Translator's Epilogue *A Brief Historical and Theological Introduction to the Church of Persia to the End of the Seventh Century* from *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian*,

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TRANSLATOR'S EPILOGUE

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THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTIANITY in Persia (that is, the region lying to the east and west of the Tigris River, now in Iraq) can probably be traced to apostolic times. In the Acts of the Apostles it is recorded that on the day of Pentecost there were found in Jerusalem devout men, 'Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia'.[1] It is not unlikely that some of these took news of the recent occurrences at Jerusalem to the Jewish communities in their own lands. Yet not until Mari, who seems to have been a Syrian (Aramaic) disciple of the Apostle Thomas, may one speak of the Gospel being preached in Persia. Recent scholarship indicates the border province of Adiabene as the most probable point of origin and first centre of Christianity among the Syriac-speaking inhabitants of the Mesopotamian region.[2] In Adiabene the Jewish community possessed a school before A.D. 70 and even succeeded in converting the ruling house by the end of the first century.[3] To this thriving community the apostolic preachers brought the word of salvation, and from there they propagated it both east and west, first among the Jews and then among the Syriac-speaking natives. As elsewhere, the teachings of Christianity were eventually rejected by the main body of the Jews of Persia, and converts to the new doctrine were forced to worship separately. Nevertheless, one may surmise from the Hebraic elements of fourth century Persian Christianity that the Church and the synagogue remained in close, though not friendly, contact much longer than in the West.[4] The importance of this should not be overlooked: strong Hebraic roots conjoined with isolation from her western brethren amid Zoroastrian oppression imprinted indelible characteristics on the nascent Christianity of Persia.

In 129 B.C. the Arsacids defeated the successors to Alexander the Great's Persian empire (the Seleucids) and established their capital in Ctesiphon, on the east bank of the Tigris, directly opposite the former Greek capital Seleucia. During the 350 years of Arsacid rule, Greek cultural influence in Persia declined rapidly, due partly to their natural preference for oriental ways, and partly to constant war with the western remnants of the Seleucids and, afterward, with Rome. Though they formally remained Zoroastrians, the Arsacids were rather tolerant of other religions. This policy of neglect, combined with their gradual adoption of the Aramaic culture of the lower Mesopotamian region, where they made their capital, and their singularly decentralized government, greatly contributed to the strengthening of the Jewish colonies and the spread of Christianity. The oldest sources indicate that in the beginning of the second century Mari established a church in Seleucia-Ctesiphon. If this be the case, we may be certain that throughout the second century small Christian communities sprang up in the urban centres of the middle and lower Mesopotamian region. There are, however, very few reliable sources for the history of Christianity's growth in this early period. What may be gleaned has been ably presented by J. M. Fiey, and to his work we refer the reader.[5]

The ascendency of the Sasanid dynasty in A.D. 226 had great, though not immediate, effect on the Christians of Persia. Ardashir I, whose forefather's name was Sasan, came from the harsh terrain of south-western Persia. A dynamic and far-sighted ruler, he aspired to re-establish the ancient kingdom of the Achaemenid dynasty destroyed by Alexander the Great. To accomplish this he created a highly centralized and efficient governmental administration, returning to the principles of Darius I. Although the population of the Mesopotamian region was essentially Aramaean, not Persian, and although the Arsacid capital of Seleucia-Ctesiphon was dangerously close to the Roman frontier and had been destroyed by invading Roman legions in 165, Ardashir was obliged by practical necessity to make his residence, and the seat of his government, in the old capital of the Seleucids.[6] As in other countries, the church of the capital slowly gained pre-eminence among the Christian communities, and by the fourth century one can speak of the bishop of the royal city as the chief bishop of the Persian Christians.[7]

To achieve his goal of re-establishing Persian political and cultural domination, Ardashir re-instituted Zoroastrianism (Mazdaism) as the mandatory state religion and bestowed many privileges upon the Magi, that is, the clergy, who were all descended from a certain tribe or class of the Medes. During the latter part of the reign of Shapur I (241-272), the Magi ascended to the zenith of their power through the efforts of a certain chief priest named Kartir. The higher clergy gained a position in the state bureaucracy on a par with that of the provincial governors, the lesser clergy were entrusted with overseeing the day to day life of the king's subjects, but the supreme pontiff, the *mobadhan mobadh* (Kartir

himself), was the mentor and spiritual guide of the King of kings. The Zoroastrian clergy were jealous guardians of their prerogatives, and throughout the entire existence of the Sasanid empire they strove to preserve Mazdaism's exclusive position within the state. Having gained the authority he sought, Kartir was not slow to exercise it. Viewing every other religion as a weed to be uprooted from the empire, he initiated what was probably the first persecution against the Christians.[8] It is certain that Kartir acted with the king's full assent, for we see that even the Christian wife of Varahran II (276-293), Quandira (Candida) 'the Roman', was one of those to suffer martyrdom.[9] The growth of Christianity could not escape the notice of the well-organized Mazdaian clergy; once they became alarmed over the new religion, they had power to prevail upon the king to suppress it.

As noted above, the first Christians in Persia were undoubtedly converts from the Jewish communities. It is unlikely, however, that such conversions were numerous. The growth of Christianity, then, must be attributed to conversions among the Aramaean inhabitants of Mesopotamia and among the Persian overlords of the region. Besides these native additions to the Church, her numbers were greatly increased by the Sasanid policy of deporting the entire populations of conquered cities, and even whole regions, into Persia, there obliging them to build new cities for themselves. The frequent wars with the Roman empire brought into Persia hundreds of thousands of captives from the plains of western Syria, as far as Antioch (captured, together with its bishop, Demetrianos, in 256). A great many of these captives were certainly Christians. Even though Christianity was undergoing violent persecution in the Roman empire, it was at all times regarded by the Persian authorities as an alien import. Its growth, therefore, undermined the strength of the Persian state. It is indicative that Judaism, never being associated with the Roman empire, rarely suffered persecution at the hands of the Sasanids. When, in the fourth century, Saint Constantine the Great espoused Christianity, it could not be long before persecution was again unleashed against the helpless Christians of Persia.

With the exception of Roman prisoners of war, the Persian Church had very little contact with her Christian brethren to the west. Recent studies have demonstrated that the bishops of Persia had no dependency upon any western diocese, specifically that of Antioch.[10] The Persian Church grew up from its own roots, as did the other early local Churches in the Roman empire. Yet unlike the local Churches of the Mediterranean area, which enjoyed considerable communication with each other even during persecutions, the Church of Persia remained virtually isolated until the beginning of the fifth century. No parallel to her position can be found among the western Churches, with the possible exception of the early Irish Church; the latter, however, never endured persecution and constant governmental oppression. The Church of Persia, encompassed on every side by hostile Mazdaism, cut off from any source of external support, maintained her autonomous

existence under most difficult circumstances. This independent struggle for survival rooted a deep sense of autonomy in her consciousness which was never to be relinquished.

Our single source for learning about the beliefs and religious observances of the Persian Christians in these formative years is the writings of Saint Afrahat 'the Persian sage'. These consist of twenty-three 'Demonstrations', as they are usually called, written between 337 and 345.[11] Most striking is the simple, biblical expression of his faith, the complete absence of any influence of Greek thought-forms, and his continual concern with the teachings and customs of the Jews. In the first pages of the book he gives his definition of the Christian Faith:

> Now this is faith: when a man believes in God, the Lord of all, Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; and He made Adam in His image; and He gave the Law to Moses; and He sent of His Spirit into the prophets; and then He sent His Christ to the world. Furthermore, [faith is] that a man should believe in the resurrection of the dead, and also that he believe in the mystery of baptism. This is the faith of the Church of God.[12]

For a fuller statement of his christology we must look to the Seventeenth Demonstration 'On Christ, that He is the Son of God'. This was composed as a refutation of the Jews who blasphemed against the Christians ('the people from the nations') by saying: 'You worship and serve a man who was born, a human being who was crucified, and you call a human being God. Although God has no Son, you say that this crucified Jesus is the Son of God.'[13] Saint Afrahat begins his answer to them as follows:

> Although we grant to them that He was a human being, and we also honour Him and call Him God and Lord, yet we do not do so in some novel manner, and we have not given Him a novel name which they themselves have not employed. Howbeit, we are certain that Jesus our Lord is God, the Son of God, the King, and the Son of the King, Light from Light, the Creator, the Counsellor, the Guide, the Way, the Saviour, the Shepherd, the Gatherer, the Door, the Pearl, the Lamp, and by many [other] names is He called.[14]

Saint Afrahat's simple confession of Christ's divinity as well as His humanity indicates that he had no conception of the Arian controversy raging in the West, nor even of the Nicene Creed.[15] Only in passing does he mention that the Gnostics Marcion and Valentinian, and the 'sons of darkness, [i.e.] the teaching of the impious Mani', fast without recompense.[16] Except for Jewish doctrines, which he refutes repeatedly, no other teaching threatens the people of the Christians.[17]

The 'Demonstrations' offer a vague but precious picture of the religious life of mid-fourth century Persian Christians: the elementary forms of monasticism, the liturgical observances, the conception of prayer, fasting, humility, and the other Christian virtues. For example, Demonstration 12 'On Pascha' describes the Christian celebration of the

feast, distinguishing it from the Judaic one. The Jews celebrate the fourteenth of Nisan and they eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first. But 'our [Pascha] is the day of the great Passion, which day was Friday and the fifteenth [of Nisan], the evening and the morning thereof.'[18] The Christians eat unleavened bread,[19] 'keeping the feast with pure fasting, constant prayer, earnest glorification, and the melody of psalmody, as is fitting, giving the seal [of chrismation] and baptism in its rite and the consecrated blessings at their times'[20] from the fourteenth of Nisan (whereon the Lord initiated the mysteries of baptism—in the washing of the apostles' feet—and Holy Communion) until the twenty-first, whereas 'our great day is the day of Friday',[21] whenever it should fall within the period. Such paschal observances, so outwardly similar to the Hebraic, had no parallel in the West.

Three years after the death of Saint Constantine (+ 337), Shapur II (309-379) instituted against the Christians a savage persecution which, in varying degrees of intensity, continued throughout the rest of his reign and the reigns of his successors, Ardashir II (379-383) and Varahran IV (388-399). Although the Mazdaian clergy were active in both inspiring the persecution[22] and overseeing it, it was clearly Shapur's own desire to put an end to Christianity's rapid growth. He is said to have written of the Christians to the rulers of the Aramaean lands that 'they dwell in our land but are of the same mind as Caesar, our enemy'.[23] According to Eusebios' report, Saint Constantine had written earlier to Shapur:

> You might suppose how gladly I heard that the best regions of Persia are abundantly adorned—as I myself should wish—with this category of men, I mean the Christians, on whose behalf alone I am now writing. May you, therefore, enjoy what is most excellent, and they likewise, that you and they may together share therein; for thus the Master, Father, and God of all will be merciful and favourable to you. And now, because your [mercy] is so great, I commit these persons to you; and because you are illustrious in piety, I entrust them to you. Cherish them as befits your kindness toward men, for by such faith you will procure for yourself and us unbounded [Divine] favour.[24]

Shapur, whose predecessor and namesake had considered himself 'the Mazda-worshipping divinity, Shapur, king of the kings of the Aryans (Iranians) and non-Aryans (non-Iranians), who is of the stock of the gods, son of the Mazda-worshipping divinity Artakhshatr, king of kings of the Aryans, who is of the stock of the gods, grandson of the divinity Papak, king',[25] and who considered the Christians both as unbelievers and traitors (potentially, if not actually), must have received this missive with the utmost displeasure. Not only were his Christian subjects naturally drawn toward the Christian monarch, but the same, Shapur's great rival, regarded himself as their protector. Throughout the history of the Sasanid empire the Christians were viewed with these very suspicions.[26] The persecutions

during Shapur's reign, as well as those which sporadically followed until the seventh century, have been well described by Labourt,[27] Vööbus,[28] and Fiey.[29] Labourt's concluding words may here suffice:

> One may thus conclude that the persecution of Shapur II was inferior neither in duration nor in intensity to those which the Churches of the Roman world underwent. It is the great honour of the Persian Christians that they sustained such a terrible tempest without foundering.[30]

Although persecutions, or the threat thereof, and governmental oppression were never distant from the Church of Persia, the reign of Yazdegard I (399-421), until the year 420, gave the Christians respite from their afflictions. This, combined with the visitations of the Byzantine envoy Saint Maruta, bishop of Mayperqat, infused new life into the Persian Church.

When Yazdegard I acceded to the Persian throne, Arcadios, the emperor of Byzantium (395-408), sent Saint Maruta to assure the new monarch of the peaceful intentions of New Rome. From his visits to Constantinople on church affairs, Saint Maruta was known in the capital for his many abilities and knowledge of both Greek and Semitic cultures. Arcadios' choice proved wise, for Saint Maruta made an excellent impression on Yazdegard and is said to have healed the king from some chronic malady with the aid of his knowledge of medicine. In 408 he again returned to Persia because of the accession of the Byzantine emperor Theodosios the Younger (408-450). Being, thus, a *persona grata* in the Persian realm, he was able to return to Persia in 410 on a purely ecclesiastical mission. According to the account in the *Synodicon Orientale*[31] prefacing the decisions of the Council of 410, several bishops from western Syria, Porphyrios of Antioch, Acacios of Aleppo, Paqida of Edessa, Eusebios of Tella, and Acacios of Amid, entrusted Saint Maruta with a letter addressed to Yazdegard, beseeching the latter to permit the convocation of a council.[32] The purpose of this council was 'that the laws, the divine ordinances, and the orthodox and true canons which have been laid down by the venerable fathers and bishops in the West, be likewise instituted in the East for the confirmation of rectitude, of truth, and of all God's people'.[33] Before this time, perhaps under Saint Maruta's influence, Yazdegard

> gave deliverance and repose to the assemblies of Christ; conferred upon God's servants the right to magnify Christ openly with their bodies, in their deaths[34] and in their lives; dispelled the tempest of persecution from all God's churches; and dispersed the gloom of affliction from all Christ's flocks. For he gave command throughout all his kingdom that the temples which had been reduced to ruins by his forebears should in his days be magnificently rebuilt,[35] that the altars which were overthrown should be carefully ministered to; that those who for the sake of God had been tried and had undergone imprisonment and tortures be set at liberty; and that the clergy, the leaders, and all those who have consecrated themselves, might walk about boldly, without fear and trembling.[36]

Being assured, then, of Yazdegard's good will, the letter of the western bishops was presented in translation for his approval. Yazdegard, in turn, both approved of the contents of the letter and employed his imperial authority to summon all the Persian bishops to the capital for the Council. The proceedings of the Council were as follows: the letter of the 'western fathers' was read, in which they exhorted their eastern brethren concerning the placement of bishops, the celebration of Christ's Nativity and Theophany, the forty-day fast before Pascha, and Pascha itself, and urged them to adopt the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, as well as the canons of later councils. Saint Maruta was then invited to read his Syriac translation of the Nicene Creed[37] and the canons, whereupon all the bishops expressed their approval. Hereafter a reaffirmation was given by Yazdegard's chief officials, the canons of the Council were composed, and all present signed.[38] It might be asked why the bishops so readily assented to adopt the practices of the western Churches, thus abandoning customs which, in some cases, were of great antiquity. The answer may lie in the fact that sixty years of fierce persecution were still fresh in their memory. The sense of isolation from their western brethren in the Faith must have been keenly felt in that dark period and, realizing that their new freedom could be of short duration, they ardently wished to forge closer ties with western Christians while the opportunity availed itself. Another reason is that the Church of Persia suffered from many internal disorders and it was hoped that the canonical rulings of the western Churches would bring internal stability and peace.

The Persian Katholikos, Mar Isaac, died several months after the Council, and by the year 420, many of the bishops who had sat at the Council of 410 had reposed. Isaac was succeeded by Mar Ahai, and Mar Ahai by Mar Yahbalaha. Mar Yahbalaha was sent to Constantinople as an envoy to Emperor Theodosios II in 417 or 418 and was apparently absent from Persia for over a year. In his absence so many ecclesiastical disorders arose that, on his return, eleven bishops petitioned him to hold a council where the canons of all the local councils held in the West should be adopted. They wrote:

> All the Churches of Christ our Lord in the lands of the Romans, together with their leaders, have for a long time accepted with joy the things laid down in the blessed Council by the Fathers, the bishops, in accord with the tradition of the holy and Spirit-bearing apostles, and they have observed all these helpful rulings with great assiduity. But because the Churches of our land were deprived of these [laws], there has been much confusion in them, and disputes and divisions have sprung up in various places because the heads [of the Churches] are without ordinances.[39]

This document states specifically that 'the laws, in their entirety, which were sanctioned by the holy council [of 410] and true tradition have not been obeyed'.[40] This, as can be seen from the decisions of many other councils of the Persian Church, was a continuous

problem, the causes of which seem to be chiefly two: (1) Synodal and patriarchal authority was not recognized on a local level. The churches in the various regions of Persia had grown up more or less independently of one another and enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy. Although the authority of the Katholikos is emphasized and re-emphasized in the councils, the reason for this is clearly that it was locally disregarded. (2) The Persian Church was rarely able to seek the help of the state's secular power to implement its decisions. These two factors[41] made any centralized control of the inner life of the Church extremely difficult. The decisions promulgated in the church councils must often be read negatively by a historian. Canons were instituted as a measure to control an abuse. The abuse is what really existed, but how successful the canon was in subduing the abuse is unstated. Likewise, a dogmatical statement indicates that belief in the contrary was held by persons sufficiently numerous as to necessitate synodal action.

During the course of the year 420 Yazdegard, under pressure from the Mazdaian clergy, and due to several indiscreet actions of certain Christians, began to oppress the Church. Shortly thereafter, in the autumn of 420, he died and was succeeded by Varahran V (420-438). Varahran, following the counsels of the *mobadhan mobadh* Mihrshabur, commenced his reign with a fierce persecution of all the Christians of his realm. Clergy and laymen (especially those who held some governmental post or were of Persian descent) were mercilessly tortured[42] and the churches were razed. The famous Persian martyr James[43] also suffered at this time. So virulent were the persecutions that great numbers of Christians attempted to flee into Roman lands, but in so doing many were slaughtered by the Arab tribes living at the borders and subject to Varahran. The king even demanded of the Byzantines the return of the refugees, whereupon Theodosios II declared war (in 421). The outcome of the war was not unfavourable to the Romans; a treaty was signed that guaranteed freedom of conscience to Christians in the Persian empire, and to Zoroastrians in the Byzantine empire.[44] Although the treaty was to endure for one hundred years, the oppression of the Christians never entirely ceased, and overt persecution broke out sporadically under Varahran's successors.

