanity is raised towards the Word and not changed or transformed in God. In addition, Martyrius says that even if humanity and divinity in Christ have one person, that of the Son, they do not lose their natural properties, and therefore they are distinct as natures. We do not see, in addition, that for our author Christ's humanity is a general human being, as (Neo-)Chalcedonians teach. It seems that for him this humanity is one body with the soul, one individual human being like us, but without his own human hypostasis or person.

In Christ, then, the duality of the natures does not mean duality of subjects; there are two natures which preserve their natural properties; the oneness of the subject is brought about by the oneness of the person and the oneness of the property of sonship. The person of the Son that manifests this particular property of sonship, concludes Martyrius, is in both natures because of the union; and therefore, even if they are distinct by natural properties, they cannot be divided into two persons. This is, in fact, the condition of the so called *Communicatio Idiomatum*:

⁵² On this use in Martyrius, see de Halleux, *La christologie de Martyrius Sahdona*, cit., 15.

[25] Khowaho Khai in ,o Khow ואלטא סוביניא סכו עם במאמי בלעוד בומחם בבינה כמלים ועבומי בג לא מחבו מלים ILLO NO CERPULE. OF UD CRACE UN DUN no oft the in who was not set the מבל בלהת, גולאמי בעונה אלא מס מא [ג] אמונה מל שמה מבין של הנישה מבי למונה אמונה בעובא מם מא האמת מם בבעא. אבוא מם המשבא אשרי מים ישרא האלש השלה השלה מים: מה ענים עבוען שובי יסבים נאובע ענים אים אמשר אלא משליו עום עיזייי עטשו לאיז حللاے انفحی ویوں انشلا اندوع کو کا کو انقام حبله جلمه و بعده من منه و بملا علمه באוב שא נה מם בו מם ובשמש. בלו בלוא ואם א מומלוכא. מעו פוב מפא וכוא כשעא אבלסת, מם בו מם כומ זאלמא מכומ ואנאא. בו برعائه مرسام، معلعة مسلم، منت دينه בת בעו פוץ מפא וכוא ובעונה אלאי בבלתים مصحنا ماده مورد مرام مراء ممدام

Great and admirable is the union of God and man, and for that it is said that each one of the natures [participates] in the [properties] of its companion – without losing its own [properties] and without being transformed. And because of the union, 'this one' is called 'that one', and 'that one' [is called] 'this one'. In fact, God the Word agreed to be called, in the union, what man is by nature, and gave man to be, in the union, what He Himself is by nature. Thus the Son of God, the Word God, is called the son of man, because of the human nature He assumed, and the son of man, the nature [assumed] from us, becomes the Only-begotten Son of God because of God the Word who assumed it. The one who descended is the same one who ascended because of the manifestation and the inhabitation. He, who is on earth, is said to be in heaven because of the honor and exaltation. And the only person $(parsop\bar{a})$ of the Lord Christ is the Son of God and the son of man. The natures of God and of man remain perfect, in Him, in the one person $(parsop\bar{a})$ of Son. [They] are, in the union, with all their properties, without separation and confusion, from the annunciation and forever.

^d Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 17.

Thanks to the union, each nature participates in the properties of the other. It is clear that Martyrius means the natural properties since he underlines that this does not mean transformation. The participation permits that 'this one' be called 'that one' and 'that one' 'this one', i.e. God be called man and man be called God; without meaning that God being called man loses His own natural properties, or man, being called god, loses *his* natural properties. To avoid being understood incorrectly, i.e. a follower of Miaphysism⁵³, he introduces the distinction between 'according to nature' and 'according to union': God the

⁵³ He also refuses and rejects the doctrine of the composite substance from two natures, understood as mixture and confusion, see paragraph 28 in *Ibidem*, 18; see also Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 24; Ioan, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 56.

Word agreed to be called, in the union, what man is by nature, and gave man to be, in the union, what He Himself is by nature. This may be considered a good example of what we have said above.

As L. Abramowski noted, this paragraph is based on *Liber Heraclides*⁵⁴, according to us elaborated and modified in order to support his Christology in opposition to that of the same *Liber Heraclides* and its introduction⁵⁵. In fact, his aim is to affirm that in Christ the *Communicatio Idiomatum* is real and effected because of the oneness of the person and hypostasis of the Son of God, which became after the union the one person and hypostasis of Christ:

In fact, since God the Word, in His nature and in His person, was united to man and became man, in His own person He makes use of the man; and since man, in His nature, was truly united to God the Word and became god [divinized], in the person of God he is manifested, as in his own [person]. And each one of them is, in two respects, God and man: one according to nature, the other according to the union; And although each one of them possesses the property of its nature, they are not two persons, but one person. For that, each one of them uses, as in his own [person], the properties of his companion; And this person is natural (parsopā $Kyany\bar{a}$), and not borrowed, because of the inseparable union of the two natures.

^e Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 19.

Furthermore, for Martyrius, in Christ only God the Word has its person, and in this His person and in His nature He was united to man; man however, was united, in His nature, to the Word; man has no person. In addition, we must note that for our author the oneness of person, and that this person is of the Word, is the true condition for the *Communicatio Idiomatum*. In fact, he says that God was humanized (אולאלר) since He used humanity in His own person, and man was divinized (אולאלר) because he was manifested in the person of the Word as if it were his own.

⁵⁴ Cf. Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 23.

⁵⁵ Cf. *Ibidem*, 25.

We believe that Martyrius uses the Nestorian and Ps. Nestorian doctrine of 'using the person as own'⁵⁶ in order to find a solution in order that this person would not be considered borrowed or estranged from his natures. He actually rejects the concept of borrowed person⁵⁷. Hence, the use of 'using the person as his own' in Martyrius is different from the one we find in Nestorius and his followers.

This is not the place to discuss what the problematic for scholars concepts of 'hypostatic person', used for example in paragraphs 28 and 29, and of 'natural person' used in the paragraph above means in Martyrius' thought⁵⁸. In our opinion, this one person is of hypostasis and therefore is called hypostatic. This means that it manifests the same group of particular properties for both of Christ's natures, i.e. the sonship, lordness etc. It is called natural, in the sense of being a person of natures, that is, manifests the natural properties of both natures, which are in *communication* and *participation* because of the union. In other words, a hypostatic and natural person means a real and concrete sole manifestation of two different natures in one singularity and one subject⁵⁹.

It is worthwhile, finally, to note the importance of the use of the term 'being divinized' (๑๘๘๘๘๘) for the humanity in Martyrius, which reveals the aim and finality of his Christological system: the union with God. For our author 'being divinized' is not according to nature, but according to our union with God.

If in Christ this union is divine and perfect, in us it is a union of will that permits our divinization. This is, indeed, what our author declares in the third paragraph of Chapter 4, entitled 'on perfect love', in the second part of his 'Book of Perfection'60:

⁵⁶ As L. Abramowski had already noted, behind the lines of this chapter we can read the doctrine of the authentic part of Netsorius' *Liber Hercalides* regarding the own *prosopon* and the appropriation of the *prosopon* and making it his own, developed by the Ps. Nestorian introduction to solve some problems that Nestorius' left open, cf. Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 24.

⁵⁷ See his opinion in this regard in paragraphs 28, 30 and 31, see Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 18-19.

⁵⁸ See the opinion of the scholars in this regard: de Halleux, *La christologie de Martyrius Sahdona*, cit., 19-22; Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 23-24; Ioan, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit., 56-57.

⁵⁹ We shall give a detailed analysis of this in our paper concerning Martyrius' Christology that we are papering.

⁶⁰ Even if O. Ioan has the same opinion as we do, i.e. that Martyrius' Christology is based on the doctrine of the divinization of human beings, he does not give any example from Martyrus' work that might confirm his hypothesis, something that we are going to do here.

حہ حم ر ہے	Man, [through love], becomes a place for the inhabitation of the Trinity; [love] mixes him and unites him with God, so
	[God] makes him one with Him, accor-
	ding to will

f Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 32.

Thus for Martyrius the humanity of Christ as the Word's place of inhabitation is the model for the inhabitation of God in us. The mystic whose desire is to achieve a union with God must follow the Christological model proposed by Martyrius in order to achieve this desire⁶¹. In Christ, humanity is divinized because of the union with the Word. The mystic, making himself the temple of God, following the example of Christ, can effect the union with God. The only difference is that in Christ the union is in the person of the Word, in the mystic the union is according to will. There is one sole result: the divinization of humanity, not in the sense of being transformed in the divine nature, but of being exalted and raised towards God:

בל הבנה הלובה ליביד זיב מבה ללכן [10] איז היביד הלהה להביד הלהיל הליבי בלהי להיל הליבי בלהי להיל הליבי בלהי ליביד להיל הליבי בלהי הליביד בלהי הליביד בלהי הלוביד בלהי היביד בחולים וכים מעומלים ובים מעומלים וכים מעומלים ובים ובים מעומלים ובים מעומלים ובים מעומלים ובים מעומלים ובים ובים ובים ובים מעומלים ובים ובים ובים ובים ובים ובים ובים וב	In fact, where the king lives, there his servants go; And if he goes to live in a modest and poor home, it [the home] obtains great dignity. What, then, will be the dignity of the heart in which the king of ages lives? How great are His riches and His glory, and how strong is His power?
בי א האל מינים באיז הביו לובה הבינים אות עינים מונים במינים במולי מלים איז בעיל משל מינים הבינים איז בעיל וויי אבר הבינים במינים במינים מלים איז בבינים מינים מי	Blessed are you Lord, who, [while] inhabiting the heights, made the heart of man your inhabitation place, and thus you make him inhabit in heights with you
[12] ישה מישה איני השודין שריז ערדישים מיני לישה בשרין	In fact, it is God Himself who, as in His temple, acts in them [those who love Him] and brings to perfection all benefactions.

g Martyrius (Sahdona), Œuvres spirituelles, II. Livre de la perfection, 2me partie (ch. 1-7), cit., 35.