During the difficult periods of persecution, young men desirous of thorough training in the study of sacred Scripture were obliged to find asylum in the Roman empire where, in the border city of Edessa, there was a flourishing Syriac school: the School of Edessa. The influence of this school upon the Persian Church is of singular importance; it is fortunate, therefore, that careful studies are available in regard to its origins, constitution, and especially its subsequent history when it was transferred to Nisibis.[45] The most common name of the School of Edessa was the 'School of the Persians', and it is almost certain that this appellation indicates the origins of the School. As mentioned above, the Jewish colony of Adiabene had a school by A.D. 70. It seems very likely that the East Syrian

predilection for schooling based on scriptural interpretation has its roots in Christian imitation of the illustrious Jewish institutions, the most famous of which were in Babylon. Although historical evidence is meagre,[46] one can be almost certain that a Christian school existed in Nisibis before its surrender to Persia. In 363 Saint Ephraim, along with many others, left Nisibis for Edessa. Presumably he, and/or his colleagues, founded in their new home an institution similar to that which they had left in Nisibis. Thus the school was called the 'School of the Persians', that is, the Persian refugees. This school was attended by Syriac-speaking young men from Edessa and its environs,[47] and also by East Syrians from Persia, those, that is, who succeeded in crossing the border. During times of persecution in Persia, the attraction of study in Edessa must have been very great.[48]

The primary goal of the School was the careful study of Holy Scripture, although secular subjects were also taught. As a guide in interpretation the exegetical writings of Saint Ephraim were used, both because of the saint's association with the School and because there may have been nothing else available in Syriac. Saint Ephraim's commentaries, however, covered only a few books of the Old Testament, the Diatessaron version of the Gospels, and the Old Syriac version of the Acts and the Epistles of Saint Paul. Therefore, about 420, the chief exegete, the *mepashqana*, and head of the School, Qiyore, is said to have initiated the laborious task of translating Theodore of Mopsuestia's scriptural commentaries into Syriac.[49] Here one is compelled to ask: why Theodore's commentaries? The reasons for this important choice are several. Firstly, his fame was proclaimed throughout all the regions dependent upon the Patriarchate of Antioch. By most he was regarded as the greatest *living*[50] commentator and combatant of heresy.[51] A second factor recommending Theodore's works to the *mepashqana* of the School was the thoroughness and systematical nature of Theodore's commentaries. He wrote on all, or nearly all, the books of the Old and New Testaments, carefully examining the meaning of each verse from a straightforward, historical, unallegorical approach. Furthermore, his thinking was very systematic: with the aid of definite, clearly stated principles he endeavoured to clarify the many obscurities of Scripture; these tenets likewise enabled him to refute the many heretical movements of his day. All this gave his commentaries evident pedagogical attraction. But perhaps an equally important factor in Qiyore's choice was the christological confrontation in western Syria, in which one could not remain a neutral observer.

The decision to translate Theodore of Mopsuestia's scriptural commentaries into Syriac, and to make them the standard of all scriptural exegesis taught at the School, brought its Syriac-speaking students into the midst of the deep-rooted and intricate theological controversies plaguing the rest of fourth century Christendom,[52] and especially the diocese of Antioch.[53] Saint Eustathios of Antioch (+ about 337), one of the presiding bishops of the First Ecumenical Council[54] and a staunch defender of the *homoousios*,

sharply distinguished between Christ's human nature and His divine nature in order to refute Arian argumentation. The Arians, indeed, strove to reduce the Son of God to the rank of a creature by pointing to scriptural passages where Christ is shown to be troubled, weary, suffering, and asking for the Father's aid.[55] By discerning two real natures in Christ, Saint Eustathios was able to dogmatize that the "human things" (*τὰ ἀνθρώπινα*) were to be ascribed to the complete human nature assumed in the incarnation, not to the divine nature of the eternal Word of God;[56] therefore Christ's sufferings were not a disproof of His divinity. After Saint Eustathios, this practice of distinguishing the natures became one of the chief characteristics of the theology of the orthodox bishops and teachers of Antioch and its environs.[57] Diodore of Tarsus (+ before 394),[58] a leader of the Meletian Orthodox party, having a background different from that of the Eustathians,[59] perpetuated Saint Eustathios' separation of the natures, tempering it, however, with the important distinction between what is by nature and what by grace.[60] The separation employed by Saint Eustathios virtually excluded the ancient principle known as the "exchange of properties" (*ἀντίδοσις τῶν ἰδιωμάτων*)[61] misused by the Arians. By distinguishing between what is by nature and what by grace (or, by virtue of the divine œconomy of the incarnation), Diodore sought to justify a limited use of the "exchange of properties", so important for Christian worship, without falling prey to the snares of the Arians.[62] Powerful opposition to the "Antiochene" approach was raised by another Greek ecclesiastic and Homoousian of the Syrian diocese, Apollinarios of Laodicea (+ about 390). To his mind the Arians were not to be refuted by distinguishing the natures, but by blending them in such a manner that the incarnation produced 'one, unique, blended, divine-incarnate nature',[63] 'one, blended, fleshly-divine nature'.[64] If the flesh assumed in the incarnation thus became one nature with the divine Word, the Word could be averred to be *homoousios* with the Father even though incarnate. But if the flesh remained a real, different nature from the Word's after the incarnation, as the Eustathians, the Meletians and the rest of Christendom taught, the Holy Trinity is made a quaternity.[65] Philosophically defining 'nature' as a self-moving, self-activating, living being (*αὐτοκίνητον αὐτοενέργητον ζῶον*),[66] Apollinarios deprived the assumed flesh of an intellect (*νοῦς*), and thus of self-activation and a hypostasis,[67] in order to forge one 'fleshly-divine nature' activated only by divinity, and having as its life-source not a human soul but divine sanctification.[68] But anyone who, on the contrary, asserted two natures must confess two independent centres of self-activation, two persons, therefore two Christs, one of which must be a mere (*ψιλός*) man, as Paul of Samosata and the adoptionists taught.[69]

Rising to the defence of his forebears, Theodore of Mopsuestia both sharply distinguished the two natures and sought to find an expression for their unity, since the Church had still made no dogmatical formulation in these matters. Apollinarios' blended, single

nature causes the divine nature to become composite,[70] therefore subject to change. Apollinarios has thus introduced Theopaschism; the divinity of the Word no longer transcends the changing, corruptible state of this mortal world. There must be, then, two complete natures united in a way which will not cause composition in the Godhead, nor impair their completeness. Theodore's definition of the union is 'indwelling', a concept used by many of the Fathers of the fourth century.[71] To distinguish this from how God indwells in creation and in the saints, he qualifies it as 'indwelling as in a son',[72] by which he means 'as in someone (something) who (which) is of the same nature and not external'.[73] The result of such an indwelling is that the human nature (as though it were 'the same as, and not external to', the divinity) receives by virtue of the union what belongs naturally to the divine nature,[74] and the divine nature without undergoing change takes on what naturally belongs to the human nature.[75] The human nature, from its conception in the womb of the Virgin, never had existence apart from the Word,[76] and 'has no activity apart or separated from God the Word, but has God the Word working all things in it because of His union with it'.[77] Due to this interchange in the 'ineffable and inseparable union'[78] one person (prosòpon) is formed.[79] To Diodore's teaching Theodore adds the concept of 'one person' as the expression, but not the definition, of the ineffable union of the two natures. The 'one person' is not meant to be the hypostasis of the Word (as Chalcedon was soon to explain), but the expression of how completely the Word united the human nature to Himself without undergoing composition.[80]

Although Theodore was not an innovator[81] and had no intention of combatting the teachings of the Church, his christological writings have been an object of heated dispute from shortly after his death until the present day. The cause of this lies chiefly in his predilection for mentally abstracting the natures from their union and speaking of them as though they were two separate beings. His own listeners, so familiar with this "Antiochene" approach, were not scandalized by this,[82] for they knew that his intent was to thwart heresy, not to introduce it.[83] For outsiders, however, it was a different matter, especially after the outbreak of the controversy over Nestorios' teachings. A mere ten years after Theodore's death, we find Saint Cyril of Alexandria writing against his "Nestorian" errors[84] and, on the other hand, the seventy-some-odd bishops of the diocese of Antioch ready to go into schism in defence of his memory.[85] Theodore's christology is imprecise and vague where precision and clarity are most needed, that is, in defining the union of the two natures in Christ. The unfortunate result of this was to make it subject to both orthodox and heretical interpretation. Therefore, while some, not necessarily adherents of Nestorios' errors, continued to regard Theodore as a luminary of Orthodoxy, the majority of the Church gradually identified Theodore's and Nestorios' christologies. As a result, the Fathers of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553), after hearing a selection

of Theodore's controversial statements, condemned both Theodore and his writings.[86]

The well-known controversy ignited by Nestorios in his brief tenure as Patriarch of Constantinople was *not* an unavoidable clash between "Antiochene" and "Alexandrine" theologies, as it is so often maintained. Had Nestorios been a John of Antioch (not to say a Saint John Chrysostom), the controversy would never have arisen. The two were equally imbued with the teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia, but John was not an innovator, he was not stubborn, he was not proud, and he was sufficiently profound to recognize in a difference of theological expression the same orthodox Faith as his own. While John united himself with Saint Cyril, though he had many ponderous reasons to hesitate, Nestorios, from the moment he received Saint Cyril's Second Letter until his last day, unwaveringly considered Saint Cyril a heretic. Nestorios was unwilling to understand, and intolerant of, any christological expression other than his own. These personal defects, conjoined with the innovations he made in Theodore's christology, brought about his downfall and were the primary cause of his becoming a *scandalum œcumenicum*.

It would not be just, therefore, to view the translation and establishment of Theodore's commentaries in the School of Edessa (completed, indeed, before the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy) as a proof of the School's adherence to the errors of Nestorios. It is, however, a sure sign of the School's adoption of the principles of exegesis and the dyophysite christology expounded by the Doctors of the Church of Antioch. At this point it is necessary to ask: exactly how did the Syriac-speaking students of the School understand Theodore? Theodore's works were read in Syriac translation, and these translations were far from perfect. A passage from an important christological text preserved in both Greek and Syriac serves to demonstrate this:

Greek Text[87]	Syriac Text[88]
But when we look steadfastly upon the union, we then proclaim that there is one *prosōpon* of both natures, since the humanity receives honour from creation through the divinity, and the divinity accomplishes in the humanity all that is needful.	But when we wish to consider the unity, we proclaim that there is one *parsopa* and one *qnoma* (hypostasis) of the two natures, since we know that, because of the union with the divinity, the humanity receives honour from creation and the divinity accomplishes in the humanity all things.

Besides the evident divergence of the Syriac from the Greek,[89] a further difficulty for Theodore's Syriac-speaking readers was created by the imperfect correspondence of Syriac and Greek terminology. It is hardly possible that *kᵉyana* could convey to Syriac readers all that φύσις—with its many theological and philosophical implications—conveyed to the

Greek author.[90] It is likewise with *qnoma*—*ὑπόστασις*[91] and *parsopa*—*πρόσωπον*,[92] as well as other important terms, such as *naqiputha*—*συνάφεια*.[93] Even to Greek-speaking Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries the precise meaning of these terms, as employed to express the Christian verities, was far from established. The East Syrian students had no theological writings of their own beyond Saint Ephraim's compositions and had very little understanding of the subtle heresies Theodore endeavoured to refute. Such lack of knowledge combined with hasty translations must have given rise to a simplified and rather unique understanding of Theodore's theology. As time passed, different schools of interpretation of Theodore's works arose within the Church of Persia herself.

Until shortly before its closing in 487, the School of Edessa was the chief centre of learning for Persian Christians, who afterward returned to Persia and established small schools in their native regions or, in some cases, became bishops. With the aid of Barsauma, the metropolitan of Nisibis and former pupil at the School,[94] the School of Edessa was refounded at Nisibis by the last *mepashqana* Narsai (+ about 503), and as the School of Nisibis it continued its intellectual pre-eminence among the East Syrians until the end of the sixth century. Narsai's eighty-five metrical homilies[95] are the only remaining witnesses to the christological teaching brought to Persia by the migrating School of Edessa. In them one can see clearly the scars of bitter strife with the monophysite faction in Edessa which had the Syriac translations of Theodore's works burned,[96] and later, the School closed entirely. The chief concern of the christological passages of Narsai's writings[97] is to delineate sharply and distinctly the two complete natures in Christ, not to explain their union. Because of this polemical preoccupation, Narsai's christology seems unbalanced. Nevertheless one need not conclude from the sheer quantity of his dyophysite statements that he had no clear concept of unity in Christ; indeed, because of its simplicity, his expression of the unity is clearer than Theodore's.

Two natures I have expressed which are distinct one from the other,
but not two persons (*parsope*) have I introduced, as the calumniators [claim].
As one do I know the Word of the Father and the body which is from us. . . .
We also confess that which came to pass in the fullness of time,
even that He [i.e. the Father] redeemed us by His Son and reconciled with us
the heights and the deep.
'By His Son', I said, [signifying] the Word Who is from Him and the body which is from us:
one spiritual and one corporeal, the Hidden and the manifest.
Two in nature are the likeness of a servant and that of the Maker;
one in essence [or, being] is He Who willed and honoured His own by His own.[98]

Narsai defines the meaning of the 'one *parsopa*' by referring to the union of body and soul in man: the two are one *parsopa*, which here must mean 'one person'.[99]

As the soul and the body, which are fellows, are called one *parsopa*,
the soul being the nature of vitality, and the body the nature of mortality,
So are called one *parsopa* the two which are distinct one from the other:
the Word, the nature of the [divine] essence, and the body, the nature of the humanity,
The one [which is] made, and the one [Who is] Maker, are one in the union.[100]

The 'one *parsopa*' of Christ is also the basis of the "exchange of properties", as understood by the Doctors of Antioch. By reason of the union of person, the Word gives His own properties in a real manner to the assumed humanity and 'consigns the properties of the humanity into His divinity',[101] not, however, in such a way as to enable one to ascribe suffering and change to the divine nature in any proper sense.[102] Although the subtleties of Greek theological reasoning are alien to Narsai's Semitic mind, it is clear that he grasps the basic elements of Theodore of Mopsuestia's christological doctrines. The apparent paradox of Antiochene christology, its two distinctly concrete natures and one real prosôpon, is keenly felt in Narsai's writings. The School of Edessa, if it may be personified in Narsai, introduced into Persia a simplified Theodoran christology conjoined with a misunderstanding of, and antipathy for, Saint Cyril of Alexandria.[103] One may, however, distinguish between what Narsai wrote amid turbulent controversies in Edessa and the non-polemical writings of his later years in Persia, which display a more balanced and reflective christology.[104]

The influence of the School of Edessa on the Persian Church, as represented by her bishops, first becomes evident in the canons of the council of Beit 'Edrai, held under the Katholikos Mar Aqaq (Acacios) in 486. This council produced the first christological document promulgated by the Church of Persia. The bishops deemed it necessary to profess something beyond the creed of Nicaea, not because they felt obliged to respond to the proceedings of the Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils (their precise knowledge of which is uncertain), but because

there are in this region of Beit Aramaye men corrupted in mind, clothed in the habit of mourning [i.e. monastic dress] but far removed from the power of the work of this habit, who go around in many places and corrupt the minds of the simple, and do injury to the right faith of the Catholic and Apostolic Church . . . teaching contrary to the Holy Scriptures and reviling the heralds and teachers of religion.[105]

Monks of monophysite convictions wandered throughout the region of Beit Aramaye, that is, the Mesopotamian district in the vicinity of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, preaching against the dyophysite faith and reviling the 'teachers of religion', meaning Theodore of Mopsuestia most certainly,[106] and probably Diodore of Tarsus as well. The simple Christians of Persia had little or no understanding of the dispute over one or two natures in Christ and

therefore could be easily led to accept whatever these monks of venerable outward appearance taught them.[107] As Mar Aqaq the Katholikos and at least four other bishops at the council were former students of the School of Edessa, they could not endure this propagation of Monophysitism among the simple. Not having secular power to drive away the troublemakers,[108] they hoped that a clear dogmatical statement by the bishops would alert the faithful as to what they should believe. The bishops, led by Mar Aqaq and those who had acquired some theological training at the School of Edessa, wrote the following:

> We instruct and we admonish the entire community of the faithful that . . . our faith in the œconomy of Christ should be the confession of the two natures of divinity and humanity, no man among us daring to introduce a blending or mixture or confusion of the distinctions of these two natures. Rather, while the divinity abides and is preserved in its own [properties], and the humanity in its own, we gather together the differences of the natures into one lordship and one worship because of the perfect and indivisible unification (*naqiputha*) which the divinity has with the humanity. But if anyone thinks, or teaches others, to join suffering and change to the divinity of our Lord, and does not preserve with respect to our Saviour's unity of person (*parsopa*) a confession of the perfect God and perfect man, let him be anathema![109]

The terminology of this dyophysite confession is that taught at the School of Edessa; the bishops knew no other theology and terminology to express themselves. They confess two distinct, complete, indivisibly united natures and a 'unity of *parsopa*' that does not entail mixture or confusion of the properties of each nature; therefore the property of the human nature to suffer and change cannot be 'joined' to the Lord's divinity, and the Theopaschism of the Monophysites is excluded. By this confession the Church of Persia established herself forevermore as the inheritor of the dyophysite tradition of Antioch. Howbeit, the extremes and deviations of Nestorios, and even the polemical starkness of Narsai, are absent from this document, as they are from the conciliar statements of the following century. The position adopted by the Church was one of doctrinal moderation whereby both Monophysitism and the erring extremes of Dyophysitism were shunned. Although one cannot find a point by point correspondence between the profession of the bishops at Beit 'Edrai and the dogmatical formulation of the Council of Chalcedon, it would not, on this account, be reasonable to charge the Persian bishops with departure from the orthodox faith of their forefathers[110] and that of the Churches of the West. The Antiochene tradition accepted by them admits of orthodox as well as heterodox interpretation. Just how the Persian Christians assimilated and interpreted it in the sixth and seventh centuries will be discussed below.

The troubles caused by the monophysite monks continued in the region of Nisibis, that is, close to the Roman border, as we learn from Barsauma's plea to Mar Aqaq that he

anathematize the dissidents.[111] From the synodal letters of Mar Babai's council, held in 497, we learn that Papa of Beit Lapat (who signed at the council of 486) and Yazdad of Rev-Ardashir have deviated from 'the orthodox faith of the Church' and are called to return.[112] Whether this means that they had embraced Monophysitism,[113] or something else is implied, is impossible to determine. All other genuine historical data of this period indicate that the profession of 486 was accepted unquestioningly by the great majority of Persian Christians as a proper expression of the true faith. Judging by the technical language of the profession, it is likely that the simple Christians of Persia understood it to say only that the one Lord Jesus Christ, proclaimed in the Gospels, is both God and man, which is the very faith Saint Afrahat had professed 140 years earlier. The monophysite propagandists, therefore, made little headway in Persia at this time, although their ranks were greatly increased when large numbers were expelled from the Byzantine empire under the reign of Justin I (518-527). The chief source of trouble for the Persian Church during the first decades of the sixth century was internal divisions among the hierarchy.[114]

The third *mepashqana* of the School of Nisibis, Abraham d-Beit Rabban, (active from approximately 510 to 569),[115] was responsible for initiating the important process of the adaptation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's lengthy scriptural commentaries to the needs of classroom study, which was ultimately to result in the reduction of his works to florilegia. The students of the School of Nisibis, who reached the number of one thousand under Abraham's directorship, found great difficulty in using Theodore's commentaries 'in that they were quite complicated due to the Greek [constructions, syntax] and obscure owing to the loftiness of the style of that man and also of the translators afterward'. Abraham, then, 'seeing that it was very difficult for many brothers to find the meaning of the Scriptures from the reading of the volumes of the Interpreter, wrote many of them and interpreted them luminously'.[116] Apparently Abraham composed paraphrases of the commentaries, condensing their length, clarifying their meaning, and perhaps adding some of his own insights. These abridged commentaries were warmly received and, no doubt, were referred to and recopied more frequently than the originals.[117] The significance of this is very considerable, because the basis of East Syrian religious thought was always scriptural interpretation, not theological speculation or personal inspiration. Although Theodore's commentaries retained for the moment their indisputable authority, in their abridged form they were gradually supplemented and even supplanted by the interpretations of other Greek ecclesiastical writers and East Syrian commentators.[118] This process began in the School of Nisibis in the sixth century and continued through the tenth,[119] with the effect of broadening the Persian religious understanding and liberating it significantly from Theodore's restrictive system.

In 540 Mar Aba was unwillingly raised to the dignity of Katholikos. Though he spent most of his tenure in prison, due to a new persecution of the Christians instigated by the Mazdaian priests, he successfully returned the Persian Church to a state of canonical order and internal peace. It is, however, his influence in the theological realm that interests us here. After finishing the School of Nisibis, and perhaps spending some time there as an instructor, he journeyed to Byzantine lands, taking advantage of the new state of affairs caused by the death of Anastasios I and the approbation of the Council of Chalcedon and the dyophysite confession by Justin I. Mar Aba first went to Edessa, where he learned Greek from a scholar named Thomas. Thereafter, in the latter's company, he journeyed to the Holy Land and Alexandria (where he met Cosmas Indicopleustes[120]), finally residing in Constantinople until the reign of Justinian. In his travels he made contact with Greek-speaking admirers of Theodore of Mopsuestia, from whom he collected Greek manuscripts of Theodore's works as yet untranslated into Syriac.[121] It is very possible that he also obtained a copy of Nestorios' apologetical work known as *The Book of Heraclides* and later had it translated into Syriac.[122] Until this time the Persians knew only of Nestorios that he had been a close associate of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and they had heard that he had been unjustly treated by Saint Cyril, but they had no accurate understanding either of Saint Cyril's or Nestorios' theological positions. The Syriac translation of Nestorios' apologetical work was enthusiastically received in certain conservative monastic circles,[123] and became a new influence on a number of Persian theological writers, most notably Babai the Great (+ 628). Yet although the writings of Nestorios improved his image still more,[124] and likewise brought further ill-fame to Saint Cyril's name, the Persian Church continued to be reserved about his memory.[125] Upon his return to Persia, Mar Aba was also responsible for an increased interest in Greek philosophical learning, which, in the form of digests, became quite popular in the East Syrian schools.[126]

The only theological document produced by Mar Aba is his *Synodal Letter on Orthodoxy Regarding the Faith,* composed in 544. Without employing the disputed theological terms "person" and "hypostasis" the Synodal Letter expresses the traditional Persian dyophysite faith and rejects the slanders made against it by the Syrian Monophysites. The central christological passage is as follows:

> From the Holy Spirit Himself the apostles learned that Christ is not a mere man (= ἄνθρωπος ψιλός), nor God stripped of (= θεὸς γυμνός) the garment of humanity wherein He was made manifest, but that Christ is God and man: that is, humanity which is anointed with divinity, which anointed it [i.e. the humanity], as it said, 'Wherefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness more than Thy fellows' (Ps. 44:6);[127] this indicates His humanity. And again, 'In the beginning was the Word' (John 1:1), which demonstrates His divinity.[128]

Mar Aba hereafter proceeds to show with scriptural quotations that because Christ's divine

nature is made known to men through His visible human nature, and because the divine nature properly reveals itself in its three hypostases, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, therefore the three Hypostases of the Trinity are made known to men through the incarnation.[129] His purpose here is twofold: firstly to prove that the Holy Trinity was known only through types in the Old Testament, whereas Its mystery was fully revealed with the incarnation;[130] and secondly to show that the Persian Christians had no intention of introducing a quaternity instead of the Trinity, a charge first levelled at dyophysite Christians by Apollinarios and taken up again by the Monophysites. The Synodal Letter concludes with several anathemas:

> Anyone who introduces a quaternity into the holy, immutable Trinity shall be anathema! And anyone who does not confess that in the last times the only-begotten Son of God, Who is Christ our Lord, was manifested in the flesh shall be anathema! And anyone who does not confess the suffering and death of Christ's humanity and the impassibility of His divinity shall be anathema! And anyone who seals [his] prayer in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and numbers together with them some other, or does not believe that the appellation "Son" signifies at once the divinity and the humanity of Christ, or who seals [his] prayer in the name of Christ and does not confess the Trinity, shall be anathema![131]

These anathemas, with the exception of the one against Theopaschism, are written to demonstrate that the Persian Christians do not do the things anathematized; they are defensive rather than indicative of an abuse. For example, the statement that "Son" signifies Christ's two natures means simply that when the Trinity is invoked, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the dyophysite confession is included without introducing a quaternity or "two Sons". Mar Aba's Synodal Letter fixes the guidelines employed for the official confessions of faith drawn up by the councils of 554, 576, 585, and 596. Becoming ever increasingly aware of the allegations made against their "Theodoran" faith, they are anxious to show that their faith is not heretical and that the charges are unwarranted. In so doing, they refine and broaden their christological conceptions without compromising their essential principles. As represented by the Synodal Letter, Mar Aba seems unaffected either by the novel and complex deliberations of Nestorios or the philosophical erudition he acquired in the West.[132] The canons of Mar Aba show that he accepted the Council of Chalcedon together with its canons.[133] Nevertheless, under the strong, authoritative hand of Mar Aba, amid a new wave of Mazdaian persecution and new hostilities between the Byzantines and Khosrau I, the Church of Persia's ancient sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency increased: regardless of the theological leanings of the Byzantine emperors and the vicissitudes of the Orthodox Churches of the West, the Church of Persia should continue to hold to its traditional confession without being intimidated by accusations.

The emperor Justinian's campaign against the writings and person of Theodore of Mopsuestia was initiated to prove to the Monophysites that adherents of the Council of Chalcedon were not Nestorians, as the latter claimed,[134] and to put a stop to Theodore's rising popularity in certain circles within the Byzantine empire. Although Theodore's condemnation was expressed with the greatest possible severity,[135] the Monophysites viewed the Dyophysitism of Chalcedon with unaltered hostility: 'the apparent concession did nothing to bridge the cleavage between the two churches'.[136] On the other hand, the posthumous condemnation of Theodore aroused considerable indignation among many bishops of the West,[137] and, of course, alienated the dyophysite Christians of Persia, once they learned of it. Babai the Great, writing in the early seventh century, has many harsh words to say about Justinian because of this condemnation,[138] but the official documents of the Church of Persia seem simply to ignore the Council's actions. The extensive defence of Theodore issued by the council of 585 under Isho'yabh I has its direct cause in the controversy aroused by Henana of Adiabene in the School of Nisibis,[139] not the decisions of Constantinople II. In contradistinction to Justin I,[140] Justinian was considered to have fallen away from true Dyophysitism, but hope was entertained that imperial religious policies would change once more, as they had at the death of Anastasios.[141] In other words, the decision of the Fifth Ecumenical Council against Theodore was regarded by the Persians as imperial policy forced upon the Churches of the West and was consequently no concern of theirs. The Persian ecclesiastical conception of their relation with the Western Churches can be stated as follows: when Saint Maruta brought the Creed and canons of the 318 Fathers of Nicaea, for the first time the Church of Persia possessed a tangible union with their Christian brethren in the West; the binding link (and indeed, no other link was possible) was the confession of faith and the ecclesiastical canons promulgated in the orthodox Councils. Because the Persian bishops were fully persuaded that the Antiochene dyophysite christological doctrines they embraced were consistent with this confession,[142] they believed that they had not broken the union forged in 410. They were conscious of no juridical powers exercised over them by councils held in the West, to which they had not even been invited, but only of a brotherhood in the faith, which was preserved as long as the faith of Nicaea was not betrayed. Needless to say, this conception of church union and their apparent obliviousness to the ecclesiastical affairs of the West was greatly encouraged by their isolation from the Byzantine empire.[143]

In 562 or 563, after peace was restored between the Byzantine and Persian kingdoms, Justinian requested Khosrau I to send a delegation of Persian theologians to converse on matters of faith. Six leading bishops and teachers then journeyed to Constantinople with Khosrau's permission and discoursed with the Byzantine theologians for three days, after which they were dismissed by the emperor with honours and allowed to

return to Persia.[144] A Syriac document, brought to light by Guillaumont in 1969,[145] has very possibly preserved a fragment of these discussions, and therefore furnishes us with an important insight into the mid-sixth century differences of the two dyophysite Churches. The point at issue in the fragment is whether Christ's human nature has its own hypostasis, as the Persians maintain, or whether it has as its hypostasis that of the divine nature. Both parties agree that the human cannot be strictly ἀνυπόστατος, deprived of a hypostasis, for then it would not even exist, but the dispute is over *how* the human nature possesses it. Justinian's orthodox theologian expounds the subtle doctrine of "enhypostatic existence" adopted during Justinian's reign as the proper explanation of Chalcedon's somewhat vague expression 'one *prosōpon* and one hypostasis': 'We say that the human nature subsists [m^{e}qaima = has hypostatic existence] *in* the hypostasis of the Word of God. It was not seen or known separately in its own, paticular hypostasis, but it possesses its subsistence [or, hypostatic existence] *in* the hypostasis of the Word.'[146] The Persian interlocutor cannot grasp this concept. Hypostasis is the real, individual existence (subsistence) of a nature; if the nature is human, its individual existence (hypostasis) will likewise be human; a nature and its hypostasis are indivisibly bound: 'Every hypostasis is known according to its nature, and every nature that exists is known, and is manifested to sense, to sight, and to the *theoria* of the intellect, in its own hypostasis.'[147] Therefore a created human nature could not have an uncreated hypostasis.[148] The Byzantine replies that this is so in the natural course of things, but that the human nature does not have its hypostasis in the Word in a natural way, by virtue of the union forged supernaturally in the incarnation.[149] Unfortunately the Persian reply to this is not recorded, but perhaps one may conjecture the objection that a human nature so endowed with a hypostasis is not really human at all.[150]

The official teaching of the Church of Persia makes no mention of there being two hypostases in Christ and it accepts the Council of Chalcedon's 'one person and one hypostasis'. Why, then, do her representatives—if we assume the document is authentic—defend this teaching? It is clear that the Chalcedonian formula was taken to mean that "hypostasis" should be understood as a synonym for "person";[151] they saw this interpretation supported by the affirmation that the natural properties of the natures were preserved. When, however, they understood the Byzantine theologian to assert that Christ 'does not subsist as a perfect and hypostatic man',[152] that is, does not have a human hypostasis—individual, real human existence, taking "hypostasis" in the sense employed by Saint Basil and not as a synonym for "person"—they could not accept it. For them the Council of Chalcedon did not imply this; the Byzantines did not interpret the phrase 'one hypostasis' as they did. If hypostasis is to mean a nature's concrete subsistence, then it is more correct to speak of two hypostases, for otherwise the human nature would be deprived of

full existence. Therefore, although the teaching of two hypostases was not the official confession of the Persian Church, it was inherent in their conception of the completeness of the natures in Christ and the strict Basilian interpretation of hypostasis: the two natures must subsist in their own hypostases.[153] But if, on the other hand, hypostasis is interpreted as a synonym of "person", then it is correct to speak of one hypostasis. In view of the fact that the Syriac translations of Theodore of Mopsuestia's works speak of 'one person and one hypostasis' as does the Council of Chalcedon, it is very likely that in sixth century Persia the formulas 'one hypostasis' and 'two hypostases' were employed concurrently without causing scandal.[154] Such a dual, and therefore indefinite, use of hypostasis probably explains why the official christological expositions of the sixth century Persian Church avoid the term. Only when, within the Persian Church herself, some began to employ the expression "one hypostasis" in the sense of "one composite hypostasis" that excluded the Antiochene conception of two concretely existing natures did the bishops of the Persian Church in 612 officially adopt the formula "two hypostases".[155] As long as their interpretation of hypostasis in the new formula did not imply two persons,[156] it did not indicate a further step toward true Nestorianism.

The second half of the sixth century witnesses a great increase in monophysite activity within Persia.[157] Massive deportations of West Syrian captives and the flight of Monophysites into Persia corresponded with the insupressible activities of Jacob Bar'adai, by whose name the Jacobites are called. In 559 Jacob ordained Ahudemmeh as the first monophysite metropolitan of the Orient; hereafter the clergy and hierarchy of the eastern Monophysites steadily grew in strength. The Persian Katholikos Joseph (552-567) apparently made unfounded accusations against the Monophysites to Khosrau I, and the latter, wishing to verify them, had a debate between the two parties held in his presence. Concluding from the confrontation that the allegations were unjustified, Khosrau gave permission to the Monophysites to build churches and monasteries without hindrance.[158] It was, however, in the beginning of the seventh century, during the reign of Khosrau II (590-628), that the Monophysites enjoyed their greatest patronage. The court physician and royal favourite, Gabriel of Singar, joined the Monophysites after being excommunicated by the Katholikos for bigamy.[159] Thereafter, at every opportunity, he championed the monophysite cause and even succeeded in convincing Khosrau to forbid the election of a new Katholikos after the death of Gregor I (+ 609). Thus, during the difficult period from the death of Gregor I to the death of Khosrau II (+ 628) the Church of Persia was without a chief hierarch[160] and in official disfavour.[161]

At the very time when these outward tribulations were multiplying, the Persian Church also underwent a severe internal trial caused by the teachings of Henana of Adiabene. Henana became the *mepashqana* of the School of Nisibis in 572;[162] he was endowed

with a brilliant mind, a searching spirit, and great didactic abilities. With his position at the School he was able to obtain Syriac translations of the biblical commentaries and theological works of many Greek authors not usually read in Persia.[163] Henana was especially attracted by the allegorical approach to scriptural interpretation, employed so freely by Origen (whose writings were probably not available in Syriac), and later by Saint Gregory of Nyssa and many other Church Fathers. It was here that he first came into conflict with the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the great Interpreter for the Persians until that time.[164] By the report of an euthusiastic contemporary, Henana wrote voluminously, setting down his own commentaries on the Scriptures:

> Because of his great love for interpretation, the trustworthiness of his word, and the rich treasury of his soul, it did not suffice him to give exegesis by word of mouth alone, but he also wished in books to set down for us his understanding and opinion on all the verses and chapters in the Scriptures, both Old and New, like the blessed Interpreter. He also composed many homilies and treatises. . . . And lo, his writings are everywhere, and by them he is near and teaches even in distant places. His praise is spread abroad in all the schools, both far and near, by the mouths of all his disciples.[165]

It seems Henana's first intention was to supplement Theodore's interpretations with the commentaries of other writers and his own insights.[166] But as Theodore's extreme adherents became alarmed, Henana hardened his position by openly contradicting the Interpreter[167] and even seeking to supplant Theodore entirely.[168] Because interpretation of Scripture and theology are inseparably intertwined, the growing dispute eventually spread to the theological realm also, and amid 'many controversies, great disputation, outcry, contentions, and schism'[169] three hundred of the School's eight hundred students left Nisibis.[170]

It is very difficult to determine Henana's theological position with any degree of certainty, because we possess only a few fragments of his works and a number of wild accusations by his mighty adversary, Babai the Great. It is, at least, known that besides undermining the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia, he taught that there was one composite hypostasis in Christ.[171] He is also charged with teaching one nature, or with confusing the natures,[172] but this could be merely the consequence which his enemies drew from his doctrine of one composite hypostasis.[173] Babai frequently incriminates Henana with the worst errors of Origenism, and it seems not unlikely that Babai's careful and extensive defence of Evagrios' works against those who would find Origenism in them,[174] was elicited partly by Henana's use of Evagrios.[175] The popularity of Henana's writings may have been due to his non-Theodoran, and therefore novel, emphasis on the mystical union of God and man,[176] which he demonstrated by allegorical interpretation of Scripture, the christological doctrine of a composite hypostasis,[177] and Evagrian mysticism. Although the

concept of a composite hypostasis never prospered in Persia, and seems to have died with Henana's direct disciples, Henana's influence in the realm of exegesis and, perhaps, mysticism bore plenteous fruit in the centuries to come.[178]

The council of Mar Isho'yahb I (585) first bears witness to the controversy caused by Henana. The council's first canon contains a careful exposition of the Creed of Nicaea, reaffirming its traditional dyophysite interpretation (without reference to the christological term "hypostasis"), and thus, the interpretation of Theodore of Mopsuestia. This was necessitated by mounting monophysite propaganda,[179] but also, perhaps, by Henana's commentary on the Creed.[180] The second canon of the same council is a protracted defense of Theodore and his commentaries, occasioned by the following:

> Now before the synod of the fathers, it was reported that at this time men have sprung up who, although called by the name orthodox, are by their disturbances the perturbers of Orthodoxy and the doctrines and traditions of the Church, who struggle with impotent, hostile force against the mighty power of our true doctrine, which has been fortified and established by the help of grace through the books and commentaries of the Interpreter.[181]

The council concludes its defence by forbidding anyone 'in open or in secret to defame this Doctor of the Church or to refute his holy books'.[182] Despite these admonitions, the controversy continued to grow within the Persian Church, a fact that can be easily determined by the decisions of the councils of Mar Sabrisho' I (596) and Mar Gregor I (605). In both these synods a careful exposition of the traditional faith (again avoiding the term "hypostasis") and a lengthy defence of Theodore are made, while anyone who should 'refute the commentaries, exegeses, and teachings of the proven teacher, the blessed Theodore the Interpreter, and who attempts to introduce new and strange exegeses replete with folly and blasphemy',[183] is anathematized. Although the bishops made a firm stand with regard to Theodore of Mopsuestia, no mention is made of the dispute over one person-hypostasis, one composite hypostasis, or two hypostases. It is clear that the bishops felt uneasy with this term, not employed in the earlier decisions of the Persian Church, and preferred to leave its interpretation to the theologians in the schools. By the beginning of the seventh century three currents of thought within the Church of Persia become apparent: the radical reformers (represented by Henana, his disciples and sympathizers), the moderate conservatives (represented by the councils of 585, 596, 605 and the main body of the Persian Christians), and the radical conservatives (represented by Babai the Great, the monks of Mt. Izla, and their supporters).