^h *Ibidem*, 35.

i Ibidem, 35.

⁶¹ See also L. Leloir, *La pensée monastique d'Éphrem et Martyrius*, in *Symposium Syriacum*, 1972: célebré dans les jours 26-31 octobre 1972 à l'Institut Pontifical Oriental de Rome, éd. par Ig. Ortiz de Urbina, (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 197), Roma 1974, 105-131, here 130.

Martyrius is very careful to underline the unchangeability of human nature even in the final resurrection. Although he says, in paragraph 41 of the chapter 'on the Orthodox faith', that the body will become incorruptible, he also underlines that the human form will not be lost or altered; it will, however, be perfected. This is the way, in fact, towards perfection, i.e. divinization, which is the main aim of our author's book:

They will take off corruption and put on incorruptibility in order to become immortal and incorruptible according to the body, and unchangeable and unchanging according to the soul. This corruptible [body] in fact, shall put on incorruptibility, and this mortal [body] shall put on immortality. No one of them will remain in hell, even their harmonious form of their proportions will not be altered, but they will be resurrected in perfect way, with all their limbs and in their normal form, before the tribunal of Christ. confessing His lordliness and blessing His name. Each according to his works will be rewarded in body and soul. Therefore, the great Paul says: 'We shall all appear before the tribunal of Christ, so that each one may be rewarded in his body for what he has done, good or evil'.

Martyrius was deposed first by a synod under $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}'yhab$ III; he was then re-instated only to be once again, according to the decision of the same catholicos $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}'yhab$ III, deposed, condemned of heresy and exiled to Edessa, were he stayed until his death⁶². His doctrine, however, did not disappear with his condemnation. Since he had a strong influence on some monastic communities, we think that his doctrine, Christological and spiritual, continued to exist among his followers. This may be one of the reasons behind the positive legend, noted by P. Bettiolo, that we find in the tradition of the Church of the East regarding the figure of Martyrius⁶³. An-

⁶³ Cf. *Ibidem*, 85.

¹ *Ibidem*, 22-23.

⁶² On the controversy between the catholicos and Martyrius, see also Bettiolo, *Un vescovo in una età di torbidi*, cit., 78-85.

other proof of such an hypothesis, which we shall provide with our study here, is the synod convoked by the catholicos Gewargis I in 676, and his Christological letter written in 679/80, which we shall analyse afterwards.

4. Mar Gewargis I and His Reaction to Martyrius' Current

Our interest in Gewargis, particularly in his Christology, started while we were writing our doctorate dissertation, defended in June 2014⁶⁴. In November 2015, we published an article about Gewargis' Christology as expressed in his letter to Mina, the chorbishop in Persia⁶⁵. In 2016, P. Catalin-Stefan published his doctorate dissertation, which concerned the figure and Christology of Mar Gewargis I⁶⁶. It can be considered the sole analytic, detailed study on Gewargis that we have hitherto received. Even so, we shall present here another reading of Gewargis' synod and Christology, one quite different from that of P. Catalin-Stefan⁶⁷. As we have said, we think that the synod convoked by Gewargis and his Christology expressed in the letter to Mina is also a polemic against the followers of Martyrius-Sahdona.

⁶⁴ Cf. B. Ebeid, La Cristologia delle grandi confessioni cristiane dell'Oriente nel X e XI secolo. Studio comparativo delle polemiche del melchita Sa'īd 'Ibn Baṭrīq e le risposte del copto Sawīrus 'Ibn al-Muqaffa' e del nestoriano Elia di Nisibi. Dissertatio ad Doctoratum, Pontificium Institutum Orientale, Rome 2014, 424, 434, 440 and footnote 101 on p. 516; our dissertation should be published soon.

⁶⁵ Cf. B. Ebeid, La cristologia del catholicos Mar Georgis I. Un'analisi della sua lettera a Mina, in Aethiopia Fortitudo Ejus. Studi in onore di Monsignor Osvaldo Raineri in occasione del suo 80° compleanno, a cura di R. Zarzeczny (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 298), Roma 2015, 203-220.

⁶⁶ Cf. P. Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I.* (660-680). Ostsyrische Christologie in frühislamischer Zeit (Göttinger Orientforschungen, I. Reihe: Syriaca, 50), Wiesbaden 2016.

⁶⁷ It seems that P. Catalin-Stefan did not know about our article and did not read our hypothesis regarding the Christology of Gewargis I, i.e., it was a reaction against Martyrius and his Christological current, which had already spread among some monastic communities, cf. B. Ebeid, *La cristologia del catholicos*, cit., 218-219 and footnote 53 in these pages. His reading of the synod and the Christology is related to the encounter between Christians and Muslims, so he considers, for example, the letter, to be an apologetic response to some Islamic doctrine, an opinion that we do not share and will explain the reasons for this in this study.

Mar Gewargis I⁶⁸ was born on an unknown date in a village called $Kafr\bar{a}$ in the province of Beth $Gaway\bar{a}^{69}$. At an early age he became a monk in the monastery of Beth ' $Aw\bar{e}^{70}$, where he probably met $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}$ 'yhab III and began a strong friendship with him⁷¹. Indeed, this friendship was behind his election to Metropolitan bishop of Adiabene, as the successor to $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}$ 'yhab himself, when the latter became catholicos⁷².

Gewargis was elected catholicos of the Church of the East after the death of his friend $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}$ 'yhab III, probably in 660⁷³. It seems that it was $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}$ 'yhab's will that Gewargis should become his successor on the catholicate's see⁷⁴, and he remained on this see until his death, which occurred in 680/1. He is considered the first catholicos under the Umayyad dynasty. As P. Catalin-Stephan noted, his catholicate coincides with the same years of the first Umayyad Caliph, Mu ' $\bar{a}wi$ -yah bin $Ab\bar{\imath}$ Sufyān (660/1-680)⁷⁵. As the successor to $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}$ 'yhab III, he had to solve some problems that his predecessor had caused: 1) the conflict with the bishops of Beth Persayē (Fars) and Beth Qaṭrayē, who did not acknowledge $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}$ 'yhab as catholicos, resulting in a schism within the Church of the East; and 2) in our opinion, the consequences of Martyrius' condemnation⁷⁶. We also add another element: the problems that appeared in the area of Beth Qaṭrayē, some of which

⁶⁸ For a detailed study of his life, the sources and other problems and issues in regards, see Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 15-39; another reference with a brief presentation on Gewargis is L. van Rompay, *Gewragis I*, in *Gorgians Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*, ed. by S. Brock, A. Butts, G. Kiraz, L. van Rompay, Piscataway 2011, 175.

⁶⁹ Cf. Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 15.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Ibidem*, 19.

⁷¹ Cf. *Ibidem*, 21.

⁷² Cf. *Ibidem*, 24.

 $^{^{73}}$ It is to be noted that L. van Rompay is not sure about this date and says that it could be in the 660 or 665, cf, van Rompay, *Gewragis I*, cit., 175; while P. Catalin-Stefan maintains the years 659/660, directly after the death of $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{\sigma}'yhab$ III, cf, Catalin-Stefan, $G\bar{t}warg\bar{t}s$ I, cit., 25.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Ibidem*, 25; Note that there were also two other bishops with the name Gewargis, the bishop of Nisibis and that of *Parth dhe Maišān*, both of whom were also close to the catholicos $\bar{l}\bar{s}\bar{o}'yhab$. They did not recognize Gewargis as catholicos, but, after his election and consecration, he went and visited both of them and was reconciled with them; for further details see *ibidem*, 27-39.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Ibidem*, 1.

⁷⁶ This important element in the context of Gewargis was not taken into consideration by P. Catalin-Stefan in his important study on Gewargis's Christology.

of an ecclesiastical nature in the dioceses there, and some other issues resulting from Arabic and Islamic rule.

In the year 637, Seleucia-Ctesiphon was conquered by the Arabs and Muslims. However, for 15 years the ecclesiastical provinces of Beth Persayē (Fars) and Beth Qatrayē (today's Qatar and Bahrain) had not yet been occupied and were isolated from the rest of the Church of the East. For this reason, as P. Bettiolo noted, the Metropolitan Rew Ardašir of Fars could not participate in the election, in 649, of the successor to Maremmeh, which is why he did not recognize the election of Īšōʻyhab III as catholicos⁷⁷. The bishops of Beth Persayē (Fars) and subsequently of, Beth Qaṭrayē joined the Metropolitan Rew Ardašir and shared his opinion, the outcome of which was a schism within the Church of the East. Even if Īšōʻyhab tried to solve the problem, it seems that the synod convoked by Gewargis I also had to solve this problem, not only those of the province of Beth Qaṭrayē that we mentioned above⁷⁸.

4.1 The Synod and Its Canons

In order to solve all these problems, Gewargis travelled to the province of *Beth Qatraye*⁷⁹ and presided over a synod on the island of Dirin (today's Bahrain) 80. The synod was held during the month of May (ישרא שובא) in the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא ערשבא ערשבא) 10 the 57th year of the kingdom of the Arabs (ישרא ערשבא ערשבא

⁷⁷ Cf. Bettiolo, *Un vescovo in una età di torbidi*, cit., 86; For other material on the conflict, see Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 5-6, 27-39, and the references he provides on these pages.

⁷⁸ Cf. *Ibidem*, 6, 44; van Rompay, *Gewragis I*, cit., 175.

⁷⁹ On his travel see Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 40-44.

⁸⁰ Cf. Ibidem, 44.

⁸¹ Cf. Synodicon orientale, cit., 215.

⁸² Cf. *Ibidem*, 215; see also Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 44.

⁸³ Cf. Synodicon orientale, cit., 215-226.

⁸⁴ On the *Synodicon* and its importance, see L. van Rompay, *Synodicon Orientale*, in *Gorgians Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*, ed. by S. Brock, A. Butts, G. Kiraz, L. van Rompay, Piscataway 2011, 387-389.

Canons⁸⁵. In our contribution here we should like to re-read Canons 1, 2, 3 and 12, and analyze them in order to demonstrate our hypothesis: that some monks who were following Martyrius' spirituality were defunded in the area of *Fars* and *Beth Qatrayē* and that these synod's Canons, along with the letter to Mina, is also to be considered a polemic against them and their doctrine.

Before we do so, it is important to offer a brief presentation of the topics with which the Canons deal⁸⁶. Canon 1 deals with the significance of preaching, on Sundays and particularly on feast days, stipulating that the content of this preaching should be based on the orthodox faith so that believers will be able to respond to heretics on topics concerning orthodoxy; Canon 2 orders that all monasteries should be built with the knowledge and permission of the area's bishop; Canon 3 mentions which characteristics and virtues ecclesiastical leaders should possess, according to which they could be elected to their positions; Canon 4 orders the bishops and clergy not to deal with tasks that lay people could take care of, such as economic questions, since this would be a obstacle to their mission of teaching and preaching; Canon 5 orders lay people not to intervene in bishops' or the clergy's tasks, such as ordinations, building monasteries, etc.; Canon 6 says that problems and issues among Christians of a juridical nature should be solved in Church; this probably reflects the new situation of Christians living under Islamic rule⁸⁷; Canons 7 and 8 deal with the characteristics of those who want to join the priesthood, and those who have recently joined it, giving them some advice on how to behave in their new positions; Canon 9 concerns the daughters of pact (bnat qyamā), giving them some strict rules on behaviour and appearance: Canon 10 deals with the relationship between bishops and their clergy; Canon 11 assigns bishops with the responsibility for orphans and their inheritance until they become adults; Canon 12 regards some 'false monks'; Canon 13 forbids Christian women to marry without the consensus of their parents and family and without the presence of a priest; this Canon is connected to Canon 14, which forbids Christian women to marry *hanpē*, i.e. pagans, including Mus-

⁸⁵ Cf. Catalin-Stefan, Gīwargīs I, cit., 45-52.

⁸⁶ Another brief presentation of the canons is to be found in van Rompay, *Gewragis I*, cit., 175.

⁸⁷ Cf. Catalin-Stefan, Gīwargīs I, cit., 48-52.

lims⁸⁸; Canon 15 deals with some liturgical issues; Canon 16 forbids polygamy; Canon 17 is a ban on drinking wine with Jews in Jewish locations, particularly after the liturgy; Canon 18 concerns some funeral traditions; finally, Canon 19 underlines the respect that must be given to bishops, and that Christians who were responsible for collecting the *ğizyah* poll tax and giving it to their Muslim rulers should not collect it from their bishops.

It is clear that this synod it is important to provide a clear image of the relations between Christians and Muslims in the early Islamic period⁸⁹. In fact, Canons 13, 14, 16 and 19 reflect some problems caused by the encounter between Christians and Muslims, such as marriage to Muslims or paying the taxes of *ğizyah* and *ḥarāğ*⁹⁰.

For us, Canon 12 is also very important and must be read carefully. The title says: «Regarding the disturbance and the trouble of those who have been given the name and attire of monks but are far from its virtue»⁹¹. It is clear that this Canon is aimed at the presence of some monks who are considered 'false'. According to the Canon's description, these monks do not follow the rules of monastic life; they do not know the teaching of the Holy Scriptures or the monastic Canons of the fathers; and, in particular, they neither belong to a monastery, nor are subject to an abbot; furthermore, they are present among people, at times in bad localities; bishops, therefore, must expel them from their dioceses in order to protect the simple people from them; and, consequently, they should be deprived of the name and the attire of monks⁹².

⁸⁸ On the term *ḥanpe*, its meaning and how it might also be connected to Muslims in Syriac texts after the Arab conquest, see M.Ph. Penn, *Envisioning Islam. Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World*, Philadelphia 2015, 67-69; see also Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 48-52.

⁸⁹ Unfortunately, this text was not taken in consideration in the study by M.Ph. Penn mentioned in the previous footnote.

⁹⁰ On the importance of the canons of the catholicos and their relationship with the presence of Muslims, see H.G.B. Teule, *Giwargis I*, in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, 1: 600-900*, ed. by D. Thomas, B. Roggema, (The History of Christian-Muslim Relations, 11), Leiden-Boston 2009, 151-153.

^{91 «}mlen رعة بعد المعددة المعددة من ومما و ماهة بعدة المعملية الأه المعانفة الماه الماء ال

Who are these monks? First of all, it is clear from their description in the Canon, that these 'false monks' belong to the Church of the East and not to another Christian confession. However, they neither live in a monastery nor have an abbot. In our opinion, these monks were strangers to the area; they came as refugees, since they do not have their monasteries there. We do not think that they were a group of charismatic monks who usually created problems within the Church of the East, such as the Messalians. We maintain that these monks were linked to Martyrius' spirituality and doctrine, which were considered a 'heretic' current within the Church of the East. In support of this hypothesis, one can notice other details found in other Canons of the same synod that underline the importance of Orthodox doctrine.

According to Canon 2, all churches, and monasteries in particular, must be built according to the knowledge, guidance and permission of the bishop⁹³. It is possible that this Canon was written against those 'false monks', and it forbids them to be organized as a monastic community. The Canon even forbids believers to build churches or monasteries without the permission of bishops. Again we can read behind such an affirmation a connection to the 'false monks'. In our opinion, perhaps some lay followers of these monks tried to build monasteries and put them at their service. For this reason, therefore, according to Canon 12, bishops, must protect lay people who are characterized as 'simple' and must send these 'false monks' away from their dioceses. One might also see another dimension to Canon 2: a desire to organize dioceses and specify the role of bishops and clergy, on the one hand, and that of lay people and believers, on the another. Although such a reading is also logical, it does not exclude ours.

These monks' problems also seem to include their doctrine, since, as we have seen, Canon 12 says that bishops should protect simple people from them. In relation to this, we should evaluate the content of Canon 1. According to this Canon, bishops should preach frequently, and their kerygma must contain the orthodox faith (אוֹב אַר)⁹⁴. Their kerygma is important since through it believers

can respond to heretics (מוֹשׁבּיאה), if they were asked by them, concerning matters of their Orthodox belief⁹⁵. Even Canon 3 remarks that one of the characteristics which ecclesiastic leaders should possess is to be Orthodox in their belief (מוֹבּיבּיאה מֹאַה בּיבּיאה)⁹⁶.

Who might these 'heretics' in the first Canon be? P. Catalis-Stefan, who discussed in detail what this concept could mean, arrived at the conclusion that they did not follow the valid doctrine of the Church⁹⁷, without identifying them with one specific group. He also lets the reader think that such a term could refer to Muslims, or to a different, distinct religious group. It is impossible to accept the latter possibility for the following reasons: 1) the same text used other terms, *ṭayyayē* and *ḥanpē*, for Muslims, which were also used for Muslims in other Syriac sources contemporary to our authors⁹⁸; 2) M. Penn demonstrated convincingly that Syriac texts in the early Islamic period, to which our synod belongs, did not have a clear idea about Islamic doctrine; moreover, in that period Islam was not yet seen as a religion⁹⁹; 3) if, finally, it refers to idolatry or paganism¹⁰⁰, then the term should be in singular feminine form, not in the masculine plural as the text has it.

What is more, these heretics could be either one of the other Christian confessions, Miaphysites or/and Chalcedonians, or a heretic group within the Church of the East. Since the text did not use the term the but the but the term to accept the second possibility. We believe that the term the term the same confession. Furthermore, putting Canons 12 and 1 together results in the following: the 'false monks' were dangerous for simple people because of their doctrine, and for that reason bishops must

⁹⁶ We read in the canon's title the following: « הביסה המובה הלושה הל

⁹⁷ Cf. Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 47-48; in these pages he tries to understand who these heretics could be, also having as a reference the difference between and and who within the same confession.