The force of Henana's assault against Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentaries was dissipated by the anathemas laid upon any who should 'refute' his exegeses.[184] It was, however, Babai the Great who carried on a successful struggle against Henana's theological

positions and finalized the christological significance and usage of "hypostasis". After attending the School of Nisibis, about 575 Babai entered the great monastery of Mt. Izla (located not far from Nisibis) under the illustrious Abraham of Kashkar (+ 586),[185] the founder of the monastery and the renovator of Persian monasticism. Abraham, a one-time student at the School under Abraham d-Beit Rabban, had journeyed to Egypt and Sinai to learn the monastic discipline of the Fathers. After passing a number of years in the West, he returned to Persia and instituted the principles of Egyptian monasticism and hesychasm in his own country. Because of Mt. Izla's proximity to the School of Nisibis, many of the monastery's monks were well educated. Along with the ascetical writings of Evagrios, Abba Isaias, the *Paradise of the Fathers*, and the writings of the great Cappadocians, the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia were carefully studied and Nestorios' *Book of Heraclides* was held in esteem.[186] Therefore, besides the influence it exerted on Persian monasticism, the monastery of Mt. Izla became a stronghold of Persia's most uncompromising form of Dyophysitism and it was the monks of Izla who reacted most strongly to Henana's christological views. Babai was the most outspoken and most prolific representative of this tradition; although his virulent speech was a peculiarity of his irascible nature,[187] his theology can be taken to represent that of his entire party.[188]

Babai's major christological work, *On the Divinity and On the Humanity and On the Person (Parsopa) of Union*, called *The Book of Union* for convenience,[189] is a synthesis of the christological conceptions of Theodore Mopsuestia, Nestorios (as represented by *The Book of Heraclides;* although Nestorios is never quoted or even mentioned by name, his influence in certain technical aspects is evident), and Persian authors, such as Mar Aba.[190] Babai does not presume to expound any new teachings,[191] and in fact, he probably does not. His intention is to set forth a sharply dyophysite interpretation of the ancient Antiochene christology, while both demonstrating the necessity of there being two hypostases in Christ and refuting any teaching of mixture or hypostatic composition. Babai's achievement is the thoroughness of his exposition, not the originality of his thought. In applying old conceptions to the doctrinal issues of early seventh century Persia, he is, for the most part, quite reactionary. If one compares the late sixth century synodal definitions of the Persian Church with many of Babai's formulas, one feels as though he has stepped back into early fifth century Antioch. There is an evident attempt in Babai's christological works to stop the gradual evolution of Persian thought which led to the aberration of the Henanians; to his mind the moderate position taken by the councils could not do this.

Babai understands that a precise definition of terminology is imperative, if he is to demonstrate that both the divine nature and human nature in Christ must have a hypostasis.[192] The two terms to which Babai gives a special definition are hypostasis (*qnoma*) and person (*parsopa*). In G. Chediath's analysis they are defined as follows:

Qnoma is the concretization of the abstract kyana [nature] such as this or that. Kyana never exists except as qnoma. Although originally qnoma was the Syriac translation of the Greek *hypostasis*, it cannot be identified [with it]. . . . Qnoma may be translated, "this or that substance", "substratum", "subsistence", "reality" opposed to the unreal or illusion. It is primarily referring to concrete reality or actuality rather than Person (*prosôpon* or *persona*). The qnoma in Babai is not the Chalcedonian hypostasis. So to translate it into hypostasis or to person is incorrect and highly misleading. . . .
Parsopa is the property which distinguishes one qnoma from another qnoma of the same species. It is the sum total of the accidents, and properties, giving the particular characteristic to the qnoma. The indivisible and singular property of the qnoma is given by the parsopa.[193]

By making *parsopa* 'the property of whatsoever *qnoma* by which it is distinct from others',[194] Babai has given to it part of what Saint Basil means by hypostasis. For Saint Basil, hypostasis included the distinguishing property; for Babai *parsopa* is the distinguishing property. Thus, because the hypostatic characteristic of the Son and Word of God is Sonship (begottenness), Babai can call this His *parsopa*,[195] 'the *parsopa* of Sonship' (or 'Sonness': *υἱότης not υἱοθεσία*).[196] With such definitions Babai can easily maintain that each of the two concretely existing natures in Christ must necessarily have their own hypostasis: the hypostasis of the divine nature being the second Hypostasis of the Holy Trinity, and the hypostasis of the human nature being the perfect and particular Man Jesus, whom we distinguish from Peter and John.[197] To have concrete existence, a nature must have a hypostasis;[198] therefore to speak of one hypostasis in Christ, like Henana, means either that one nature has ceased to have real existence or that it has been totally absorbed into the other nature (as Eutyches apparently taught). A mixed or composite hypostasis is impossible because this could only come about if both natures were imperfect of themselves before the union (as the body and soul in man),[199] or that they were so joined as to alter the concrete existence of each: in such a case, the divine nature would become subject to suffering and change. Henana, according to Babai, therefore teaches Theopaschism. With Babai's definition of hypostasis (*qnoma*) there can be no union on the hypostatic level: 'Thus it is evident that it is in no wise possible for the divinity and the humanity of Christ to become one hypostasis (*qnoma*), but only one *parsopa*, in which is made known unitedly the two natures in their hypostaticality.'[200]

The union achieved in the incarnation is in the *parsopa*, for this is the only ontological medium which remains to Babai. Christ is not a "mere" man united to God by grace or by moral achievement or by an anointing of the Spirit which occurred after His humanity was constituted, as Paul of Samosata and the other heretics say.[201] God the Word formed one *parsopa*, one ontological manifestation, with the humanity while it was being formed in the Virgin's womb, when the foetus received its rational soul and became a human hypostasis. The human nature, as made concrete in its own hypostasis, never

existed separately from the Word, Who gave to it His unique property of Sonship (whereby we know that the Son was incarnate, not the Father or the Holy Spirit). Christ's humanity was at all times like iron in the fire of His divinity, not losing its essential natural properties or human hypostasis, not changing its nature, but taking on the attributes of divinity as the iron takes on the aspect of flame and its burning action.[202] In this union of *parsopa* the iron can be broken but the flame not, the flame burns *by nature* but the iron not; likewise in the incarnation the human nature can be put to death but the divinity not, the divinity is almighty *by nature* but the humanity not.[203]

Likewise in this prosopic, voluntary,[204] unforced, impassible union the natures take and give what belongs to each: God, that of man, and man, that of God, in this one *parsopa*. And just as the natures are united in one *parsopa*, so their names (titles) are united in the designation of the same one *parsopa*. While in this union of the *parsopa* of Christ (which exists by reason of the single unification [*naqiputha*] of divinity and humanity) the natures are not separate from each other in appellation, in power, in authority, in honour, in lordship, and in adoration, they are preserved unitedly without confusion and forever.[205]

Babai professes an ontological and indissoluable union of the two complete natures in Christ. However, he has difficulty finding a way to express this union which will safeguard him from Theopaschism, as he understands it, and not decrease the reality of the incarnation.

This worshipful, astonishing, and ineffable union has all these modes [listed in the foregoing passage] and surpasses them through a distinct and inscrutable mode that transcends partial ones that limit one another. It is not an external unification only; it is not an internal restriction and limitation; it is not prosopic in [the sense of] separation; it is not voluntary as setting apart the natures; but it is the Infinite in the finite, while the natures are preserved without confusion, without commixture, without blending, without composition, and without partition.[206]

Employing christological terminology imported from Antioch, which Henana had apparently challenged, Babai grasps for a christology that will meet the theological needs of the seventh century. He unwaveringly professes:

Perfect God in perfect man: the Infinite dwelt in, was united to, was clothed in, and was joined to the finite. And although the [natures] were united, they were distinct in their properties; and although they were distinct, they were united in one *parsopa*. In short, the two natures are preserved forever in the one Christ, the Son of God.[207]

Nevertheless, his exposition suffers from the same deficiency one often finds in Theodore's works. Being so preoccupied with keeping Christ's two natures unconfused, it fails

adequately to transmit the simple and all-important message of the Gospel: He who became man and is the Subject of the events recorded by the apostles is the very Son and Word of God.[208] This truth, without cumbersome technicality of language, is clearly expressed by the synodal documents mentioned above.[209] Though the councils acknowledged the correctness of Theodore's interpretations, they were able to overcome this essential weakness of Theodore's christological expressions. The "one person" of Christ is, for them, the Son of God's "person";[210] the simple apperception of this truth, unobscured by endless qualifications, was the faith of the common body of the Persian Church.

During the nineteen years that the Church of Persia was without a katholikos (609-628) Babai and his party endeavoured to steer the Church on a radically conservative course that vehemently opposed the Monophysites, the Henanians,[211] and—presumably—the Churches of the West that accepted the doctrine of a composite hypostasis. The four bishops who, in 612, formed a delegation to present a defence of their faith to Khosrau II, officially professed two hypostases in Christ,[212] and from henceforth the matter of one or two hypostases could no longer be open to question. Although, as shown above, the formula of two hypostases essentially meant nothing more than two concrete natures, the violent controversy over Henana's teaching gave it a further significance for the ultra-conservatives: not only was "two hypostases" the most correct confession, it was the *only* orthodox confession;[213] anyone who in any sense should confess one hypostasis in Christ was not orthodox. Thus, among Babai's party of conservative zealots, the Council of Chalcedon was also rejected and, along with it, any possible relations with the dyophysite Churches of the West. This extreme position, however, was not shared by all.

When Kavad II Shiroe ascended to the throne of his father (628), he permitted the bishops of Persia to elect a katholikos. Isho'yahb II of Gdala (628-646) was chosen, a former student of the School of Nisibis and one of those who had departed in protest against Henana's teachings.[214] Soon after, Kavad II died, and was succeeded by his sister (or wife), Queen Boran. Boran bade Isho'yahb undertake a mission to the Emperor Heraclios, then residing in Aleppo, to announce her accession to the throne and renew the peace treaty with the Byzantines. Whereupon Isho'yahb, accompanied by a number of notable ecclesiastics (among whom was Isho'yahb, bishop of Niniveh and later katholikos [648-659], and possibly Sahdona),[215] journeyed to Aleppo where he was graciously received by Heraclios. After dispensing with international affairs, the emperor and the katholikos engaged in a discussion of the Faith, during the course of which Isho'yahb demonstrated to Heraclios that the Church of Persia had not deviated from the faith of the Fathers of Nicaea and that their Dyophysitism was not heretical.[216] Over one point, however, they could not reach agreement: the Persians would not have Saint Cyril commemorated in the diptychs, and the emperor would not have the "Three Doctors," Diodore of

Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorios, commemorated. To overcome this impasse, the objectionable names were simply omitted,[217] two Liturgies were celebrated by the katholikos, and the emperor himself received Communion from him. Apparently no one dared find fault with the emperor for the œconomy of dropping Saint Cyril's name, but, on his return to Persia, Isho'yahb was severely criticized by a number of extreme conservatives.[218] The *Chronique de Séert* has preserved two irate letters of Bishop Barsauma of Susa to the katholikos protesting, essentially, that 'there is a deep chasm betwen us and the Greeks'.[219] The 'chasm', in the mind of Barsauma, is none other than the Council of Chalcedon,[220] for it is almost certain that the emperor and the katholikos came to agreement on the basis of this council. Chalcedon was no longer acceptable to the radical conservatives represented by Barsauma (who, incidentally, broke communion with Isho'yahb), but to the more moderate katholikos, Chalcedon could still form a basis for church unity.[221]

Although the doctrine of two hypostases had been irrevocably established by the efforts of Babai the Great, in the mid-seventh century there were still some who regarded it with considerable distrust, whereas others openly rejected it. From the letters of Isho'yahb III, at the time metropolitan of Arbela, we learn that Kyriakos, the metropolitan of Nisibis, began to preach one hypostasis about the year 640, causing a controversy which only subsided after his death.[222] But, at approximately the same time, much greater turmoil arose over the teaching of Sahdona of Beit Nuhadre,[223] who may have been, but probably was not, a young student of Henana.[224] Sahdona joined the monastery of Beit 'Abe and quickly became illustrious for the excellence of his ascetic life and literary gifts; at Isho'yahb III's suggestion, he was consecrated bishop of Mahoze. Some time thereafter, however, a treatise he wrote for private circulation became public; news of it reached Isho'yahb, and he, being of the radically conservative party, was very alarmed to discover that Sahdona taught one hypostasis. The great pains that Isho'yahb was forced to take to have Sahdona condemned, and later, to prevent him from reassuming his bishopric, reveal that Sahdona had many sympathizers among the moderates, the Katholikos Maremmeh, perhaps, among them.[225] Howbeit, Isho'yahb eventually triumphed (perhaps only when he became katholikos) and Sahdona, having in Persia no dyophysite church where to lay his head, passed the rest of his days in a cave near Edessa.

Sahdona's writings have, for the most part, come down to us,[226] and from his chapter 'On the True Faith and the Sound Confession of Orthodoxy'[227] one may obtain a reasonably accurate conception of his controversial christology.

When God the Word in a sublime manner became one with this [particular] nature of our humanity, from the very beginning of its formation and forevermore, He made it one hypostasis (*qnoma*) and one

person (*parsopa*) with Himself by a wondrous and ineffable union, and filled it with the glory of His divinity. And in its form[228] He was seen by creation: 'They beheld', it says, 'His glory, the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14).[229]

As is abundantly evident from his exposition of the faith, and as de Halleux has pointed out,[230] Sahdona's christology does not betray any non-Persian influences; his christology in almost every respect is that of the common body of the Persian Church. The point at issue is his use of "hypostasis", which clearly differs from that established by Babai and taught in the schools. This is precisely what Isho'yahb bitterly decries: 'That feeble-minded man . . . [supposed] that we should take this "hypostasis" for "person", or indeed, "person" for "hypostasis", as that witless writer strives to demonstrate.'[231] In his exposition Sahdona states clearly that the word *parsopa*, as used theologically in Syriac, is inadequate to express the union forged by the incarnation: 'Though a picture presents the image of a man, it is not by nature the man, and though an angel or an ambassador bears the *parsopa* of God or a king, they are not truly God or the king.'[232] 'But with our Lord Christ', he continues, 'it was not thus; He is truly in both . . . as the natures are united with one another and the *hypostatic parsopa* of Sonship is manifested in the two.'[233] He distinguishes a 'hypostatic *parsopa*' from a 'borrowed[234] and assumed *parsopa* which is distant from him to whom it belongs',[235] such as a king's ambassador. By "hypostatic" Sahdona means "real", in other words, what is rooted inseparably in the very being and identity of a thing. Sahdona also calls Christ's *parsopa* 'natural'[236] (i.e. pertaining to nature), with the meaning that in it His two natures have their concrete expression.

The one, hypostatic *parsopa* is not an appearance which can be separated, like a mirror's image, from 'him to whom it belongs'; it is an essential, indivisible part of the existence of a thing. Our Lord, however, has two natures (two "things", as it were), each retaining its properties;[237] but because these natures are united inseparably and eternally, such that 'that which was assumed can never be known separately as being parted from Him Who assumed', there are not two *parsope*, and so, two Sons.[238] Sahdona describes the union of the natures thus:

God the Word took upon Himself to be called,[239] through the union, that which a man is by nature, and He gave to the humanity [lit. man] to be, through the union, that which he is by nature, such that the Son of God, God the Word, is called Son of man because of the human nature which He assumed, and such that the son of man—that nature which is from us—is the only-begotten Son of God because of God the Word Who assumed it.[240]

The result of this most intimate union is that the two natures are one "being", one "reality", one *qnoma*.[241] Sahdona's 'one *qnoma* and one *parsopa*' (which is undoubtedly a

reference to Theodore of Mopsuestia's expression), his hypostatic *parsopa*, means "one reality", and this Reality is the subject of both the sufferings and the miracles recorded in the Gospel.

> The sufferings and lowly things naturally belong to the body that is of Mary, and the miracles and lofty things properly belong to the Word Who is of the Father. But through the union both the sufferings of the humanity and the miracles of the divinity belong to the very same one *parsopa* of the Son and Lord Christ.[242]

Sahdona's essentially Antiochene vocabulary and his deep veneration for the saints of the Persian Church[243] demonstrate clearly that he had no intention of introducing theological concepts foreign to Persian tradition, as Henana had apparently attempted. He generally uses the term "nature" in the old sense of concrete nature, *physis-hypostasis.*[244] The term *qnoma* is thus freed from its restricted use as a concrete, individual nature and can be employed to give a more substantial, real, connotation to *parsopa.*[245] In doing this, Sahdona harks back to sixth century Persia, when *qnoma's* interpretation was unestablished. However, conservatives such as Isho'yahb, whose party had won a hard victory over Henana, could not endure such an overthrow of the now established formula of two hypostases, whether or not they were essentially in agreement with Sahdona.[246] Furthermore, with the accepted definition of hypostasis, 'one hypostasis must necessarily imply one nature',[247] and the door is open to dreaded Monophysitism. One may surmise that Sahdona, who regarded himself as a loyal son of the Persian Church, undertook to establish a different usage of *qnoma* with the intention of mitigating some of the extremes of Babai and his party. The many physical examples of the one *parsopa* offered by Babai in his *Book of Union* all seem somehow unreal, unsubstantial;[248] they do not adequately convey what one finds in the sixth century conciliar declarations of faith. Sahdona hoped to remedy this ill. Unfortunately, the technical, theological meaning of hypostasis, as employed by Babai, had strong roots reaching back into the fourth century; it could not be so easily displaced by Sahdona's vague, though orthodox, redefinition.

While Isho'yahb was struggling to extinguish the fire rekindled by Sahdona, the Arab deluge swept away the Sasanid dynasty, leaving no trace of it at all. Christian contemporaries, as though they lived in some other world, hardly mention this exchange of one non-Christian overlord for another. Even so, the effects of the Moslem conquest were very great, if not immediate.[249] In the seventh century, the new Moslem rulers kept their promise to leave the Church unmolested.[250] Hence the most important consequence of the invasion was a final and complete severance of any ties with the Christians of the West. Byzantine borders were no longer close to Nisibis, and as years passed, the distance of Byzantium grew ever greater. Turning her attention eastward over the following centuries,

the Church of Persia busily expanded her dioceses to remote Mongolia and China,[251] until at last the tide of Mohammedanism submerged all in gloom.