⁹⁸ Cf. Penn, *Envisioning Islam*, 56-59, 66-68.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Ibidem*, 53-74.

¹⁰⁰ It should be mentioned that אמשהיה could mean idolatry, or could refer to the religion of idolaters as אולשייה.

teach Orthodoxy in their kerygma in order to protect these simple people from the 'false monks' and their doctrine, who belonged to the same Church and were not of another confession.

If this is so, who might these heretics be? The synod probably had to deal with the presence of some followers of Martyrius' spirituality and Christology, who according to us, had chosen this area, i.e. Beth Persayē and Beth Qatrayē, as a place of refuge, since it had been judged to be schismatic and had been excommunicated together with their enemy, $\bar{l} \dot{s} \bar{o}' v h a b$ III. A second argument that supports this hypothesis of ours is the letter that Mar Gewargis I sent to Mina during 679/80. First of all, this letter, according to the given title in the Synodicon orientale, contained the orthodox faith of the Church of the East against those who destroy this orthodoxy¹⁰¹. Secondly, Mina was a priest and chorbishops in the land of Persians (حمنح , that is in the diocese of Beth Persayē (Fars)¹⁰³. Writing such a letter to him against the doctrine of those people, who, as our analysis will demonstrate, were followers of Martyrius¹⁰⁴, means that these followers were defunded also in Beth Persavē and there was a need to explain the orthodoxy against their dangerous and heretic doctrine.

4.2 The letter of Gewargis I to Mina and its Christology

According to the letter's introduction, Gewragis had already received two letters from Mina with questions related to doctrinal is-

^{101 «}Keren Kus hal hahahki Kunisi waiifa Kalaho wi iai i khi K aii wa alia mhasika Kuresi mhamla Laias mai Kuniai Kalawaakiaa msaaa Kiwa Kama aluhek Khla Kmlai Khiai Kwaaihik Jiwa », Synodicon orientale, cit., 227.

¹⁰² Regarding this ecclesiastical function, see Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 62-64. ¹⁰³ Cf. *Ibidem*, 63.

¹⁰⁴ P. Catalin-Stefan also reads this letter in connection to some canons of the synod and their content; however, he arrives at a very different conclusion. According to him, the heretics mentioned in Canon 1 are related to the <code>hanpē</code> in Canon 14, who are also mentioned in the letter, cf. *Synodicon orientale*, cit., 237. For this reason, and with further argumentations, he concludes that the letter was written against Muslims, separating it from the title given to it later by the editor of the *Synodicon*, cf. Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 64-68. We have already explained why we do not agree with identifying these heretics with Muslims. In addition, our analysis will demonstrate that those heretics were Christians of the Church of the East, precisely, the followers of Martyrius.

According to Gewargis' introduction, Mina had asked to have some issues regarding the Orthodox faith on God and the Economy of Salvation explained to him¹¹¹. It is clear that this request is to be read in connection to the information on the discussion that Mina had had with those who blaspheme the Orthodox faith. According to the epilogue, these people attribute passion to Christ's divinity, i.e. they are *theopaschites*, and reject His humanity taken from us¹¹².

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יים בלכה לאינטול אי בבון במלאי. בליאי פוסיא מי ופיים לאי ובו נאסיא מומיא איים בוליאי. בוליאי מומיאי, ולולפייאי, ולילפייאי, ולילפייא

¹¹⁰ For more details on Mina's profile, see the construction of Catalin-Stefan, $G\bar{\imath}warg\bar{\imath}s$ *I*, cit., 64-68.

¹¹¹ See footnote 116 above.

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A rapid reading of the latter affirmation leads the reader to identify these adversaries with Miaphysites. However, we must not forget that Martyrius was also accused of being, in some way, a follower of Miaphysism¹¹³. In fact, the same epilogue may help us to solve this issue.

According to Gewargis' epilogue, Orthodox Christology affirms two united, yet not confounded, natures in one Christ, Son of God¹¹⁴. This affirmation seems to be different from the catholicos' Christology, which follows, as scholars have shown¹¹⁵, and will be presented further below in this contribution, from Babai's Christology and from that of the assembly of 612, i.e. the two hypostases (two-qnom \bar{e}) Christology. Moreover, in the same epilogue, the catholicos says that this Orthodoxy of the Church of the East is common to the churches of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Rome, etc., (that is the Western Churches) that teach two natures (متحمه عند) with their properties eurion (ברליבות and their operation (ברליבות in one union (ברליבות מים) ראמיזא) of Christ (תנביטז)¹¹⁶. This is yet another proof that the letter was written against Martyrius' Christology. According to Paolo Bettiolo, based on A. de Halleux, the story of the delegation of the Church of the East sent by the Sassanid Queen Boran to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius in 630 was developed through posterior

[«]خوني مصحني», Synodicon orientale, cit., 244.

¹¹³ For this reason, in fact, it could not be acceptable that Mina participated in disputes with Muslims, and that those who blasphemy orthodoxy were Muslims, as P. Catalin-Stefan, in some way, maintains: Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 67-68. In addition to what the same letter leads us to believe, as we have said, Islamic doctrine was still not very well-known to Christians; hence, how could the lack of references to *Qūranic* verses or to direct Islamic doctrines in the letter be explained.

¹¹⁵ L. Abramowski was the first to notice such a thing: cf. L. Abramowski, *Babai der Grosse. Christologische Probleme und ihre Lösungen*, in «Orientalia Christiana Periodica», 41(1975), 289-343, here 299; furthermore, in our article regarding Gewargis Christology, we also demonstrated this element of his Christology, cf. Ebeid, *La cristologia del catholicos Mar Georgis I*, cit., 205-218; Finally, P. Catalin-Stefan also revealed the same fact: cf. Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 114-118.

יווי «הוב אוני אין וויברא המב אוני אין וויברא הבידים בידים אוני אין אייני איי

sources in such a way as to explain why Martyrius, who was Orthodox and member of this delegation, became a heretic¹¹⁷. According to the legend, both $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}'yhab$ III, who was at that time the bishop of Nineveh, with Martyrius who was the bishop of Beth Garmai, and another bishop, left the delegation, on their way back home, and visited Antioch, there they stayed in a Miaphysite monastery, where Martyrius alone met the Abbot and was influenced by him¹¹⁸. We know from the sources that the head of this delegation was the catholicos $\bar{I}\bar{s}\bar{o}'yhab$ II. He made a profession of faith in front of Emperor Heraclius, which was accepted as Orthodox, and thanks to the Orthodoxy of this profession the Emperor himself participated in the liturgy presided over by the catholicos and received communion from him¹¹⁹. In later sources, moreover, we find an Arabic text of this profession with a further development of the legend¹²⁰.

In our opinion, the epilogue to Gewargis' letter could be considered the nucleus of this legend, or at least reflects the first steps in its development. We have the same main elements: the faith of the Church of the East and that of the Western Churches are equal, while heretics are those who teach *Theopaschitism*, i.e. the Miaphysites and those who follow their doctrine, Martyrius included. Moreover, there is an important element in the description of the doctrines of the Western Churches that Gewargis gives that sustains our hypothesis that we have just presented. According to his description, Western Churches teach that the two natures in Christ have their properties (plural: and their operation (singular: and monothelitism and Monoenergism that Emperor Heraclius supported 122.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Bettiolo, *Un vescovo in una età di torbidi*, cit., 80-81.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Ibidem, 80-81.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Baum, Winkler, *The Church of the East*, cit., 40-41.

¹²⁰ It was the topic of the paper J. Pasa s.j. gave at the Aram Forty Sixth International Conference on the Melkite Christianity during the 1st-19th centuries, which was held at the Oriental Institute of Oxford University on 12th-14th July 2017.

¹²¹ It is also how J.-B. Chapot translated it into French, cf. *Synodicon orientale*, cit., 514. ¹²² This element was not noted by either L. van Rompay or P. Catalin-Stefan, who maintained that the catholicos wanted to say that the faith of his church is the faith of the Catholic Church unsullied by heretical doctrines. This also was the reason why they did not notice, either, the relationship between the epilogue and the legend we have talked about, cf. van Rompay, *Gewragis I*, cit., 175; Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 138.

After this introduction to the letter, we can start to analyse its Christology in order to demonstrate and prove our hypothesis. We believe that this letter is of significant importance because it is preserved in the Synodicon orientale¹²³, the canonical collection of the synods of the Church of the East; this means that it had, and continues to have, significant canonical and doctrinal weight. The letter, in fact, is one of the first doctrinal documents of the Church of the East after its 'nestorianisation' which occurred in 612 AD. If the acts of the assembly were not included in the Synodicon¹²⁴, this letter is to be found there and follows the Christology of the assembly of 612. It is divided into four parts, starting with an introduction and ending with an epilogue: the first part concerns Trinitarian doctrine. The second is on Christological doctrine, wherein the catholicos begins by explaining the salvific plan of God starting with creation and continuing through the incarnation and all the salvific events of Christ. He then explains the union of the two natures and the consequences of this union, which is clearly a Nestorian and Antiochian Christology, and, therefore, he defends the authority of both Nestorius and Theodore of Mopsuestia¹²⁵; the third part reports the New Testament testimonies, which prove the Nestorian Christology and show its Orthodoxy since it agrees with the apostolic doctrine. The fourth and last part of letter is a patristic florilegium which had also the aim of supporting the proof of the Orthodoxy of Nestorian Christology and its concordance with the patristic tradition.

We are interested in analysing the Christological part of the letter¹²⁶ in order to see how the catholicos understood and explained the doctrine of his church after 612 AD, and the way in which he developed this Christology and accepted the doctrine of divinization as a reaction to the Christology of Martyrius and his followers. We shall achieve this by quoting some parts of the letter, which we have translated from the original Syriac text into English, then by analysing and commenting on them.

¹²³ Cf. *Synodicon orientale*, cit., 215-245; see also regarding the manuscripts that include it and other details in Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 59-60.

¹²⁴ It is important to note that the acts of the assembly of 612 are placed in the appendix of the edition we have today; therefore, they were not part of the basic Manuscript of this edition.

¹²⁵ א הביבת שמימדאז דלם שימלשוז בוד דאשב מל אן דוד באבו באסז א אמשר בזאם בעל הביבת שמימל שימל ביד מש ביד מיש...», Synodicon orientale, cit., 235. ¹²⁶ For a complete analysis of the letter, see Catalin-Stefan, Gīwargīs I, cit., 67-138.

For the catholicos, the salvific action is of God the Word in agreement with the Father. In fact, he defends the doctrine of his Church soteriologically:

מבומה ל בהושא ונבים לא. המל מפת מהא ישו ישי אשא אלא אניים ומשליז אלססה, אב כיום בי חבאינה מל במי פחיםן. Ker Fr egy work on grange int of באבטשי איז בווד ליז עופטנישן מיע ישטבעז גבר בוחי טינהא ל בא לתיטואא הייד דיי בא שני ען בי איתהם ב עאיע שאיםשועיי בחבא ואכה מבשה בשכה וכלחלל שו שלא מים מס וכן וובת וומנו מואכותם אשמח, יטרושי איאי מסויבטון בטויסא ווריטון איאי מאביטי זאר כנט ההא יניס ארינים ארליו בן עולא ובעאי סבקו כח סעונת בכח בעול u.okh rciokh r.lm. rha esin overn ci ביד אימסשי בבינו ל אינו אש מבביני בינו אשי on more kelk kels pali kparino Klk [Kam] was where Kly wires on wins icok ush introposa. Terian it ofunity ובלי מו כוא ואלטא מטונה טאמיה ואישטטיי אמשר ביוא תיים האני ישעני שאניהולם שאנישותם אר השמשם הנים הצוום השמשם הנים עו כל זו האלמא כמונים מכשבעים. משאה מאלי وميه المناهدة والمناهدة وا

... for our salvation, the Saviour of all, at the end of time, appeared, according the predictions of prophesy. And who else could make our salvation perfected, if not God the Word, who is also our Creator, and through whom our salvation is perfected. Therefore, He, The Word God, with the will of His Father, for our salvation, we the humans, and for the renewal of all creatures, and to make us pass from the error to the knowledge of His divinity, willingly without being taken away from the bosom of His Father, He came into the womb of the holy virgin Mary. He who, according to the prediction of the prophesy, had to be from the line of David and Abraham, made, with a wondrous way over the power of nature, a body with a rational soul, and He inhabited (in-dwelled) in it and united it to himself through the unique union of His sonship. Although the body and the soul are consubstantial to us, due to their feeling and rationality, however, through the union with the Word God, who assumed them and united them to himself so He [can] manifest His mystery through them and show through them the greatness of the power of his divinity for our salvation and the renovation of everything, we confess and say that He is, in His divinity and his humanity, one Son of God. And although the natures are two, [that is] God according to nature and hypostasis, and human according to nature and hypostasis, however, we confess and glorify one Son of God, now and in His [second] advent, from the beginning and forever.

^m Synodicon orientale, cit., 234.

The saviour, according to Gewargis, is God the Word, who made (בב) for Himself, in the womb of the Virgin, a body with a rational soul (בבי בים בים בים בים אובר), and He assumed it (בבי בים). Here, we can see the Antiochene doctrines of

inhabitation and assumption¹²⁷. However, even if he describes the union as the inhabitation of the Word in the body, he also affirms that the Word joined to Himself (معده عجم) the body and the soul. For him, thus, 'inhabitation' is equal to 'assumption', and means 'union'. The most significant point is his way of linking the one union with the distinction of the two natures using the Nestorian Christology of his Church: even if the body and soul, which are consubstantial to us (حن حسر), are united with the Word, the result is two natures and two hypostases: God in His nature and hypostasis (בבינא) and the human in his nature and hypostasis (מבפיסא محمدی). Following the thought of Babai the Great, it is clear from the latter affirmation that, also for the catholicos, the two natures are concrete, and for this reason they have their hypostases. In addition, he points out that even if there are two natures-hypostases, there is one Son of God. In our opinion, he was able to develop this last doctrine due to the kind of union, which is a unique union of the sonship (האסיבה האסגע הבים), i.e. of the Son of God. We will return to this kind of union in another passage. What we should like to note now is the salvific view of the catholicos, which is Theodorian¹²⁸. God the Word joined to Himself a perfect man so that He could reveal His invisible nature through this man, in order for humans to be able to arrive at the knowledge of His divinity (שמפשלא האם אלו אולים באלא). In the following quotations, we shall understand better the meaning of this kind of knowledge and how the same catholicos clarifies it. In our passage here, he merely says that God, with His incarnation, had the intention of saving humanity and renewing all creatures.

In this passage, the catholicos' wish is to confute the doctrine of Martyrius, using the same terms, but expressing the opposite Christology. In paragraphs 21 and 22 of Martyrius' chapter on Orthodox faith, analyzed above, we noted that for him, too, the Word is the subject of incarnation; He united to Himself (هکره الله) the man, composed by body and soul, as he affirms in paragraph 23; and He, the Word, made this nature of our humanity with Himself one hypostasis and one person. The doctrine of assumption and inhabitation is present in Martyrius, as well as in the Theodorian doctrine on salvation: the invisible revealed Himself in the visible in order for the invisible to become perceptible (هم عنه الله عنه عنه الله عنه عنه الله عنه عنه الله عنه الله عنه عنه الله عنه الله عنه عنه الله عنه ا

¹²⁷ See also Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 119-121.

¹²⁸ Cf. McLeod, *The Image of God*, cit., 169-170.

I, then, tries to express the two-hypostases Christology through the linguistic codex used by Martyrius and his followers. We shall see, in fact, that this polemical method is the main mechanism of the catholicos throughout his letter in order to achieve these two goals: 1) to confute Martyrius' doctrine; and 2) to express the opposite Christology.

מששא גן מאז באונים: בושא גאולמשנו wa apand mes apanda apanda מבוצה א בהובא הביה אמ הלהכיא והיו. ובל יתאטיייי החדש אישאר עשוא ניתים עיים היש ملنة حر سدةته له مهم هنه و تمامحسه ברבעה מבו אובה לה ומשעה הכבעה אלמשעול cioux rapres oculs sign resis chic. מבו לב אפ האלמא אמלמת, משעוא מהוע ב ירשיבים אשלה זאשא בים אלה ואשים משעוא מן בל פוֹמס מלעמים ענן. במי, ואכא Kuaja. Kues Kan Kl Kl can Kolk . Kures Koo K KK : Oo Kolk Keiosi פת אלת שבינים עוני הצים פת מעששם אלש בשיבות ומסונית באינים בשל באף באף און אמיזיים שביד שייחים שן ששמיז בשוע esize ozero la zocin ilain

What do we say, then, [about] Christ? He is a human who was anointed by the divinity and the divinity which anointed the humanity according the prediction of the prophesy of the blessed David: «For that, o God, you God anointed with oil of gladness more than your friends». Not like those who were anointed by the blessed oil, because, according to the pious Scripture, the humanity of Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit and power [of the Highest]. And although we confess and believe that Christ is God, however, each time we nominate Christ God, we preserve, from every ruse, [the fact] that the Father is God and did not become Christ, or that the Holy Spirit is God but He did not become Christ? And although we see and know that Christ is human, however, we confess and believe that He is also God due to the Word God who assumed him [the human] and united him to Himself through an inseparable union, and made him His habitation forever.

In this passage, the catholicos explains why Christ, who is the subject of the Economy, cannot be identified with God the Word, even if it is certain that Christ is God (בארשה בינים ביני

ⁿ Synodicon orientale, cit., 234-235.

¹²⁹ L. Abramowski noted that in the Nestorian tradition it was not strange to find such an affirmation; cf. Abramowski, *Martyrius-Sahdona*, cit. 22-23.

He is, however, God and man together. Christ is God the Word (אלשאה) who assumed (באביה), and united this human being to Himself (סטבות בפה), and made it His inhabitation (אביה). The union, in this passage, is described as inseparable (באביה); that is, the inhabitation of the Word in the assumed man is forever.

We can again note how Gewargis and Martyrius, share the same doctrine, but each one leads it in a different way so it may support their own Christology. For Martyrius, in opposition to Gewargis' Christological current, Christ is identified with the Word since human and God are united in the one person and one hypostasis of the Word. In paragraph 23, he expressed his doctrine with the same expressions used by the catholicos here. Even if the two natures are distinct and perfect, Martyrius affirms, since man is the temple of God, he cannot be manifested separately. Because of the union, in fact, the inhabitant is one person with the assumed humanity.