By the end of the seventh century no more controversy is heard over one or two hypostases, but this does not indicate that the Church of Persia hereafter stagnated. On the contrary, the seventh and, especially, the eighth centuries mark the Church's period of greatest spiritual and intellectual ferment. The most evident cause of this is the mighty influx of ascetical and mystical literature of western authors in Syriac translation: Evagrios' expurgated treatises,[252] Abba Isaias,[253] Saint Makarios of Egypt,[254] the *Paradise of the Fathers* by Palladios, Jerome, and others,[255] Saint Dionysios the Areopagite,[256] the great Cappadocians, Saint John Chrysostom, and so on. Although the effect of this new literature is very evident in the realm of scriptural exegesis,[257] and in intellectuals such as Henana, it produced still more abundant fruit among the numerous monks of Persia. In its elementary forms Persian monasticism can be traced to the fourth century, that is, as far back as recorded ecclesiastical history allows us to penetrate. The earliest monastic text that has come down to us is the letter of Mar Babai to the priest Quryaqos (Kyriakos) 'On the Solitary Life and on Complete and Divine Renunciation'.[258] This Babai is perhaps Babowai the Katholikos, put to death by Peroz in 484,[259] but perhaps not; at any rate, the text almost certainly belongs to the fifth century. The rustic, wholesome simplicity of Mar Babai's counsels mirrors, in all probability, the state of Persian monasticism at the end of the fifth century.[260] Abraham of Kashkar, the sixth century leader mentioned above, is credited with initiating the seventh and eighth century monastic renaissance. He accomplished this not only by instituting the rules of Egyptian monasticism, but also by his emphasis on the study of the writings of the Fathers. Under his guidance a new generation of well-educated, strict ascetics was born. These monks, in turn, set off to found, or refound, other monasteries, and within less than a century all of Persia was filled with monks of the new, hesychastic direction.[261] When strict Egyptian asceticism and mysticism were mixed with the sound elements of Theodore of Mopsuestia's theology,[262] explosive results ensued. From a christological point of view, however, the movement was not unified. Abraham of Kashkar and his successors on Mt. Izla were the leaders of the radically conservative party in Persia. Sahdona, on the other hand, was a disciple of Jacob of Beit 'Abe, a disciple of Abraham. Hesychasts such as Saint Isaac seem to have carefully avoided all christological controversies as spiritually harmful,[263] and considered the excessive zeal manifested by Babai and his descendents as a serious illness.[264] Despite these differences, the new generation of ascetics offered powerful support to the Church's missionary activities in the East, and set up a unified resistance against the Messalians, who plagued the Persian Church for centuries.[265]

The most significant christological document produced in the end of the seventh

century is the letter of Mar Giwargis (George) the Katholikos, written (originally in Persian) in 680 to the chorepiscopos Mina on the subject of our Lord's incarnation.[266] This letter is a response to one by Mina, who was apparently at a loss to answer certain arguments of monophysite missionaries that had come to his region. Mar Giwargis' epistle is an excellent witness to how the conservative trend set by Babai was slowly assimilated and mitigated by the moderates of the Persian Church, who eventually regained control of church life. On the one hand, the formula of two hypostases is distinctly stated,[267] and the union of *parsopa*.[268] On the other hand, his one Lord Jesus Christ has none of the unreality that can be sensed in Babai's exposition: 'Christ is truly consubstantial with us in His humanity, and likewise consubstantial with God the Father in His divinity: two real, hypostatic natures in the one Christ, the Son of God.'[269] Christ is the very incarnate 'Word of God, Who, by the will of His Father, for the salvation of us men and the renewal of all created things, and so as to cause us to turn from error to the knowledge of His divinity, came voluntarily into the womb of the holy Virgin Mary without departing from the bosom of His Father.'[270] In our Lord's transfiguration on Mount Tabor the Katholikos sees Christ's real human nature, identical to ours, 'enveloped with the rays of the glory of His divinity', and yet:

> His divinity was not altered or confined, nor did it cause His humanity to vanish. And His humanity was not swallowed up in His divinity, but rather the assumed [portion] of our humanity retained its existence in the union with His divinity, that His divinity might be revealed in our humanity, that our salvation be accomplished by His divinity, and that the lowliness into which we slipped might be raised up to the lofty rank of His divinity, according to His grace from all ages. Who, then, would have been able to work such great goodness for corporeal and spiritual beings, save only God our Creator Who became man in the nature that is of us and revealed in us our salvation![271]

Mar Giwargis' chief argument against the Monophysites is that our salvation depends on our Lord being truly consubstantial with us in order that, as being part of our nature, He, as God and consubstantial with the Father, might bring to us the revelation and glory of divinity, from which we had fallen. If, however, either of His two natures were imperfect, this could not be accomplished; and if He were one nature, He would not be truly consubstantial either with the Father or with us.[272] Furthermore, the dyophysite faith is the faith of all the Christian Churches:

> This faith, which we hold to the capacity of our knowledge, is that of great Rome and all Italy, of Constantinople as well, of Jerusalem, and of all the renowned cities and Catholic churches of the cities of the Romans [i.e. Byzantines] which have not been defiled by the foetid mire that the heretics spill forth from the well-springs of their hearts and the speech of their lips; for they hold fast to the truth of the confession of two natures with their properties and their operations (energies) in the single unity of Christ. But

with especial clarity, exactitude, and lucidity, according to apostolic tradition and without any stain, this faith is held by the Catholic Church which is in this dominion of the Orient, that is, the land of Persia and the regions surrounding it.[273]

In concluding this brief introduction to the Church of Persia, the following question must be posed: was the seventh century Persian Church "Nestorian", as historians customarily designate her?[274] When Nestorios introduced the term "Christotokos", he was understood by the Christians of Constantinople to teach Psilanthropism and Adoptionism, that is, that our Lord was a mere man who received deification by the action of the Holy Spirit.[275] Saint Cyril, however, perceived that the error of Nestorios lay not in a denial of the divinity of the Son and Word of God, but in the relationship between the Word and the human nature He assumed in the incarnation: 'One must not, therefore, divide into two Sons the one Lord Jesus Christ; nor will it in any wise avail the right expression of the Faith to do so, though some should claim a union of persons (*prosôpa*).'[276] Nestorios' error was to teach that the Word of God and the complete human nature were two separate beings with their own independent identities (*prosôpa*) and existences. To exclude this deviation from the Faith, Saint Cyril introduced the expression 'union according to hypostasis' (ἕνωσις καθ' ὑπόστασιν), by which he meant a 'real union',[277] that is, a union whereby the Word and the human nature are one real Being, not two. When, in 433, the bishops of Antioch made it plain to Saint Cyril, without the use of this expression, that they likewise believed our Lord Jesus Christ to be one real Being,[278] he gladly accepted them into communion. Such, then, is the Church's definition of Nestorianism. From the preceding survey of Persian christology it should be evident that, through the sixth century, the Church of Persia never espoused such a doctrine; their Antiochene dyophysite faith, simplified, modified, and given unheretical interpretation on Persian soil, confessed one real Lord and Saviour Who was both God and man, divine and human, and Who, moreover, was the very incarnate Word of God, not some other "composite person". In the early seventh century, at the height of Babai's influence, the Persian Church would seem to veer toward heresy. This is not because of her acceptance of the two hypostases formula, which meant only two concrete natures, but because of the extremism of Babai and his party.[279] However, by the reign of Mar Giwargis (661-680) and his successors we find the moderates again at the helm of the Church, and once more a clear confession of the Faith, unobscured by endless qualifications.

Although not Nestorian in a strict doctrinal sense, the Persian Church's evolved christological expression of the Faith no longer resembled that of the Council of Chalcedon; and when interpreted in light of the meaning of hypostasis accepted in the West, two hypostases seemed inescapably to teach "two Sons". Further, the Church of Persia was at

odds with her sister Churches of the West over the commemoration of Saint Cyril, Nestorios, and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Needless to say, the Persians were very ill-informed about the first two,[280] and their devotion for Theodore of Mopsuestia could in no wise tolerate the imprecation laid upon his memory during the reign of Justinian. Because of her ancient autonomy and perpetual isolation from the rest of the Christian Churches, the Church of Persia felt herself under no obligation to accept the judgement—to her mind unjust—of the western Churches on the memory of these persons. These two factors, the confession of two hypostases and the commemoration of Theodore and Nestorios, have given factual basis to the misleading practice of referring to the Persian Church as Nestorian.[281]

The seventh century finds the Church of Persia in a state of interior evolution, where many different currents were converging to determine the course of her existence. The influx of patristic literature in Syriac translation was significantly broadening and altering her traditional Theodoran views, particularly in the realm of scriptural interpretation. Her flourishing monasticism was being refounded on the dynamic principles of hesychasm. The Arab conquest of Mesopotamia isolated her still more from the Orthodox Churches of the West. The struggle within the Church over the word *hypostasis* produced a new christological formulation which was gradually being assimilated into the Church's traditional confession of two natures and one person. And the tension created by the unrelenting activity of the Monophysites in Persia gave rise to extremism among some, resistance to such extremism among others, and a more numerous, though less vocal, party of moderates.

It is not difficult to determine Saint Isaac's historical position amid the currents of seventh century Persia. His thorough study of Saint Dionysios the Areopagite, the *Paradise of the Fathers*, certain writings of the great Cappadocians, Evagrios, Saint Makarios of Egypt, along with the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia,[282] is self-evident.[283] In the realm of exegesis he is acquainted with the allegorical method championed by Henana.[284] In the christological realm he is simply silent. Saint Isaac's reticence on the burning christological issues of his era could indicate that he shared some of Henana's or Sahdona's conceptions, or at least that he hesitated over the two hypostases formula,[285] and that, learning from the fruitless trials they underwent at the hands of the radical conservatives, he deemed silence more profitable and more conducive to the spiritual life. This must, however, remain a conjecture. He is certainly dyophysite,[286] and his confession of our Lord's incarnation is entirely orthodox:

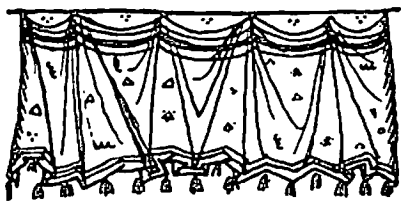
> For humility is the raiment of the Godhead (Divinity). The Word Who became man clothed Himself in it, and therewith He spoke to us in our body. Every man who has been clothed with it has truly been made

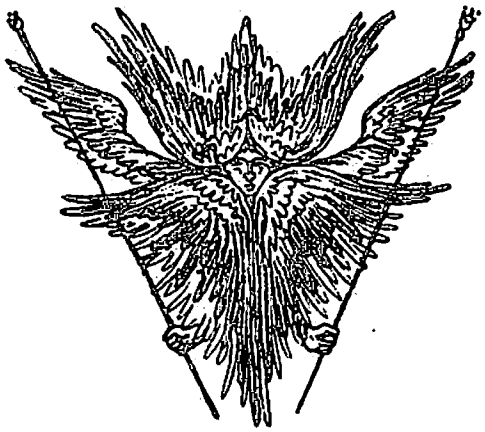
like unto Him Who came down from His own exaltedness, and hid the splendour of His majesty, and concealed His glory with humility, lest creation should be utterly consumed by the contemplation of Him. Creation could not look upon Him unless He took a part of it to Himself, and thus conversed with it, and neither could it hear the words of His mouth face to face.[287]

The heavenly bread is Christ, Who came down from Heaven and gave life to the world. . . . Blessed is he who consumes the bread of love, which is Jesus! He who eats of love eats Christ, the God over all, as John bears witness, saying, 'God is love.'[288]

But the sum of all is that God the Lord surrendered His own Son to death on the Cross for the fervent love of creation. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son over to death for its sake.' This was not, however, because He could not have redeemed us in another way, but so that His surpassing love, manifested hereby, might be a teacher unto us. And by the death of His only-begotten Son He made us near to Himself. Yea, if He had had anything more precious, He would have given it to us, so that by it our race might be His own.[289]

From a christological point of view, Saint Isaac probably stands with the moderates of the Church of Persia, but his homily against foolish zeal witnesses his strong dislike of the "witch-hunting" practices of the extremists, and thus, the sharp tensions within the Persian Church. From out of the midst of these currents Saint Isaac ascended the lofty mountain of stillness, whence he wrote down for us these holy homilies so replete with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May his prayers be with us. Amen.





NOTES

* For a more thorough account of the history of the Persian Church the reader may refer to the following works: J. Labourt, *Le christianisme dans l'empire perse sous la dynastie sassanide* (Paris, 1904); A. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient* I, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (CSCO) 184, Sub. 14 (Louvain, 1958); J.M. Fiey, *Jalons pour une histoire de l'Eglise en Iraq*, CSCO 310, Sub. 36 (Louvain, 1970) and *Communautés syriaques en Iran et Iraq des origines à 1552*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1979); and W.S. McCullough, *A Short History of Syriac Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, Scholars Press (Chico, 1982). In these monographs one may find complete lists of all primary and secondary sources for the history of Persian Christianity.

1. Acts 2:9.
2. See R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 8f.
3. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20:2.
4. See below on the 4th cent. author St. Afrahat.
5. *Jalons*, pp. 32-65.
6. An excellent treatment of the Sasanid state can be found in A. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* (Copenhagen, 1936 [1944]), pp. 93-135.
7. The actual extent of his authority seems to have been disputed as late as the Synod of Beit Lapat (484). See S. Gero, *Barsauma of Nisibis and Persian Christianity in the Fifth Century*, CSCO 426, Sub. 63 (Louvain, 1981), pp. 73-8. The titles 'katholikos' and 'patriarch' were not employed until the 5th century. See J.M. Fiey, 'Les étapes de la prise de conscience de son identité patriarcale par l'église syrienne orientale', *L'Orient Syrien* 12 (1967), pp. 21-2.
8. An inscription executed at Kartir's order reads, 'And Jews and [Buddhist] Sramans and Brahmins and Nasoreans and Christians and Maktak and Zandiks in the empire became smitten.' M. Sprengling, *Third Century Iran, Sapor, and Kartir* (Chicago, 1953), p. 51.
9. Fiey, *Jalons*, pp. 54-5. For her Acts see S. Brock, 'A Martyr at the Sasanid Court under Vahran II: Candida', *Analecta Bollandiana* 96 (1978), pp. 167-81.
10. See W. deVries, 'Antiochien und Seleucia-Ctesiphon, Patriarch und Katholikos?', *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant* 3 (Studi i Testi 233), pp. 429-50, and Fiey, 'Les étapes'.
11. Ed. by I. Parisot in *Patrologia Syriaca* (PS) 1, 2 (Paris, 1894, 1907). Eight of these are translated into English in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 13, pp. 345-412.
12. PS 1:43.
13. PS 1:785.
14. PS 1:785-8.
15. The expression 'Light from Light', implied in the New Testament (John 8:12, James 1:17, Heb. 1:3), is probably of apostolic origin and part of the common Christian heritage; hence it is found

in 3rd cent. writings of diverse localities (e.g. St. Hippolytos of Rome [PG 10.817], St. Dionysios of Alexandria [PG 25. 508]). In the early 4th cent. it was known to St. Eustathios of Antioch (PG 24. 837).

16. PS 1:116.
17. Zoroastrianism is simply ignored, which may indicate that he judged it dangerous to write anything against the state religion; the great persecutions had, indeed, already begun by 340.
18. PS 1:521.
19. PS 1:536.
20. PS 1:537.
21. PS 1:536.
22. Sozomen reports that the Jews also strove to have the Christians persecuted (*Ecclesiastical History* 2:9).
23. From the acts of the Katholikos Shem'on (Simon) Bar Sabba'e, edited by Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum Syriace* 2 (Paris, 1891), p. 136.
24. *Life of Constantine* 4:13, PG 20. 1161.
25. An inscription of Shapur I, M. Sprengling, op. cit. p. 14.
26. The Syriac life of St. Symeon the Stylite (+458) records how Na'am, the Arab chieftain, said: 'When the report about Mar Symeon was heard among us, and some of our Arabs began to go up to him, the chiefs of my camp came and said to me, "If you give them leave to go up to him, they are going to become Christians, and will cleave to the Romans and will rebel against you and leave you."' Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum* 4 (Paris, 1894), p. 597.
27. *Le christianisme*, pp. 43-82, 104-30, 176-91, 234-6.
28. *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient* I, p. 234f.
29. *Jalons*, pp. 45-55, 85-99.
30. Op. cit. p. 82.
31. A late 8th cent. collection of the decisions and canons of the Persian Church, ed. and trans. into French by J.-B. Chabot (Paris, 1902). It is a document of primary importance for Persian church history.
32. *Synodicon Orientale* (SO), p. 18 (255-6). One may perhaps hypothesize that St. Maruta, acting in accord with Mar Isaac the Katholikos, elicited this epistle from the western bishops in order to show honour to Yazdegard. The Council also carefully established the prerogatives of the katholikos, which were apparently questioned by some of the local bishops.
33. SO, p. 18 (255).
34. This probably refers to Christian burial, a major bone of contention with the Zoroastrians.
35. This may mean only that he gave permission that this be done by the Christians themselves.
36. SO, pp. 17-18 (254).
37. St. Maruta translated the original form of the Creed formulated in 325, not the revision of the Second Ecumenical Council commonly used today. See A. de Halleux, 'Le symbole des évêques perses au synode de Séleucie-Ctésiphon' in G. Wiessner (ed.), *Erkenntnisse und Meinungen* 2 (Wiesbaden, 1978), pp. 161-90.
38. The petition of the Council of 420 indicates that more canons were agreed upon than were actually set down. Perhaps this refers to the canons of the local councils held in the Roman lands.
39. SO, p. 39 (279).
40. SO, p. 39 (280).
41. One might also include the hostility and frequent oppression of the government.
42. In his *Ecclesiastical History* (5:38) Theodoretos of Cyrus, a contemporary, gives the following description: 'And on the death of his father, Varahran the son of Yazdegard took up the king-

dom in succession as well as the war against piety, and when he died in turn, he left both conjoined to his son. To relate the various kinds of punishments and the specially devised tortures inflicted upon the pious is no easy task. The hands of some were flayed, the back of others; of others they stripped the head of skin from the forehead to the beard; others were enveloped in split reeds with the cut part turned inward against the body and tied round with tight bandages from head to foot; then each of the reeds was dragged out by force so as to cause bitter agony while tearing away the adjacent portions of skin; pits were dug and carefully greased in which hordes of rats were put; then they let down the athletes of piety, bound hand and foot, so as not to be able to protect themselves from the vermin, to be food for the rats, and the rats, pressed by hunger, little by little devoured the flesh of the saints, causing them long and terrible suffering.' PG 82. 1272-3.

43. Celebrated by the Church on Nov. 27.
44. See Labourt, op. cit. pp. 104-18; also *Chronique de Séert*, Patrologia Orientalis (PO) V, pp. 305-13.
45. A. Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis*, CSCO 266, Sub. 26 (Louvain, 1965) and *The Statutes of the School of Nisibis*, Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile 12 (Stockholm, 1962); also E.R. Hayes, *L'école d'Edesse* (Paris, 1930).
46. In his *Nisibean Hymns*, St. Ephraim praises the bishop Valagesh as one 'learned [in Scripture] among the readers [thereof]' (Hymn 15:8, CSCO 218, p. 41). The 'readers' are taken to mean 'scholars'.
47. 'The rulers [i.e. of the neighbouring towns] and the wealthy sent their children there to study' (*Vie d'Alexandre l'Acémète*, PO VI, p. 674).
48. Although there were many small schools in Persia, these did not offer the advanced training given at the School of Edessa and were undoubtedly closed during persecution. See the history of Narsai in Barhadbeshabba, *Cause de la fondation des écoles*, PO IV, pp. 596-7.
49. See Vööbus, *History*, p. 14.
50. He died in 428.
51. Not long after Theodore's death, Theodoretos wrote the following: 'When the divine Theodore was guiding the Church of Antioch, Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia, the teacher of the entire Church, the triumphant warrior against every heretical phalanx, ended his life. He had enjoyed the teaching of the great Diodore [of Tarsus], and was a companion and fellow worker of the most divine John [Chrysostom], for indeed, in company they both partook of the spiritual streams of Diodore. He passed 36 years in his bishopric, fighting against the battle array of Arius and Eunomios, wrestling against the thievish band of Apollinarios, and offering the divine sheep a most excellent pasture. His brother Polychronios was shepherd of the Church of Apamea, and a man endued with grace of speech and a radiant life.' *Ecclesiastical History* 5:39, PG 82. 1277.
52. For the best recent analysis of these controversies see A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* 1 (Atlanta, 1965), the English translation by J. Bowden of his *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*.
53. Because Antioch, due to its geographical location, was a confluence of all the cultural and intellectual streams of the eastern Mediterranean region, St. Basil writes, 'Could any of the Churches of the world be more important than the Church of Antioch!' (Letter 66. PG 32. 425). See D. S. Wallace-Hadrill's recent monograph *Christian Antioch* (Cambridge, 1982) for an examination of Antioch's position and the development of "Antiochene" views.
54. Theodoretos (PG 83. 1440) and Facundus of Hermiane (PG 18. 692) claim that he held the first place of honour among the assembled bishops.
55. See the quotation given by St. Athanasios the Great in his *Discourses Against the Arians* 3:26. PG 26. 377-80.