There are some points that the above quotation from Gewargis does not deal with, and they must be explained in order for us to understand better the difference between him and Martyrius. What is the relationship between hypostasis and nature, and, on the other hand, what is their relationship with the one subject of the union, Christ? The following quotation provides the answer for us:

If the likeness of God was nature and hypostasis, it is clear that also the likeness of human is nature and hypostasis. Two hypostatized natures in one Christ, one Son of God.

In his interpretation of Phil. 2:5-7, Gewargis explains that since Christ is the likeness of God, this means that the divinity in Him is nature and hypostasis. We think that here the catholicos is referring to the Word as a concrete, perfect hypostasis of the divine nature. Furthermore, Christ is also the likeness of man; this also means that humanity in Him is nature and hypostasis. As a result, in Christ there are two hypostatized natures (حتك مده), or hypostatic natures. Indeed, this expression is a key to understanding the relationship between nature and hypostasis. The general nature becomes concrete being hypostatized, since nature without hypostasis does not exist. According to this metaphysical rule, if in Christ there are two natures, these two natures, in order to exist, need to have their own

[°] Synodicon orientale, cit., 240.

hypostases, which means they need to be hypostatized (or hypostatic)¹³⁰.

¹³⁰ See also the comment of P. Catalin-Stefan on the ביצה מנספיב; For him it means two personalized natures, i.e. the nature obtained its individuation through the hypostasis, cf, Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 120-121. Moreover, we have already explained that Gewargis also uses the concept of 'hypostatic name' for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; this means that hypostasis for him is the individuality and particularity of the general nature; hypostatic nature is a distinct individuality of the general nature, while the hypostatic name is the indication of this distinction, this means that in the Trinitarian field the hypostatic name for Gewargis is the *parṣopā* of Babai; see more in Ebeid, *La cristologia del catholicos Mar Georgis I*, cit., 217-218.

ملحلانسه ملحلانت ادم لے عنتہما ، حے Kasaia Kasa Kalana Kaluazi Lelik Lamb one the con the contract of the דלהארים איזיב עדי שן יבין באטומט בין בין בי דאשים האיבי ישה מים בי המש לשום Let ween sure Loca Lurish of Resole. סכן אום מסב האמנים הוששלא האמשבה מט Luindy iza ylon alks. aft icola Khowika Khowiki Khowas Klo مهدلجه ممهم المهالمه وحمده معدمه בואה מלש וום ל נוועם באואים. סוובמאם של ייש עועד בי והדשו לא עדשיים באינא שליי ح محصمه المسلم المسلم المرسمية المرسمية cary Amy Ecoti citas siis usi محمدع محصحت محلع بملصه عذبته خحذ בתי מס ניעי לאישטאת שב אלמטאת בעונטאא Experience can cany our cix 1xlmx kicin لم دلاتيمه حييةم وحدلته ولاندمه Klosz po kordo Ko zo Koro Kloro יאטיסיטוט איזאיס אמיזאט עביזט יאטיניאי י محاءه، لا يت جاء لالم ١٤٥ لايد تر ١٩٥٠ مواحك נינושא יד עשט טשט עריבטבין עופיו אלים מכלפם האמלוחה כיושא משע באלחאי $4 \sqrt{2}$

And we must really go away and deny all those who blaspheme on God [attributing to Him] difference, change, limitation, composition and passion; and those who do not confess the real nature of a human regarding the incarnation of our Lord who assumed it, as a holy principle of our nature, [and] united it to Himself through a union without change; and also those who say that the principle [of our nature] which was assumed from us for the union with the God Word, due to the lordship and infinity of the divinity, was swallowed and lost in the divinity. We must, [therefore], rightly go away from the evil of such blasphemies. And these blasphemous [ones] should be ashamed of themselves due to the proof of the disciples who know, confess and believe that Christ is real human according to His manifestation in the body, and teach that in Him inhabited (indwelled) the real God who united to His humanity His divinity through an inseparable union, and who say one Christ and one Son of God in His two natures, and who say and teach that the birth, growing, eating, drinking, being thirsty, being tired because of traveling, passion, wounds, hurts, crucifixion, being nailed in the hands and feet, opening the side by spear, and the death are [attributed] to Christ who is a human anointed through God, and not [attributed] to the divinity.

^p Synodicon orientale, cit., 237-238.

This quotation is clearly polemical against the Miaphysites¹³¹. For the catholicos, as for his Church, the problem of the Christology of the Miaphysites is its *Theopaschism*. Opinions such as human nature being swallowed (אמבובא) by the divine, indicate how the theologians of the Church of the East understood the Miaphysite Christology. For this reason, he describes the union not just as inseparable (מבובאלא גלא במעלב), but also as a union without change (בובטאלא גלא במעלב). Neither

¹³¹ Even if P. Catalin-Stefan analyzes the letter as an apology in the face of Islam, an opinion that we do not share, commenting on this passage he notes that the catholicos is aiming a polemic at Miaphysites; cf. Catalin-Stefan, *Gīwargīs I*, cit., 128.

nature is changed, transformed or lost, even if they are united. This condition is important in order to avoid *Theopaschism*. Passions and all other natural human properties, in fact, must be attributed to the human in Christ, and for this reason there is a need for the distinction.

Furthermore, in this quotation we notice the identification between the Word and the Christ. The catholicos clearly says that the humanity and the divinity belong to Christ who is the real God inhabiting the man, an expression also used by Martyrius. The divinity, Gewargis affirms, is of this real God (אוֹני אָבּאָר אָבּי אָבּאָר אָבּאָר אָבּאָר אָבּאָר אָבּאָר אָבּי אָבּ

We also truly confess and say that, according to the announcement of the angel who announced the Holy Virgin and said [to her]: «peace to you full of grace, blessed you are among the women, the Lord is with you, you will conceive in the womb and will give birth to a son, from the Holy Spirit and from the power of the highest that will come above you, and this [one] who will be born from you is holy, and will be called the Son of the Highest», his humanity that was formed in the womb of the holy virgin Mary, is united inseparably to the divinity in one person $(parsop\bar{a})$ of the sonship from the beginning of [its] creation and forever. The Word God, therefore, is with the human hypostasis infinitely and without separation during all the Economy: in birth, in growing, in passions and in death. The divinity was in the tomb with the body, and with the soul in paradise, not however in a limited way. We confess one Son of God in two natures.

^q Synodicon orientale, cit., 241-242.

¹³² On this topic see L. Scipioni, *Ricerche sulla cristologia del 'Libro di Eraclide' di Nestorio. La formula teologica e il suo contesto filosofico*, Friburgo 1957, 128-130,147-148.

In this passage, the catholicos expresses the Nestorian Christology using the metaphysical term parṣopā. The God Word (תבלאה), which is one hypostasis of the holy Trinity, united to Himself a human hypostasis (תבים האים) in one person of the sonship (מבים בים). In the other quotation above, we noticed that the union, according to the catholicos, is a union of the sonship (תבים האים), of the Son of God. Do we have an identification between the parṣopā and the union? In other words, does the parṣopā indicate and manifest the union and its one result?

We are of the opinion that here the catholicos is trying to say the same thing that Babai the Great taught, i.e., the parsopā is of the union (אוב מבא געגטאל)¹³³. Therefore, if we say that the union is of sonship, then the parsopa, which is of the union, is also of sonship. We think that in this way the catholicos created a synthesis between the doctrine of Babai and that of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the inhabitation as in the Son ($\dot{\omega}_{\zeta}$ $\dot{\epsilon}v$ $vi\tilde{\omega}$)¹³⁴. It is to be noted, moreover, that Martyrius also has the same opinion: in paragraph 23, he names the one person, which indicates the union as he affirms in paragraph 28, 'the hypostatic person of the sonship'. Again, it is clear how each one directs the shared doctrine towards his own Christology. If we take into consideration the concept of the 'hypostatic name' (אונים), which Gewargis applies in his Trinitarian doctrine¹³⁵, this difference will be clarified better. For Gewargis, 'Son' is the 'hypostatic name' of the Word, i.e. the property of sonship: the parsopā for Babai¹³⁶, and is distinct from the hypostasis itself; for Martyrius,

¹³³ Cf. Scipioni, *Ricerche sulla cristologia*, cit., 142-148.

¹³⁴ On this doctrine in Theodore of Mopsuestia, see McLeod, *The Roles of Christ's Humanity*, cit., 182-185.

¹³⁶ In the Trinitarian part of his letter, Gewargis does not apply the term *parṣopā*, but a hypostatic name, and we identified this term with the concept of person applied in Babai's Trinitarian doctrine and his general metaphysical system; see here footnote 142. Furthermore, we shall see that in the Christological field, where it is indirectly related to Trinitarian doctrine, i.e. regarding the hypostasis of the Word in Christ, Gewargis applies the term person to the Word, which after the union becomes the

instead, 'Son' is the hypostasis, the particular property of the Word, and therefore saying the hypostatic person of the sonship means the person of the hypostasis, i.e. its manifestation as Son¹³⁷.

In another passage, which we shall analyse later, the catholicos affirms that the parṣopā is of God the Word in which He united to Himself the perfect man (...) Taking into consideration everything that we have analyzed of the Christology of Mar Gewargis I, we can reach some considerations. First of all, it is clear that we do not have any identification between the terms parṣopā and qnomā. We can say that the parṣopā is of the hypostasis of the Word, that it is the property of the sonship. In other words, the parṣopā is the idioma, or the hypostatic name, of being the Word, the Son of God. This reveals two main things: 1) his understanding of both concepts is different from that of Maryrius¹³⁹; and, 2) there is an indirect appli-

person of Christ, and of the two hypostases in him, i.e. hypostatic name, the property of sonship, of both hypostases.

¹³⁷ According to this explanation, it is clear that for Martyrius hypostasis and person are not identified; for further details in this regard, read our forthcoming publication on Martyrius' Christology.

¹³⁸ Cf. the penultimate quotation from the letter of the catholicos that we present below.

¹³⁹ It is clear that what is hypostasis for Martyrius, is the person (hypostatic name) for Gewargis. For Martyrius, in fact, nature as abstract reality does not exist, so saying that in Christ there are two natures means that these natures are concrete; both have one hypostasis, i.e. one property of sonship, and both have one person, i.e. one manifestation of one concrete singularity (the one hypostasis as one particular property) and two natural distinct properties. For Gewargis, however, concrete nature means hypostasis, if the natures in Christ are real, it means that they have their hypostasis (the group of the natural properties of a singular concrete nature); the person, then, is the one particular property of sonship of both natures.

cation¹⁴⁰ of the doctrine of Babai the Great regarding the *parṣopā* in the Trinitarian field¹⁴¹, something that the synod of 612 did not do¹⁴².

Consequently, the union occurred in the parsopā of the Word and not in the Word as hypostasis. Moreover, if the person is the property of sonship, it could be said that the union is of the sonship. This means that the Son of God is one since the parsopā of the sonship is also one. The humanity and the divinity are of the Son of God, i.e. are of the person of the sonship, which belongs to the Word. One is the parsopā in which the two natures-hypostases are united. So it is clear that we also have a kind of distinction between the titles 'Son of God', preserved for the person, and 'Word' for the hypostasis. In such a development, once again the catholicos defends his Christology from that of Martyrius while using the same basis. He, therefore, emphasizes that the result of the union is one person and one Son of God, and affirms that this union was inseparable from its creation and will be so forever. He expresses such an affirmation in a special way, saying that the divinity was not separated from the humanity, even in the passion and death and that if death is the separation between the body and the soul, then the divinity was with the body in the tomb and with the soul in heaven. Although this is an inseparable union between the two natures, it does not mean, as the catholicos remarks, that the divinity is limited in the humanity. It is clear that the non-changing and non-transforming of the natures is an unforgettable condition, and that this doctrine is the basis for accepting the real *Communicatio Idiomatum*, as will see below.

Let us now see how Gewargis expresses the divinization of the human nature of Christ and its soteriological consequences, as a reaction to Martyrius' Christology and doctrine on deification.

¹⁴⁰ See here footnote 150.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Scipioni, *Ricerche sulla cristologia*, cit., 116-119; Abramowski, *Babai der Grosse. Christologische Probleme und ihre Lösungen*, cit., 297-314.

¹⁴² It is interesting to notice that Mar Gewargis did not apply this term in the exclusive Trinitarian part of his letter; cf. Ebeid, *La cristologia del catholicos Mar Georgis I*, cit., 216-218.

okkici runk v in, ino ci al foir ikeni when, to no braces icheirnha un. תאתאש תאמשו אותשמשם אותעם, מסאותו العقر الم لمن منه منه المحلم المعلمات المقرر المقرر שחבשה האלמשה האלבי ביש האלמינים מים המבשי במפי אחל השומים אחל במשי לי שביא ושמשא ומעום מן מפו נשמו השולו השאי האולו בל בחשמה של כן בתלוא ובהברא אכשל, والمعن عمع مدهون على على على ما مالمهم ما where you have an flat breshow. האמשותה אלבבא בארמיםאות. אמשואיז אמשבטוא האבש הלא · Just of py whome is whome? perion us pai extension perform reel אלומים לגו איז וכא ואלומים לאו محده مع علم علم المحدد المحدد

Your brotherhood should remember this, that our Lord himself appeared on the mount of Tabor, He manifested the form of His incarnation which is a naturally and hypostatically true likeness of a human. This hypostasis, which placed on the beams of the glory of His divinity, the eyes of His disciples could not observe in the splendour of her light. As the sun, [he] is hidden by the splendour of the beams which shine on his body more than the darkness of the [bodies] of the stars whenever the sun's beams are spread on them. And neither was His divinity changed or limited or disappeared in His humanity, or His humanity was swallowed in His divinity, but the assumption of our humanity remains in the union of his divinity so that His divinity would be revealed through our humanity, our salvation would be perfected through His divinity, and humility of our scorn rises to the high status of His divinity, according to His eternal grace.

From this quotation, it is easy to note that for the catholicos the human nature of Christ was divinized because of the union with the Word. In this passage he gives his interpretation of the event of the transformation on Mount Tabor. The humanity of Christ is certainly real, according to the nature (ביצאנא) and to the hypostasis (مدخصمه), meaning it is truly the likeness of man. This humanity is called مصحح, the technical term of the Nestorian Christology to express «the visible appearance under which something or someone is now recognized»¹⁴³; the way it was used by the catholicos, however, is again a polemic against Martyrius' use of the same technical term and other expressions: in paragraphs 21-22, Martyrius affirms that the Word joined the honor of His hypostasis and the glory of His divinity to the humanity, alluding to its divinization. Then, in paragraph 22, he says that he was seen in the form (משבפבא) of humanity. Furthermore, in paragraph 31, Martyrius, commenting on some evangelical verses, says that the Word pronounced some affirmations regarding

^r Synodicon orientale, cit., 236-237.

¹⁴³ Cf. McLeod, *The Roles of Christ's Humanity*, cit., 149-150.

His relationship with the Father, through the human form (אספים), which was truly man according to nature, since it was used personally, i.e. by the person of the Word and Son of God¹⁴⁴. For Martyrius, Christ's humanity was real man since it was used 'personally' by the Word, that is, by His person, and for this reason it was manifested concretely and really. For the catholicos, however, this humanity was real because it was human according to nature and had its own hypostasis. Both authors, in fact, aim to underline the same thing, that is to say, that this humanity was divinized, but each one explains it according to his system.

To return to Gewargis' citation, this human hypostasis on the mountain revealed that it was assuming the beams of the divinity. The fact that the humanity was shining like the sun means that it was divinized. To explain this, the catholicos makes the analogy of the sun: just as the disc of the sun is assuming the light of the beams, in the same way the humanity of Christ is taking on the light of His divinity. As the beams give the disc light and make it shine, in the same way, the divinity made humanity shine. The disciples could not, therefore, see the invisible divinity, but rather the glorified humanity of Christ. Furthermore, this divinization does not signify a confusion of natures, a cancellation of humanity or its transformation.

We believe, as we shall see in the following passages, that the catholicos affirms that this salvific action of God affects us, but under the same condition, which does not mean that we become gods by nature, but by grace. Moreover, the divinization of the human nature of Christ is different from ours, and this, we think, is clear in the analogy of the sun used by the catholicos: he says that the stars shine

whenever the sun's beams are spread over them, but not in the same way as the light of the disc of the same sun. In this analogy, we see that the catholicos means to say that the divinization of the humanity in Christ (the effect of the sun's beams on the disc of the sun), which is due to the union, is more perfect, while our divinization depends on our communion with the glory of God (the effect of the sun's beams whenever they are shed over the stars). This means that our divinization reflects the status of our acceptance of God in our life. In this sense, our divinization cannot be equal to that of the humanity of Christ, which is divinized once and forever, from the moment of its assumption and union with the Word.

Once again, the catholicos uses the same expression as Martyrius to affirm the same thing for his own Christology. If, for Maryrius, the union of the humanity in the one person and one hypostasis was the cause of its elevation, for the catholicos, based on the assembly's affirmation of 612 commented on above, the union of the human hypostasis in one person with the divine hypostasis of the Word was the reason for the elevation of humanity. In both authors the divinization of our humanity is explained as the 'elevation to the height and the status of divinity'. They both also underline the difference between the divinization of Christ's humanity and our own.

According to the catholicos, Christ will also reveal the deification of His humanity during the second advent:

	He is talking about his other advent that
משומשור הבים בי הר imo השמפש משומשור ז השפים	will be in glory and splendour when His humanity will shine through the glorious
(78)0(72) (7.11)	brightness of His divinity

s Synodicon orientale, cit., 235.

In fact, the deification of the humanity of Christ is special, which led the catholicos to describe it in the following way:

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And another prophet said: «will be manifested to you, you who know my name, the Sun of rightness, and the healing [will be] on his tongue». So it shows that the disc [of the sun] is his corporeality [of Christ]^u from our nature, and that He descended from the seed of David, and that [He] brightens the beams of His divinity through the lamps of his [body's] members, -that is, thought the healing of all our illness, the resurrection of dead people, the multitude of the helps that [He] gave by his tongue, for our lives, for our salvation, for the consultation of all humans and for the renewal of all creatures.