56. He writes, for instance: 'Now if, as Paul says, "In Christ dwelleth all the fullness of divinity" (Col. 2:9), it is firstly evident that what dwells is other than what is dwelt in. If, then, the natures differ from each other, neither the suffering of death, nor the appetite for food, nor the desire for drink, nor sleep, nor sorrow, nor weariness, nor the shedding of tears, nor any other change, could properly have joint existence with the plenitude of divinity, since divinity is immutable by nature. These things are to be ascribed separately to the man, which consists of soul and body' (M. Spanneut, *Recherches sur les écrits d'Eustathe d'Antioch* [Lille, 1948], frag. 47, p. 109).
57. The concept of "nature", especially in christological usage, was as yet undefined. St. Eustathios and his successors conceived of it concretely, including in it what was later defined as "hypostasis" (see below, n. 91), e.g. Christ's "human nature" means not only the abstract humanity common to all mankind, but also the specific human being (the Man Jesus) in/by which the humanity is made concrete, real. As a result, this human nature can be a subject of attribution to which the "human things" are ascribed. The same can be said of the divine nature in Christ. The difficulties created by this usage of "nature" became evident only later when it became necessary to define the unity of the two natures in the one Son of God: "nature" so used appropriates to itself a good deal of what we now call "person". In fact, with a similar, but not identical, conception of "nature" the Apollinarians, and later the Monophysites, viewed anyone who spoke of two natures as a believer in 'two Sons', i.e. two separate persons (the teaching commonly called Nestorianism). The Cappadocian distinction of nature and hypostasis, and the subsequent identification of hypostasis and person by the Council of Chalcedon, was the solution to this difficulty; unfortunately it was not easy for many to redefine thus their theological terminology, which had already become traditional.
58. The most thorough study of Diodore is N. Fetisov, *Diodor Tarsskiy* (Kiev, 1915). Unfortunately only a few fragments remain of Diodore's theological writings.
59. The Eustathians, lead by Paulinos, equating hypostasis with essence (as in the original form of the Nicene Creed), spoke of only one hypostasis of the Holy Trinity (see F. Cavallera, *Le schisme d'Antioche* [Paris, 1905], p. 301 f.) and were very extreme in separating the human from the divine in Christ. (Apollinarios writes: 'They [i.e. the great Cappadocians] fall into the division evilly introduced by the Paulinians who, slavishly following Paul of Samosata, say that He Who is from Heaven (Whom they confess to be God) is other than he [the man] who is from earth, saying that the one is uncreated, the other is created. . . .' ['Epistle to Dionysios' in H. Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea* (Tübingen, 1904) pp. 256-7]). On Diodore's background see Grillmeier, op. cit. p. 352f.
60. Diodore writes: 'We do not affirm that there are two [Sons] from the one Father, but that there is one Son of God by nature, even God the Word. He, however, who [or, that which, i.e. the humanity] is from Mary is by nature of David, but by grace of God. We concede also this: the two are one Son, and with this contradictory statement we shall leave the matter.' A little afterwards he continues: 'By grace the man [or, humanity] from Mary is the Son, but by nature God the Word is the Son. The former pertains to grace and not to nature, whereas the latter pertains to nature and not to grace. There are not two Sons' (M. Brière, 'Quelques fragments syriaques de Diodore, évêque de Tarse', *Revue de l'Orient Chrètien* 30 (1946), frag. 30, 31).
61. An early example of the use of this principle can be found in St. Meliton of Sardis' (+ end of the 2nd cent.) homily *On Pascha* 96: 'He who suspended the earth is suspended. He who fixed the heavens is affixed. . . . God is murdered' (text published in O. Perler, *Méliton de Sardes, Sur la Pâque*, Sources Chrètiennes 123, p. 116). For a thorough explanation of the "exchange of properties" see St. John of Damascus, *Precise Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3: 4. PG 94. 997-1000.
62. E.g. Diodore's justification of the term "Theotokos": 'Nevertheless Mary is said to be Theotokos

by means of the union, because the seed of Abraham is mighty God on account of the union to God the Word. She is also truly acknowledged to be Anthropotokos. For if by reason of nature Mary is Anthropotokos, it is not because She gave birth by nature that She is Theotokos, but because that which is of David, man by nature, was united to God the Word.' This fragment is preserved in a letter of Eutherios of Tyana to Alexander of Hieropolis (in M. Tetz, *Eine Antilogie des Eutherios von Tyana*, Patristische Texte und Studien 1 [Berlin, 1964], p. 62).

63. Lietzmann, op. cit. frag. 9, p. 206.
64. Ibid. frag. 149, p. 247.
65. This charge was answered by St. Athanasios in his *Epistle to Epictetos* 9. PG 26. 1064-5.
66. See Grillmeier, op. cit. p. 335.
67. See St. Epiphanios of Cyprus, *Ankyrotos* 77. PG 43. 161.
68. 'Thus the body lived by the sanctification of divinity and not by the constitution of a human soul' (*On Union*, Lietzmann, op. cit. p. 190).
69. See above, n. 59.
70. See the fragment from Theodore's lost work *Against Eunomios* published by L. Abramowski, 'Ein unbekanntes Zitat', *Le Muséon*, 71 (1958), p. 99.
71. E.g. 'For thus, the body increasing in stature, there increased as well the manifestation of the divinity in the body, and before all there was displayed that it is the temple of God and that God was in the body' (St. Athanasios, *Discourses Against the Arians* 3:53. PG 26. 433).
72. H. B. Swete, *Theodore of Mopsuestia, On the Epistles of St. Paul* 2 (Cambridge, 1882), p. 296.
73. This use of "son" derives from anti-Arian argumentation first employed by St. Athanasios, whereby the Son exists *by nature* from the Father, but creatures *by will* (see G. Florovsky, 'The Concept of Creation in Saint Athanasios', *Studia Patristica* 6, Texte und Untersuchungen 81, p. 49). "Son" is an expression for "what is by nature" and "what is *homoousios*" (cf. the Syriac term *bar ituta* [son of essence] which translates *homoousios*), whereas "creature" or "work" is an expression for "what exists by God's will". Theodore writes: 'If He is Son, He is not a work; and if He is a work, He is not Son. If He is Son, He is of Him [i.e. the Father] and not external to Him. But if He is a work, He is external to Him and not of Him or like unto Him' (*The Catechetical Homilies* 4:3, ed. R. Tonneau, Studi i Testi 145 [Rome, 1949], p. 80).
74. See Swete, op. cit. ibid.
75. 'It is quite evident that the divinity could not suffer, but because of the unification, they are one. Therefore, though it was another [i.e. the human nature] which suffered, the whole thing is assumed by the divinity' (*Commentary on John*, ed. J. -M. Vosté, CSCO Ser. 4, Vol. 3, Syriac text p. 73).
76. See Swete 2, pp. 307-8. This is directed against the Adoptionists.
77. Swete 2, p. 297.
78. *The Catechetical Homilies* 8:10, p. 200.
79. See Swete 2, pp. 307-8, and also p. 300: 'But when we look closely at the union, then we proclaim that the two natures are one person (prosôpon), since the humanity through the divinity receives honour from all creation, and the divinity accomplishes in the humanity all that is needful.' Theodore writes very frequently about the 'one person', e.g.: 'For when the natures are examined separately in their distinctive characteristics, some things [said of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ] are appropriate to one nature, and some to the other, according to the order of things which are attributed to any nature. But when [the natures are examined] in the oneness (*or*, unity) of person, the two are said to be unified communicatively and by that which befits the [person] because of the union. Thus even something which is by nature distinct is seen to be said [of Him] conjointly because of the union' (E. Sachau, *Theodori Mopsuesteni, Fragmenta Syriaca* [Leipzig, 1869], p. 83).

80. Grillmeier, op. cit. p. 434, observes: 'In this way, then, Theodore posits *one prosôpon* in Christ, and this *one prosôpon* is achieved by the Logos in giving Himself to the human nature which He unites to Himself. But this self-giving is not understood as a "union in hypostasis and according to hypostasis" in the sense of later theology. Nevertheless, Theodore's christology is not simply opposed to later understanding of the union in Christ. He falls just short of it, but is open to a unity of person in the Chalcedonian sense. He has already clearly seen the problem of finding in Christ a basis for a strict union between the Logos and manhood which is not a confusion between two natures.'
81. I.e. he followed the traditions of his forebears in Antioch. A comparison of how Theodore and the great Cappadocian Fathers (cf. St. Gregory of Nyssa *Against Eunomios* 6:2. PG 45. 713-17) distinguished the two natures shows clearly that "nature" for the former was something concrete (i.e. including in itself the concept of hypostasis), whereas "nature" for the latter was only concrete in or through a hypostasis. Hence for Theodore the natures both exist concretely and form one person (prosôpon), but for the Cappadocians, the natures exist as becoming concrete in one person (hypostasis). Although Theodore struggles to express a real unity of the two natures, his concept of "nature" hinders him from reaching the more substantial definition of the Cappadocian Fathers, adopted later by the Fourth Ecumenical Council.
82. Only one instance is recorded where Theodore scandalized some of his hearers by his interpretations of Scripture. When Theodore perceived the turmoil caused by his words, he quickly 'corrected his statement publicly in the church without embarrassment'. John of Antioch cites this incident in his letter to Nestorios as an example for the latter to follow. See E. Schwartz, *Acta Conciliorum Œcumenicorum* (ACO) I, 1, 1, pp. 30-31.
83. See the text cited below, n. 85.
84. For the complete history of the controversy see M. Richard, 'Proclus de Constantinople et le Théopaschisme', *Opera Minora* 2 (52), and L. Abramowski, 'Der Streit um Diodor und Theodor zwischen den beiden ephesinischen Konzilien', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 67 (1955-6), pp. 252-87. St. Cyril's final position on the matter of Theodore, as expressed to St. Proclos of Constantinople, was the following: 'Since he (Theodore) has departed to God, I think it suffices that those who are orthodox in faith should delete improper passages written by him whenever they come across his books' (PG 77. 344-5).
85. The council wrote St. Cyril, as St. Cyril puts it, that they would rather be 'burned alive' than renounce their teachers (PG 77. 344). Among other things the council replied in defence of Theodore: 'Who, moreover, being possessed of understanding, does not know that those things which were spoken by the blessed Theodore in an unfortunate manner, he spoke by the constraint of necessity? For the entire Orient, among those who have gone before us, in common proclaimed him as one who possessed great power of doctrine in opposing heresies. Against these he wrestled and contended, often employing a certain division, not doing so from a perverse way of thinking, but rather judging it efficacious for him to employ such means against the heretics. He did not disregard or deny the extreme union [of the natures], far be it! for his books are filled with this sort of statement. On the contrary, he rather divided the properties of the natures, even as the battle which he waged against the heretics constrained him continually to declare' (for the text see E. Schwartz, *Konzilstudien*, Schriften der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft in Strassburg 20 [Strassburg, 1914], p. 65).
86. The Council wrote: 'And when we had thus professed our faith, we began the examination of the Three Chapters, and first we set before us that of Theodore of Mopsuestia. And when the blasphemies contained in his books were brought into the midst, we marvelled at God's long-suffering . . . and all of us, kindled with zeal by the exposition of these blasphemies against God, broke forth in

denunciations and anathemas against Theodore, as though he were alive and present' (ACO 4, 1, p. 210). For further discussion of the Council's condemnation of Theodore, see below. Among the numerous monographs on Theodore in modern theological literature the following are of greatest interest: R.A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (Oxford, 1963) and G. Koch, *Die Heilsverwirklichung bei Theodor von Mopsuestia* (Munich, 1965).

87. Swete 2, p. 300.
88. E. Sachau, op. cit. p. 71.
89. The divergence of the Syriac translation has been a source of considerable debate, both in the ancient Persian Church and in modern scholarship. M. Richard, in his article 'La tradition des fragments du traité *περὶ τῆς ἐναν θρωπήσεως* de Théodore de Mopsueste' (*Opera Minora* 2 [41], p. 62f.) regards the Syriac as the authentic reading and the Greek as an intentional corruption by those who collected unfavourable passages from Theodore's works with the aim of having him condemned. F. Sullivan, in his book *The Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Analecta Gregoriana 82 [Rome, 1956], p. 58f.) strongly disputes the value of the Syriac. J. Romanides ('Highlights in the Debate over Theodore of Mopsuestia's Christology and Some Suggestions for a Fresh Approach', *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 5 [1959-60], p. 156) offers the plausible explanation—if one assumes that the work was translated after Chalcedon—that the Syriac translation was performed by a 'mild chalcedonian'. A. Grillmeier, op. cit. p. 439, finally, makes the important point that for Theodore: 'A being has a *prosôpon* in so far as it is a *physis* and a hypostasis. The duality in Christ is to be sought on the side of the *physis* and the hypostasis, and the unity is on the side of the *prosôpon*.' It is, then, probably safe to assume that the words 'and one hypostasis' are an addition of the translator. For the confusion later caused in the Persian Church, see below.
90. See A. Klijn's study of the use of *keyana* in St. Afrahat: 'The Word *kejan* in Aphraates', *Vigiliae Christianae* 12 (1958), pp. 57-66. He demonstrates that "nature" in this early Syriac author means the 'existence of somebody or something as defined by the way it appears to men' (p. 66), not the abstract substance or essence; this is due to the Semitic concept of being as something dynamic, personal, not static and impersonal, as the ancient Greeks conceived of it. It is not improbable that the Antiochene concept of concrete nature has Semitic origins and was thus more easily assimilated into *keyana* than the abstract sense of *φύσις*. The great Cappadocians interpreted "nature" in the abstract sense, i.e. the common element in beings of the same species which becomes concrete only through the hypostasis (see below, n. 91); this definition was eventually adopted by the Church at Chalcedon. The moderates of the monophysite movement, however, unwittingly following the Apollinarians, conceived of "nature" only in conjunction with "hypostasis", the two being inseparably bound; hence "nature" was interpreted to mean a self-existent, living being. Christ is 'one nature', not in the sense that the divine and human in Him were confused and altered (Theopaschism), but that He is one, self-existent, living Being. On the other hand, 'two natures' must necessarily mean that there are two separate beings, two Sons; therefore all Dyophysites are Nestorians. But if "nature" is interpreted in its abstract sense or in an Antiochene concrete sense, then to teach one nature in Christ must imply either that one of the natures was absorbed or that a new, third, divine-human, composite nature was constituted, errors which, in fact, some of the extreme Monophysites did profess.
91. The original form of the Nicene Creed apparently uses hypostasis as an equivalent of 'essence' (*οὐσία*) in the phrase 'those who say that [the Son] is of another hypostasis or essence' (for the text see T.H. Bindley, *The Œcumenical Documents of the Faith* [London, 1950], p. 26. Hypostasis could here be a simple translation of the Latin *substantia*, which the Council is equating with 'essence' [ibid. p. 20]). St. Basil, in his famous letter 38, gives the first concise definition of the trinitarian usage of hypostasis, differentiating it from nature and essence: hypostasis is 'that which

sets forth and circumscribes in a specific thing what is both common and uncircumscribed [i.e. the nature or essence] by means of the properties that are made manifest' (PG 32. 328). Thus the hypostasis sets forth the nature which subsists (ὑφίσταται) in the hypostasis (ibid.) and manifests its properties through the hypostasis. As M. Richard points out, the great Cappadocian Fathers only used hypostasis to distinguish between things having the same nature, consubstantials ('Le mot "hypostase" aux IVe et Ve siècles', *Opera Minora* 2 [42], p. 16); therefore the question of whether Christ's human nature had a hypostasis distinct from that of the divine hypostasis of the Logos never arose for them. Even so, their definition would imply that Christ's human nature, as being distinct from that of other men, was set forth in its own hypostasis. To thus attribute a hypostasis to the human nature means only that the human nature subsists (ὑφίσταται) in a concrete, discernible way. The Apollinarians, however, interpreted hypostasis to mean *self*-subsistence; a thing has a hypostasis when it exists of and by itself (cf. Lietzmann, op. cit. pp. 299-301). When deprived of a νοῦς, Christ's flesh has no self-existence, hence no hypostasis of its own. If, however, Christ's human nature exists in its own hypostasis, Christ becomes two self-subsisting beings, two real separate persons, the Logos and Jesus, which teaching constitutes what was later condemned under the name 'Nestorianism'. The Monophysites, following the Cappadocian definition of hypostasis as an identifiable nature, and adding thereto Apollinarios' concept of self-subsistence, judged anyone who affirmed two natures as a Nestorian: 'The insolent definition composed by the Council [of Chalcedon] . . . dared to lay down two natures with regard to Christ. Now it is evident that they [i.e. the natures] are also hypostases, because it is impossible that a nature recognized and counted by itself should not also be a hypostasis. And a hypostasis, likewise, cannot be conceived alone unless one considers that it also has a person (*parsopa*), for a hypostasis can in no wise exist without a person. If, then, there are two hypostases, because there are two natures, and if there are two persons, because there are two hypostases, it is necessary to conclude that there are also two Sons, and consequently, two Gods as well' (Philoxenos of Mabbug, *Letter to the Monks of Senoun*, Ed. A. de Halleux, CSCO 231, pp. 11-12). The Antiochene bishops did not assimilate the concept of self-subsistence to hypostasis and therefore they did not find in the assertion of two hypostases a confession of two Sons, but only two concretely existing natures: 'Therefore, if each nature is perfect, and both have come together into the Same—i.e. the "form of God" assumed the "form of the servant"—it is pious to confess, on the one hand, one person (*prosôpon*) and one Son and Christ, and, on the other hand, it is not improper to speak of two hypostases, i.e. natures; indeed, it is very fitting' (Theodoretos of Cyrus' reply to St. Cyril's third anathema, ACO I, 1, 6, p. 117). Nevertheless, the more common Antiochene confession does not use the disputed term hypostasis, acknowledging only two natures and one person (e.g. the *Formulary of Renunion*, ACO I, 1, 4, p. 17). The Council of Chalcedon dogmatized one hypostasis in Christ by disassociating it somewhat from its mere qualification of nature, while retaining the connotation of self-subsistence, i.e. real person. Hence the two natures with their properties are made concrete *in* one Being or Person (hypostasis): ' . . . the difference of the natures being in no wise abolished by reason of the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and [both] concurring into one person (*prosôpon*) and one hypostasis; not as though divided into two persons, but one and the Self-same Son and only-begotten God, Word, and Lord Jesus Christ' (ACO II, 1, 2, p. 129). The Monophysites violently rejected this subtle shift of meaning, but the Antiochene bishops accepted it as long as it did not imply that one of the natures lost its completeness (see M. Richard, 'La lettre de Théodoret à Jean d'Egées', *Opera Minora* 2 [48]).