^t *Ibidem*, 233.
^u It is clear from the context of this quotation that the subject is Christ, cf. *Ibidem*, 232-233.

Interpreting the prophesy of Malachi 4:2, the catholicos repeats the analogy of sun, which is used in the same prophecy. We should like to comment on the way in which Gewargis describes how the divinity affected the humanity of Christ. He describes human nature as a lamp that was illuminated by the beams of the divinity, thanks to which it could shed light. In our opinion, with this image the catholicos tried to interpret the union according to the will, showing that the divinity was operating through humanity, but as a sole subject. This, moreover, is the reason why he saw an agreement with the Monothelitism and Monoenergism, commented on by us above. In this passage, the catholicos also underlines that the divinization of the human nature of Christ had consequences for our human nature. Everything was effected for salvation and renewal; in other words, this is the aim of the Economy.

For Martyrius, the reason for the divinization was the union in the person and the hypostasis of the Word and Son of God. This union was the condition for the *Communicatio Idiomatum* and his doctrine on deification. We can say that for him, and according to his comprehension of the metaphysical terms, the union was hypostatic and personal, but not natural. The official doctrine of his Church, after 612, accepts neither the hypostatical nor the natural union; the union, instead, is personal, or rather, lies in the *parṣopā* of the Son of God. According to the following quotation, it will be clear that for the catholicos this kind of union is also the reason for the divinization:

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Your brotherhood, in fact, should consolidate its hope in the truth of the divine doctrine, that is: the Word God assumed the holy principle of our nature, animate and rational body, and united it to His person (*parṣopā*) so that He becomes and is called human, and perfects our salvation and [perfects] the renewal of the upper and lower [creatures], and [that] we rise from the abasement of our wretchedness to the exaltation of the statuses of His divinity.

v Ibidem, 240.

This union occurred then in the person of the Word, and in this person was manifested, affirms Gewargis, for which reason it was divinized. Another consequence of this personal union is that the Word becomes and is called man. It is an acceptance of the real Communicatio Idiomatum. This is a development in the Nestorian Christology and is the result of the doctrine on deification. As we have said, Nestorian Christology, based on the Antiochene tradition, could not accept the doctrine on divinization. Gewargis, aiming to criticise Martyrius' doctrine, tries to arrive at the same teaching through the Nestorian system; however, talking about deification means accepting a true Communicatio Idiomatum whose centre is the Word. This is what made Gewargis, on the one hand, remain faithful to the Nestorian Christology of the two hypostases and, on the other, agree with the indirect identification between the Word and Christ, accepting the true Communicatio Idiomatum. Despite such an acceptance, and since the catholicos follows another Christological system, he could not use the verb 'to be divinized' (מאאה) as Martyrius does. However, the union for Gewargis, as for Martyrius, was not only the reason for the deification of the human nature of Christ, but it was also the reason for our salvation, for the deification of human beings and the renewal of all creatures:

سلع کی اعدی محمد و من من مراسم الم לשל כיוחא ואכםתי מובו אשל בשלו مجمة المحادث المالا محلة عندل مراد مراد المالية المالي מלאא כשו מסא. כמי, ונשב כשו ב. סא ح. دمله حصنه دست حب مسده لم مر בת. באלאמי המה במולא על ל כך מוע המשמה ליבטולא הימבט יוסמת הבת Khomla us ocerhule Les Manoh. מלף וימף אמוים להישאאשיו אלש באנידי רמישונים בשטבית וצא ממיברוטוף orly capprion can election con service במשבחולות מבחא. מבוא האו מלו מלו אשולעות כן בעות בתו, ואלאמי ומסא בשוא. נשב ון בשו א בביו עית שאטייון אש עומם നാ **് 1**ലാര ന്ധര**i** 1 ²

These things, in fact, He [the Word] made for our nature by His grace so that we rise to the name of the sonship of His Father. And even if we are corporeal and mortal, we will be sons of God and gods. And «the Word became flesh» assuming our flesh, and He inhabited us, through the flesh He assumed from us and united it to Himself and inhabited it. And it is said that He became flesh to give us in the font of baptism the pledge of His Spirit through whom we are called and we are said and we become sons of God. And as our nature does not become simple or change to the nature of the divinity, since we are called sons of God, - and even if we will be ready to gain the glory of incorruptibility and immutability in eternal life, our nature however, remains within its limit -, so the Word did not change from His nature when it is said that He became flesh. He, in fact, assumed flesh from us for His union [with it] so He [can] give us the pledge of His Spirit and unite us to Himself.

^z Ibidem, 240.

¹⁴⁵ Also in this we can find a similarity with Martyrius, who affirms that the Word gave humanity the honour of its hypostasis, which means, the honour of being the Son of God, and this is the meaning of divinization, to become sons of the Father through the Son and Word of God.

¹⁴⁶ See McLeod, *The Roles of Christ's Humanity*, cit., 58-101.

spirituality that could not talk about union with God. He links, therefore, the incarnation with the soteriological aspect of the sacrament of Baptism (הכבההגא). First of all, he identifies the 'becoming flesh' (حمية عصف) with the 'assumption of flesh' (عمد عصف) and with the 'inhabitation in flesh' (Secondly, Baptism is the result of the incarnation, of the becoming flesh of God, because, according to the catholicos, in Baptism we receive the Holy Spirit, which permits us to be sons of God. This is effected when we become united with the Word through His humanity (בשב גם בשלא. נשב גם בשלא. נשב גם בשלא כבן מבי גיים שומיז המסשה ל ביציז עור ישאמיזאל). In this short sentence, Mar Gewargis I offers a synopsis of the sacramental doctrine of Theodore and its relationship with his soteriological viewpoint. Lastly, being members of the body of Christ, which is the human nature of Christ, i.e. the Church, and through the union between man and the body of Christ, which is effected via the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, we participate in His humanity, and through His Spirit we become the adopted children of God.

Conclusion

In adopting a Nestorian Christology, the Church of the East tried to give to itself an identity that was different from the other Christian confessions, such as the Chalcedonians and Miaphysites¹⁴⁷. The assembly of 612, moreover, is to be considered the victory of the Christological current of the two-*qnomē* Christology, which also had a monastic and spiritual dimension. This Christological current coexisted peacefully, up to this date, within the Church of the East, with another current, the *parṣopā-qnomā*, which also had a spiritual and monastic dimension. It must be said that the Christological current does not necessary mean a school, but a tendency to interpret the traditional doctrine of the Church of the East. They tried to unite the Trinitarian doctrine 'one nature and three hypostases' and the Christological one 'two natures and one person', unifying the metaphysical terms. It is a passage from the Trinity to Christology, and vice versa. Both currents developed their Christologies based on their

¹⁴⁷ Cf. G. Reinink, *Tradition and the Formation of the 'Nestorian' Identity in Sixth-to Seventh-Century Iraq*, in «Church History and Religious Culture», 89 (2009), 217-250.

own traditions, having mainly an indirect access to sources from other Christian confessions.

The difference between the two currents was the Christological model they proposed in their monastic life. Christology is the basis of Christian anthropology and determines the soteriological view. The centre of the spirituality of the parsopa-quoma current is the participation of the human being in the divine glory according to grace: i.e. the deification of humanity and its mystical union with God. The Christological model was based on a true Communicatio Idiomatum between the two natures in Christ. Martyrius, who in his formation belonged to this current, tried to propose a Christology based on the oneness of the hypostasis and person of Christ, which is also the hypostasis and the person of the Word. Consequently, he rejected the Christology of the assembly of 612 AD and that of the two-*qnomē* current. In his Christology, he used the sources of the two-qnomē current against its Christology. We can maintain that his understanding of the terms hypostasis and person was traditional: 'person' means manifestation while 'hypostasis' means particular property. The outcome creates a Christology that applies the term 'hypostasis' according to its traditional Trinitarian use and the term 'person' in the Trinitarian doctrine according to its traditional Christological use. His doctrine was adopted by monastic communities that continued to defend it after his exile by $\bar{l}\bar{s}\bar{o}'\gamma hab$ III.

The catholicos Gewargis I, the successor and friend of *Īšōʻyhab* III, had to deal with this 'heresy'. Seen in this light, we can comprehend some Canons of the synod he convoked in 676 AD as well as his letter to Mina. If it seems that it was impossible to affirm a doctrine of divinization for the Nestorian Christology of 612, Gewargis, however, who was a supporter of such Christology, was able to develop it in such a way as to arrive to affirm the opposite. This means that the same Nestorian Christology leaves room for a development of thought such as the acceptance of a true *Communicatio Idiomatum* and the affirmation, under some conditions, that Christ is God.

Soteriology is related to Christology and, therefore, different ways of expressing Soteriology emerge from the different ways of expressing Christology although the content of the doctrine is of equal value. This could also be applied to both the Christologies we have analyzed, that of Martyrius and that of Gewargis. In their content they are similar: for both salvation is God the Word's action, and its finality is to help man to become god, participating in the sonship of the Lord.

Martyrius' way was mystical, Gewargis', instead, sacramental. This does not prevent them from coming together even if neither them was conscious of this.

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