92. The Greek word *prosôpon* has a great variety of meanings (see Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, pp. 1186-9, also the useful list of patristic citations in Driver and Hodgson, *Nestorius, The Bazaar of Heraclides* [Oxford, 1925], pp. 402-10) derived from its root sense of 'that which is before

one's face' (*πρό, ὤψ*), 'that which is in view'. By the 1st cent. A.D. it had gained a meaning quite close to our 'person' (see M. Nédoncelle, 'Prosopon et persona dans l'antiquité classique', *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 22 [1948], pp. 277-84). To combat Sabellianism as well as Arianism, St. Basil determined that it is more correct to speak of three hypostases of the Holy Trinity than of three prosôpa, and if one should speak of a divine prosôpon, it must be understood as 'existing in a true hypostasis' (Letter 210. PG 32. 776). In the hypostasis concur all the properties of a concrete nature (Letter 38. PG 32. 326), whereas the prosôpon is merely the unified expression and appearance of the hypostasis; there is no prosôpon that is without a hypostasis (*ἀνυπόστατον*—Letter 210. PG 32. 776). In technical theological usage prosôpon thus yielded much of its meaning of 'person' to hypostasis. Every concretely existing nature must subsist in a hypostasis that possesses an identifiable prosôpon. Clearly this essentially trinitarian terminology causes some difficulties when applied to christology, for if there are two real natures in Christ, He should have two hypostases and two prosôpa (the Monophysite argument); if, on the other hand, there is one prosôpon, there must be one composite (*σύνθετον*) nature, as Apollinarios taught (for Apollinarios 'the prosôpon makes known the very being and subsistence [*τὸ ὑφεστάναι*] of each thing' [Lietzmann, op. cit. p. 172]; therefore one prosôpon can only 'make known' one nature, and conversely, two natures will make themselves known in two prosôpa). To avoid the conclusion that Christ's one prosôpon necessarily implies that He possessed only one (compound) nature, Theodore distinguishes two kinds of outward expression made by the prosôpon: one which 'makes known the hypostasis and that which each one of us is', and one which 'makes known honour, majesty, and worshipfulness'. The one prosôpon of the historical Christ does not make known 'the essence of the two natures', thus showing them to be compounded, but the majesty and honour of God the Word 'revealed in the human nature' (see the fragment published by L. Abramowski, art. cit. p. 99). Theodore is here trying to establish the prosôpon as a medium where the properties of the two natures converge without causing the natures to become confused. Further, since it is the Word Who 'works all things in the human nature' (see above, n. 77), the one prosôpon is the Word's own prosôpon. Although Theodore's new qualification of prosôpon is a precursor of Chalcedon, his 'one prosôpon' remains an outward manifestation of a reality, the reality of the incarnation, but is not in itself something concrete. The Council of Chalcedon brought prosôpon back to its earlier non-technical sense of 'person' (St. Leo's *persona*), identifying it with self-subsistent hypostasis, and identifying hypostasis with real person. With the hypostasis-person thus freed from its necessary connexion with nature, the two natures in Christ could unite in it without confusion or loss of their properties. Christ's hypostasis-person is the subject of all His divine and human actions, His eternality, His birth, His miracles, and His death; in it is established the principle of the "exchange of properties". The Antiochene 'one prosôpon' likewise justifies the "exchange of properties" (e.g. see the quotation in n. 79), but its use as the unique subject of attribution depends on the particular author's conception of it and on how much he is influenced by the old notion of concrete nature. In general, the Persian Christians interpreted the 'one *parsopa*' to mean something very close to 'one person', i.e. a real subject of attribution.

93. The word *συνάφεια* literally means that things are 'bound together so closely that they touch'. As contrasted to *ἕνωσις*, *συνάφεια* emphasizes that two things brought together can still be recognized as two, though they have been united. *ἕνωσις*, on the other hand, can mean that two things become *one* to such an extent that they can no longer be recognized as two. In common usage, however, both simply mean 'union', according to the context. In christological application St. Basil, Apollinarios, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and even Nestorios (especially in the *Book of Heracleides*) employ both terms interchangeably (see the useful collection of texts in Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, pp. 1308-10). St. Cyril seems to have been the first to criticize *συνάφεια* (see Lampe, op.

cit. p. 1309), finding in it an allusion to a loose and unsubstantial union, 'conceived of merely by closeness and juxtaposition' (ACO I, 1, 6, p. 41), such as he understood Nestorios to proclaim. After this time the term, as used in christology, was branded with a "Nestorian" connotation which it does not necessarily have. We have translated it by 'unification'.

94. For a thorough study of Barsauma and his influence see S. Gero, *Barsauma of Nisibis and Persian Christianity in the Fifth Century*, CSCO 426, Sub. 63, (Louvain, 1981).
95. The most complete edition of Narsai's homilies is A. Mingana, *Narsai Doctoris Syri Homiliae et Carmina*, I, II (Mosul, 1905). See also the five homilies ed. and trans. by F. McLeod, *Narsai's Metrical Homilies*, PO 40, fasc. 1 (Turnhout, 1979). A brief description of each of the 85 homilies is given by I. Ibrahim in his dissertation, *La doctrine christologique de Narsai* (Rome, 1975), pp. 97-222. We wish to thank the author for making this excellent work available to us.
96. 'Those who labour for the right faith have written me from Edessa that Rabbula, the most illustrious, has gone astray from the dogmas of the truth and persecutes the defenders of Orthodoxy, such that he even anathematizes openly in church the blessed Theodore, the teacher of Orthodoxy, and spreads about ten thousand things against him. Indeed, he even anathematizes those who read his works, as well as what we have writtten, and whoever has, and does not carry to the flames, the volumes of Theodore, and also those who relish anything else except Cyril's writings. He, indeed, says and preaches that there is only one nature of Christ, and vigorously expels those who say anything else' (from the letter of Andrew of Samosata to Alexander of Hieropolis. ACO I, 4, 2, p. 86). Hiba claims that Rabbula had personal malice against Theodore because he was rebuked by him in a public assembly (ACO II, 1, 3, p. 33).
97. Narsai tends to steer away from strictly theological subjects, being more engaged in scriptural and liturgical exegesis (see Vööbus, op. cit. p. 83).
98. I.e. honoured His bodily nature by the glorious works of His divinity. *On the Nativity*, ll. 441-3, 501-6. Ed. McLeod, pp. 64 (65), 68 (69).
99. The significance and originality of this explanation is underscored by I. Ibrahim, op. cit. pp. 346-8.
100. Text cited in McLeod, op. cit. p. 27.
101. Mingana, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 10.
102. See I. Ibrahim, op. cit. pp. 368-73.
103. See his well-known homily in defence of the 'Three Doctors', Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorios, ed. F. Martin, *Journal Asiatique* 14 (1899), pp. 446-92, and French translation, 15 (1900), pp. 469-525. Our unique source for knowledge of the contemporary reports concerning the Nestorian controversy entering into Persia from the School of Edessa is Hiba's famous letter to Mari the Persian. About 433 Hiba, as a professor of the School, reported to the former pupil Mari: 'Nestorios said that the blessed Mary is not Theotokos, so that many thought that he [adhered] to the heresy of Paul of Samosata, who said that Christ was a mere man. But Cyril wishing to overthrow the words of Nestorios, slipped and fell into the dogma of Apollinarios . . . for he wrote twelve chapters . . . [teaching] that there is one nature of both the divinity and the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that one must not, he says, separate the [scriptural] statements [i.e. so as to refer to one nature or the other], either those made by the Lord Himself about Himself, or those made by the Evangelists about Him' (ACO II, 1, 3, p. 32). Hereafter Hiba tells of the schism of John of Antioch and the joyous news of how the schism was healed. He was very pleased with the Formulary of Reunion and further that St. Cyril has anathematized 'those who say that the divinity suffered, and those who say that there is one nature of the divinity and the humanity' (ibid. p. 34). On the Persian view of Nestorios, see below, n. 125.
104. See I. Ibrahim, op. cit. pp. 338-45.
105. SO, p. 54 (301).

106. See the fragment of Barsauma's synod of Beit Lapat (484) which defends Theodore against the same calumniators: 'Let no one among us entertain any doubt concerning this holy man because of the evil reports which the heretics have spread in diverse places about him . . .' (SO, p. 211 [475-6]).
107. Canon 2 of the same council perhaps indicates that many of these monks were natives of Persia (SO, p. 55 [302-3]). Such a party in Edessa is mentioned by Shem'on (Symeon) of Beit Arsham (*Biblioteca Orientalis* [BO] I, pp. 352-3). See also Fiey, *Jalons*, p. 113f.
108. S. Gero, op. cit. pp. 110-19, has convincingly demonstrated that the story of massacres of the Monophysites of Persia committed by Persian troops under the direction of Barsauma is a monophysite fable.
109. SO, pp. 54-5 (302).
110. The monophyite argument, originally presented by Shem'on of Beit Arsham (+ before 548), asserts that the 'new faith' of Nestorios, Theodore, and Paul of Samosata was first introduced into Persia by the students of the School of Edessa expelled after the death of Hiba (457), who then became bishops and called the councils of Beit Lapat and Beit 'Edrai (BO I, p. 354): 'They composed a new faith of their own which introduces a quaternity instead of the Trinity by confessing the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and Christ in two natures' (p. 356). No historical evidence indicates that the Persians themselves felt the bishops were introducing a new faith, but only that a new terminology was established; hence no objections were raised. To account for Dyophysitism in Persia, the monophysite argument must claim that five bishops and several teachers managed instantaneously to convert almost all the Christians of the vast Persian realm to their new faith, one, moreover, which was exceedingly absurd—if Shem'on's description is accurate. This is hardly credible.
111. SO, p. 528 (535).
112. SO, p. 65 (314).
113. I.e. if this Papa of Beit Lapat is the same person as the one mentioned by Shem'on of Beit Arsham (loc. cit. p. 352).
114. See *Chronique de Séert*, PO VII, 2, p. 147-52.
115. On his long career see Vööbus, op. cit. pp. 134-210.
116. Barhadbeshabba, *Histoire*, PO IX, 5, p. 622.
117. Theodore's theological works also underwent a similar adaptation, perhaps at the hands of Mar Aba I, who likewise taught at the School during this period. This is hypothesized by W. Wolska in *La topographie chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustès, théologie et science au VIe siècle* (Paris, 1964), p. 84: 'Since the three authors [Cosmas Indicopleustes, Thomas of Edessa, and Giwarguis (George) the Katholikos] recapitulate the ideas scattered in the works of Theodore, grouping them together in a similar fashion, and since they only adopt a few of his themes, fitting them, however, into a sort of frame *ne varietur* appropriated to whatsoever subject, one may conjecture the existence of an intermediate source, the influence of which supplements Theodore's original teaching. This was utilized in the 6th cent. by Thomas and Cosmas, and in the 7th cent. by Giwarguis. The simplification, the vulgarization, so to speak, of the theories of Theodore seem to indicate that they underwent systematic modification in a definite milieu.'
118. The 10th cent. compilation entitled *Gannat Bussame* is the only remaining source of the scriptural commentaries of the Katholikos Mar Aba II (+ 741). In his study on the *Gannat Bussame*, G. J. Reinink demonstrates: 'The Mar Aba exegesis exhibits a kind of approach to the holy Scriptures whereby the many possible interpretations rooted in the domains of diverse traditions come together into complex interrelation. The Theodoran exegesis is by no means the norm, in the sense that it excludes other possible interpretations, nor even in the sense that a primary and prominent

place is reserved for it' (G. J. Reinink, *Studien zur Quellen und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangelienkommentars der Gannat Bussame*, CSCO 414 [Louvain, 1979], p. 289). Mar Aba draws frequently from the commentaries of St. Ephraim and other early Syriac sources, from the writings of the three Great Cappadocians, but he has a special preference for the commentaries of St. John Chrysostom, whenever available. Theodore is not disregarded, but he has lost his seat of primacy. The other known compilers of commentaries in the 8th and 9th centuries used Theodore to varying degrees, but none relied on him exclusively.

119. See L. Van Rompay, 'A Hitherto Unknown Nestorian Commentary on Genesis and Exodus 1-9, 32', *Orientalia Lovaniensa Periodica* 4 (1973), pp. 121-33, 5 (1974), pp. 79-125, for the use of Theodore's writings and those of other commentators in this early commentary. For the *Scholion* of Theodore Bar Koni see L. Brade, *Untersuchungen zum Scholienbuch des Theodore Bar Konai; die Übernahme des Erbes von Theodoros von Mopsuestia in der nestorianische Kirche* (Wiesbaden, 1975) and S. Griffith, 'Theodore Bar Koni's *Scholion*', *Dumbarton Oaks Symposium 1980: East of Byzantium* (Washington, 1982), pp. 53-72.
120. *The Christian Topography*, PG 88. 73.
121. *Chronique de Séert*, 2, 27. PO VII, 2, p. 156.
122. There can be no certainty of this. However, the Syriac translator writes to his patron in his preface, 'You undertook the labour of a long journey from the East to the West' (Ed. Bedjan, *Nestorius, Le livre d'Héraclide*, p. 3). This, perhaps, refers to Mar Aba's travels. Cyrus of Edessa, one of Mar Aba's disciples who taught at the School of Seleucia, has been suggested as a possible translator. See L. Abramowski, 'Die Christologie Babais des Grossen', *Symposium Syriacum 1972*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 197 (Rome, 1974), p. 222, n. 19.
123. Particularly Abraham of Kashkar's monastery on Mt. Izla near Nisibis. In the versified life of the very zealous Bar 'Edta (+ 611 or 629) it is recorded how, at Abraham's monastery, Bar 'Edta recited by heart sections of *The Book of Heraclides*: 'And on the book of Mar Nestorios which is called Heraclides, which, in my days, had but recently gone forth from Greek into Syriac, on this book I laboured for years, such that at all times by heart I was repeating some sections thereof' (E. A. W. Budge, *The Histories of Rabban Hormizd the Persian and Rabban Bar 'Idta* I, II [London, 1902], p. 120 [176]).
124. Indeed, modern scholarship has been so impressed by them as to assert that Nestorios was not a Nestorian! E. G. M. Anastos, 'Nestorius Was Orthodox', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (DOP) 16 (Washington, 1962), pp. 119-40.
125. Even though the innocence of Nestorios is championed by an early *memra* of Narsai (see above, n. 103), the Persian Church remained officially silent about Nestorios until 612, when his name is mentioned, but without evident approbation (see SO, p. 574 [591]). In his *Book of Union* Babai the Great refrains from referring to Nestorios by name, and most other documents only invoke Nestorios' name in conjunction with Theodore's and Diodore's. The Persian Christians, moreover, have never, with common consent, referred to themselves as 'Nestorians'; this was a derogative title employed by the Monophysites for all dyophysite Christians. Rather, the Persians regarded themselves, for the most part, as disciples of Theodore, not Nestorios; but in so far as Nestorios followed Theodore, he was to be considered orthodox and to have suffered unjustly. Their evident reluctance to refer to Nestorios' name by itself was caused both by a suspicion that he had not followed Theodore's teaching faithfully and by a desire to be disassociated from the errors attributed to him.
126. See S. Brock, 'Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning', *Dumbarton Oaks Symposium 1980: East of Byzantium*, p. 22; also D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, op. cit. pp. 107-16.
127. This is an explanation of the word 'Christ', the 'Anointed One'. The standard patristic interpreta-

tion is that the Son as man is anointed by the Holy Spirit: 'He also receives the Spirit along with us as being a man (*ἀνθρωπίνως*)' (St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Psalms*, PG 69. 1040). St. Gregory the Theologian, however, writes, 'He is called Christ by reason of the divinity, for It is the anointing (*χρίσις*) of the humanity, not sanctifying by energy, after the manner of other christs, but by the presence of all of that which anoints' (Euthymios Zigabenos, Nikodemos Hagioreites, *ἑρμηνεία εἰς τοὺς ψαλμούς* I [Thessalonica, 1979], p. 639; see also St. John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* 4:6. PG 94. 1112). Theodore of Mopsuestia says that this verse 'marvellously sets apart the natures and demonstrates the unity of *prosôpon*' (Ed. R. Devreesse, *Le commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur les Psaumes* [Rome, 1939], p. 289).

128. SO, p. 542 (553).
129. The same doctrine is expressed in Orthodox iconography by the Byzantine icons of the Pantokrator depicted in the domes of churches. The icon portrays the incarnate Christ, but at the same time it depicts the entire Godhead, the Almighty God, i.e. the entire Trinity (see C. Kalokyris, *The Essence of Orthodox Iconography* [Brookline, 1971], pp. 22, 46-8).
130. One may see in this a modified Theodoran view, since he expressed this idea with particular boldness (e.g. PG 66. 484-5). It is not, however, unique to Theodore.
131. SO, p. 543 (553).
132. Whether his theology can be analyzed from the works of his disciples, Cosmas Indicopleustes (see W. Wolska, op. cit. p. 63f.), Cyrus of Edessa (see W. Macomber, 'The Theological Synthesis of Cyrus of Edessa, an East Syrian Theologian of the Sixth Century', OCP 30 [1964], pp. 5-38, 363-84—a careful study of Cyrus' relation to Theodore of Mopsuestia—and also the text *Six Explanations of the Liturgical Feasts by Cyrus of Edessa*, CSCO 356 [Louvain, 1974]), and especially Thomas of Edessa (see *Tractatus de Nativitate Domini Nostri Christi*, ed. S. Carr [Rome, 1898]), is an open question.
133. SO, p. 545 (556).
134. Liberatus, the Roman witness to the events in Constantinople, reports that Theodore Askidas, an Origenist monk from the New Lavra in Palestine, approached Justinian 'while he was writing a tract against the Acephalites [i.e. Monophysites] in defence of the Council of Chalcedon . . . and with the support of Theodora the Augusta, he advised the emperor that he was undertaking unnecessary toil, because he [Theodore] had a means to draw all the Acephalites into communion with him [the emperor]. "They are scandalized", he said, "by the Council of Chalcedon because it accepted [to hear] the praises of Theodore, the bishop of Mopsuestia, and by its own judgement pronounced the letter of Hiba—which is entirely Nestorian—to be orthodox. But if Theodore, together with his writings, and this letter [of Hiba] are anathematized, the Council, inasmuch as these things have been retracted and purged, will be accepted by them in every respect"' (*Breviarium* 24. PL 68. 1049). Leontios of Byzantium argues against those who found fault with Justinian that he anathematized Hiba and Theodoretos 'by way of an œconomy' [although only Theodore was personally anathematized] 'for he thought that if he anathematized them, they [the moderate Monophysites, the *diakrinomenoi* or Hesitators] would accept the Council [of Chalcedon]. He was minded to anathematize two men—although it was not right to anathematize them—so as to bring about the union of all . . . yet even so, the *diakrinomenoi* did not accept the Council' (*De Sectis* 6. PG 86. 1. 1237).
135. In his letter to the Fifth Ecumenical Council Justinian writes, among many other things, 'Since, therefore, Theodore was a heresiarch and vomited forth numberless blasphemies in his books, you have no just reason to refuse to anathematize him' (PG 86. 1. 1093). The Council itself writes: '"Be merciful, O Lord", we cried, "not even the demons have dared to utter such things against Thee!" O that intolerable tongue, O the depravity of the man! . . . We therefore anathematize the Three

Chapters above-mentioned, namely, the impious Theodore of Mopsuestia along with his execrable writings . . . ' (ACO 4, 1, pp. 210, 214). The well-known anathemas promulgated by the Council (see ibid. pp. 215-220 [Latin], 239-245 [Greek]) were first composed by Justinian in his Second Edict on the Orthodox Faith (see PG 86. 1. 1015-17).

136. W. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 282.

137. The western bishops argued: 'We must acknowledge that ignorance which is not obstinate against the doctrine of the truth does not make [a man] a heretic, but rather stubborn defence of falsehood' (Facundus of Hermiane, *Ad Justinianum* 12, 1, 7, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 90 A [Turnhout, 1974], pp. 365-6); 'Our Fathers, who expelled all heretics, first admonished them to discern what is the better; afterward they threatened them with condemnation if they did not come to their senses and, moreover, gave them time to reconsider, accordingly as it seemed necessary. We do not put this forth without documentation: the examples of the ancients corroborate our words, men whose pattern the blessed Cyril upheld, for he condemned Nestorios only when the latter was first brought to trial—not because he had fallen away, but because he did not wish to come to his senses—but he forbade to condemn Theodore, who beforehand had not been accused' (ibid. 10, 4, 4-5, p. 309). The western bishops held that the anathema is not a statement of doctrinal error, but is a means to expulse from the Church someone who stubbornly and consciously resists the Church's teaching; many fall short of the full knowledge of the truth, but they are not therefore anathema (see ibid. 12, 1, 21-42, pp. 368-71). It is for God, they said, not the Church, to judge whether a man, who passed from life in peace with the Church, has separated himself from Him by some unwitting doctrinal error: 'It is not ours to judge those who with honour have passed away, but this belongs only to the Judge of the living and the dead' (ibid. 10, 4, 33, p. 315). The Fifth Ecumenical Council, on the other hand, wrote: 'The judgement of anathema is nothing else but separation from God, because the impious man, although he may not have had the word [of anathema] laid upon him by anyone, still brings upon himself the very fact of the anathema by his impiety, separating himself from true life' (ACO 4, 1, p. 211). Since, according to the Lord's word, an unbelieving man is 'judged already' (John 3:18), the Church's anathema is merely the acknowledgement of an already existing separation of a man from God, not a judgement bringing about such a separation. Because of the condemnation of the Three Chapters many western bishops broke communion with Pope Vigilius and eventually elected their own patriarch. The schism was finally healed about 690 when the bishops of Aquileia accepted the Fifth Council's decisions and entered into communion with the Pope of Rome. For a history of the schism see E. Amman, *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* 15, cols. 1911f. Essentially, the protesting bishops saw in the condemnation of the Three Chapters an imperial move away from St. Leo's Tome (Chalcedon) toward Monophysitism.

138. See *The Book of Union*, CSCO 79, pp. 81-2.

139. See below.

140. For the Persian opinion of Justin I, see *Chronique de Séert* 2, 20: 'During the whole of his life he [Justin] cared for the Orthodox Faith. He proclaimed the Council of the Fathers of Chalcedon, who recognized two natures in Christ, and recalled the Fathers whom Severus and his partisans had exiled' (PO VII, 2, pp. 138-9).

141. Isho'yahb III's (+ 659) exultation over the rather inaccurately reported news of the anti-monothelite Lateran Council held in Rome (649) brought by Persian monks returning from Byzantine lands shows that the Persians of the 7th cent., even conservatives like Isho'yahb, still looked for an official restoration of the "old faith" of Chalcedon and Pope Leo (see *Isho'yahb patriarchae III, Liber epistularum*, CSCO, Scriptores Syri 11, 12 [Louvain, 1904], p. 212 [154]).

142. See, for instance, the Synodal Letter of the council of 585 where the faith of Nicaea is expounded

(SO, pp. 133-37 [394-98]) and canon 40 of Mar Aba's council (SO, p. 550 [561]). This was necessary because the Monophysites likewise claimed adherence to the "faith of the 318 Fathers".

143. For some Roman Catholic scholars the Persian doctrinal position is suspect *a priori* because they did not recognize 'Roman primacy': 'It may be doubted that they had a clear concept of Roman primacy or of the relationship between mystical and juridical bonds in the Church of Christ. Effectively, nonetheless, they were in a state of schism before the Nestorian controversy broke out, and, for this reason, their doctrinal position was not very secure' (W. Macomber, 'The Christology of the Synod of Seleucia-Ctesiphon A.D. 486', OCP 24 [1958], pp. 142-3).
144. See *Chronique de Séert* 2, 23. PO VII, 2, pp. 187-8, and A. Guillaumont, 'Justinien et l'église de Perse', DOP 23 (Washington, 1969), p. 49f.
145. Ibid. pp. 62-70.
146. Ibid. fol. 17r (p. 63).
147. Ibid. fol. 18v (p. 64).
148. Ibid. fol. 18r (p. 64).
149. Ibid. fol. 18v (p. 64).
150. If the Persian delegation had previously encountered the doctrine of "enhypostatic existence", it was probably in the Syriac writings of Philoxenos of Mabbug. Previous to its employment in Constantinople, Philoxenos made extensive use of the concept of one thing having its existence in another to explain how the Word's human nature can be real and yet ontologically indistinguishable from His divine nature; with it he likewise endeavours to prove that the Chalcedonian teaching of two natures and one hypostasis is untenable: 'If the body and soul [i.e. the human nature] are not counted as another hypostasis in the hypostasis of the Word, because of the fact that their hypostasis came into existence *in* the hypostasis of the Word, then likewise another nature will not be counted along with the nature of the Word because of the fact that their nature was constituted and came into existence *in* the nature of the Word. . . . And if, because of the fact that their hypostasis came into existence *in* the hypostasis of the Word, there is one hypostasis of the Word Who became flesh, then also, because of the fact that their nature came into existence *in* the nature of the Word, there is one nature of Him Who became flesh, and two natures should not be asserted' (*Twenty Chapters Against Nestorios* [actually, against the adherents of Chalcedon], ed. E. A. W. Budge, *The Discourses of Philoxenus* II [London, 1894], p. cxxvii). With such a history, the concept of "enhypostatic existence" held little attraction for the Persians.
151. E.g. Babai the Great comments: 'With much diversity the Fathers put "hypostasis" for "person" and "person" for "hypostasis" in their teaching, because at that time there had not been an examination and analysis of these terms; and they say that even now in the Roman lands these terms are likewise mixed together' (*Against Those Who Say That Just As the Soul and Body Are One Hypostasis, so God the Word and the Man Are One Hypostasis*, ed. Vachalde, CSCO 79 [Louvain, 1915], p. 306).
152. Guillaumont, art. cit., fol. 16v (p. 62.).
153. Hence Babai the Great writes (op. cit., ibid.): 'The property of a nature is known in the hypostasis and not otherwise. There is no nature without a hypostasis, and there is no hypostasis by which a nature is not made known.' Likewise Philoxenos of Mabbug says (op. cit., ibid. p. cxxvi): 'If the Word is two natures after He became incarnate, the Word is also two hypostases after He became incarnate. But if the hypostasis of the Word Who became flesh is [numerically] one, the nature of the Word Who became flesh will likewise be one.' To resolve this difficulty, the theologians of the capital undertook a long-needed redefinition of christological terminology. Unfortunately neither the various groups of the Monophysites nor the Persians accepted or understood this advance in the theological expression of the mystery of the incarnation.

154. See A. de Halleux, 'La christologie de Martyrios-Sahdona', OCP 23 (1957), p. 29.
155. In answer to the question, 'Why did the Blessed Interpreter and all the Fathers employ the expression "one hypostasis" in Christ, but we now reject it?' Theodore Bar Koni replies: 'As long as the sons of the Church did not acknowledge a collective and composite hypostasis, but only the heretics, this expression was truly accepted and the Fathers employed it. But because the heretics acted very guilefully and took "one hypostasis" in an impious sense to aid their own confession, it was rightly rejected by all the Orthodox. . . .' (*Scholion* II, ed. A. Scher, CSCO Scriptores Syri 66 [Paris, 1912], p. 191). Theodore apparently refers here to events within Persia. As long as only the Severian Monophysites spoke of one composite hypostasis (see J. Lebon *Le Monophysisme Sévérien* [Louvain, 1909], p. 319f.), the expression "one hypostasis" remained in use. But when the 'heretics', the Henanians in all likelihood (see below), adopted the expression with the connotation of composition, the orthodox Persians rejected it and began to use "two hypostases".
156. For the 6th cent. Monophysites as well as for the Orthodox Church of Byzantium "two hypostases" necessarily implied "two persons" and "two sons", due to the connotation of independent self-subsistence which hypostasis had gained (see above, nn. 91, 92). For the 5th cent. Antiochenes this was not the case, although the difficulty was recognized: 'If we should draw back from a duality of hypostases lest we be constrained to say two persons and two Sons, this fear is superfluous; such an objection is foolishness. For if, when two hypostases are confessed, we make a duality of Sons, then also when we preach two natures, we must by all means confess the same number of Sons' (a fragment of a letter of John of Agaeas to Theodoretos, ed. F. Nau, *Textes monophysites*, PO XIII, 2, p. 189). From the document published by Guillaumont it is evident that the Persian schoolmen had also adopted this Basilian interpretation of hypostasis. Such a definition was, however, too technical to be grasped by the majority of the people, especially since the Syriac equivalent, *qnoma*, was used in common parlance with the connotation of "self": e.g. *qnomeh*=himself. Thus before the formula "two hypostases" was absolved of the possible implication of "two persons", it was not generally accepted: in the 6th cent. it was officially avoided, and in the 7th cent. it was openly rejected by some (Henana, Sahdona, and their followers), and recognized by others only when the terms *qnoma* and *parsopa* were carefully distinguished.
157. See Fiey, *Jalons*, p. 127f. on this.
158. *Histoire de Mar Ahoudemmeh*, ed. F. Nau, PO III, pp. 30-1.
159. *Chronique de Séert* 69, PO XIII, 4, p. 498.
160. During this time the leadership of the Church was essentially assumed by Babai the Great, abbot of the monastery of Mt. Izla. Because he represented the most conservative element among the Persian Christians, the influence he exerted on the Church is of considerable historical importance.
161. See Labourt, op. cit. p. 208f. for this period. He maintains that Khosrau's favourite wife Shirin also joined the Monophysites, but this is uncertain.
162. The most thorough study of his career is found in Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis*, p. 234f. See also A. Guillaumont, *Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique* (Paris, 1962), p. 186f.
163. 'He applied himself to the reading of diverse [or, different] writings' (*Chronique de Séert* 74, PO XIII, 4, p. 509).
164. For Theodore's views on allegorical interpretation see Wallace-Hadrill, op. cit. p. 35f.
165. Barhadbeshabba 'Arbaya, *Cause de la fondation des écoles*, ed. A. Scher, PO IV, pp. 391, 2.
166. 'He brought forth from his treasures things both new and old' (ibid. p. 392.).
167. 'He interpreted things contrary to Theodore the Interpreter' (*Chronique de Séert* 74, PO XIII, 4, p. 509).
168. As with the commentaries of St. John Chrysostom (see Vööbus, op. cit. p. 244).

169. Barhadbeshabba, ibid. p. 390.
170. See *Chronique de Séert* 74, PO XIII, 4, pp. 509-12. The immediate cause of the departure of the students was the support given to Henana by Mar Sabrisho' the Katholikos against Gregor of Kashkar, the metropolitan of Nisibis, who had anathematized Henana. Gregor consequently left Nisibis, but at the death of Sabrisho' he was chosen to become katholikos. However, with the influence of Henana's sympathizers in the capital (who 'feared his immeasurable zeal' [Thomas of Marga, *The Book of Governors*, ed. and trans. E. A. W. Budge (London, 1893), p. 50 (87)]), and the help of Queen Shirin, another Gregor was elected—to the displeasure of Khosrau.
171. Babai writes: 'The Fathers of old established [true] doctrine, not a mixture and blending and hypostatic union, like the opinion of Arius, Eunomios, and the impious Henana. You efface the properties [of the natures] and cause divinity to suffer by a hypostatic, composite union, and by blending and a confused mixture' (*Against One Hypostasis*, CSCO 79, p. 306). For Babai the "one hypostasis" spoken of by the Fathers was identical to "one person", but the "one hypostasis" of Henana is a composite formed by mixture and blending. One of Henana's disciples, Isaiah of Tahal, is charged with teaching such a union of composition (see L. Abramowski and A. Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts* II [Cambridge, 1972], p. xlv), which could also have been the teaching of Henana himself.
172. See the quotation from Babai in Vööbus, op. cit. pp. 247-8.
173. It does seem, however, that he enlisted the help of Gabriel of Singar when the Persian bishops opposed him. See *Chronique de Séert* 83, PO XIII, p. 528.
174. W. Frankenberg, *Euagrius Pontikus*, Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse, Neue Folge, Band XIII, 2 (Berlin, 1912), p. 8. See A. Guillaumont, op. cit. pp. 259-90.
175. The first Syriac translator of Evagrios' *Gnostic Chapters* carefully expunged most of their Origenistic errors from the text. For this reason their condemnation by the Fifth Council was viewed by Syriac speakers as an injustice, and when a more accurate Syriac translation appeared in the 6th or 7th cent., it was rejected as a text corrupted by some perverse heretic. See A. Guillaumont, op. cit. pp. 200-59, for a careful examination of the two translations.
176. E. g.: 'And finally [he teaches that] all men participate in the nature of God, as Origen, the pagan of pagans, said, and lo, this wretched city is infected with this impious error' (Babai, *The Life of Mar Giwargis*, in SO, p. 626). Although Babai probably exaggerates here, the charge has factual basis. On the fundamental and irreductible divergences of Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia see Guillaumont, op. cit. pp. 183-6. Henana's distaste for Theodore certainly reflects this. It is one of the ironies of history that the School of Nisibis should be responsible for Theodore's fame in Persia as well as his defamation one hundred years later.
177. One should remember that the precise christological usage of "hypostasis" was still undetermined when Henana wrote.
178. See, for instance, A. Baumstark's comments in *Oriens Christianus* 2 (1902), pp. 254-6. But see also G. Reinink, op. cit. pp. 289-91.
179. Mar Isho'yahb's confession of faith, appended to the decisions of the council in the SO, makes specific reference to the teachings of Severus. Here Isho'yahb gives the following explanation of the two crucial points of dispute with the Monophysites, how 'the Word was made (became) flesh' and how He suffered: 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God the Word, Light from Light, descended, became incarnate, and became man by way of the œconomy, [remaining] superior to alteration and change. Our Lord Jesus Christ, He who was born of the Father before all ages in His divinity, was born in the flesh from the ever-virgin Mary in the last times, He the Same, but not in the same [nature]. The "Word became flesh" through the inseparable union and dwelt among us. O the

depth of the riches of the Faith! He "became" and did not undergo change! . . . The Christ, the Son of God, the Self-same, suffered in the flesh, while in the nature of His divinity Christ, the Son of God, was superior to suffering: impassible and passible, Jesus Christ, the Creator of the ages and the Acceptor of suffering, He who became poor for our sakes though He was rich. By way of the œconomy God the Word accepted the disgrace of suffering in the temple of His body through the supreme and inseparable union while He did not suffer in the nature of His divinity' (SO, pp. 194, 195 [454, 455]).

180. I.e. assuming that Henana had written it by this time. On its existence see *Chronique de Séert* 83, PO XIII, p. 529. Babai also wrote a refutation of it.
181. SO, p. 137 (399).
182. Ibid. p. 138 (400).
183. Ibid. p. 198 (459).
184. See Vööbus, op. cit. p. 299f., for the events which followed in the School of Nisibis and Henana's own struggle.
185. For the connexion of the monastery on Mt. Izla with the School of Nisibis, see Vööbus, op. cit. pp. 206-8.
186. Budge, *The History of Rabban Bar 'Idta*, p. 120 (175-6). See also the monastic rules of Dadisho', Abraham's successor, in A. Vööbus, *Syriac and Arabic Documents* (Stockholm, 1960), p. 168.
187. Despite his renown, many monks left the monastery of Mt. Izla during his abbacy, not being able to bear his personality. See Thomas of Marga, *The Book of Governors*, pp. 34-6 (62-4).
188. Happily, a thorough study of his christology has recently appeared, to which the interested reader can refer: G. Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great* (Kottayam, India, 1982). See also L. Abramowski, 'Die Christologie Babais des Grossen', *Symposium Syriacum 1972*, OCA 197, pp. 219-44.
189. Ed. and trans. into Latin by A. Vaschalde, CSCO 79, 80 (Louvain, 1915).
190. See Abramowski, art. cit. p. 236, for a listing of a few of these borrowed concepts. See also Chediath, op. cit. pp. 193-5. As Wallace-Hadrill (op. cit. p. 149) puts it, 'The voice is the voice of Babai, but the mind is still that of the three revered Doctors, Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorios'.
191. 'What is there new which we, the wretches, could say, save only the [teachings] of the Fathers? But because I am constrained by your love, I shall do the following: I shall collect all their [teachings] scattered here and there, and bring them into a single place and suitable order' (*The Book of Union*, p. 4 [3]).
192. This approach betrays the study of Aristotle and also Severus.
193. Op. cit. pp. 89-90. Concerning the correspondence of *qnoma* and "hypostasis" we would say that the precise meaning of "hypostasis" must be specified, if it is to translate *qnoma*.
194. *The Book of Union*, p. 160 (129). Trans. by Chediath on p. 90.
195. See *The Book of Union*, pp. 160-1 (130).
196. See Chediath, p. 128.
197. See *Against One Hypostasis*, p. 300 (242).
198. Ibid. p. 306 (246).
199. Ibid. p. 297 (239-40).
200. Ibid. p. 305 (246).
201. See *The Book of Union*, pp. 89-92 (83-5). Also Abramowski, art. cit. pp. 239-43.
202. *Against One Hypostasis*, p. 304 (245).
203. Ibid.
204. This word takes its theological meaning, as applied here, from the Arian controversy, where it is opposed to "natural". God did not become united to man by necessity, hence "naturally", but the

Father is "naturally" the Father of the Son. Theodore's famous 'union according to good will' arose out of this context (see n. 73).

205. *The Book of Union*, p. 163 (132).
206. Ibid. p. 230 (187).
207. Ibid. p. 248 (201-2).
208. E.g.: 'Take a polished mirror and bring it close to your face (*parsopa*): lo, it assumes all of its [i.e. your face's] features; not your *qnoma* (individual substance) or the fixedness of your image, but your entire face. Your face is found in two different [things]: one fixed in your *qnoma* (substance), and one fixed in the *qnoma* of the mirror. There is one face, not two, and two *qnome*, not one. Thus also God the Word assumed [i.e. like the mirror] the "form of a servant" and therein took form, was revealed, and made known, yet did not become [i.e. was not changed into] the *qnoma* of man. And the man [i.e. humanity] remained in the fixedness of its *qnoma*, as it was, being united with the [Word]' (*Against One Hypostasis*, pp. 303-4 [245]).
209. See, for instance, the text cited in n. 179.
210. By the 6th cent. the Syriac word *parsopa* had, in common parlance, fully gained the connotations of our word "person" (see J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching* [Cambridge, 1908], Appendix: Syriac terms, p. 219).
211. 'After the death of Gregor the Katholikos, while the Church remained without a head according to the wish of Khosrau (II) Parwez . . . the heretics [i.e. the Henanians and also the Messalians (see *The Book of Governors*, pp. 52-5 [93-7])] were able to spread about everywhere, and they took possession of the churches and corrupted the faith of men. This holy man [Babai], then, encouraged by numerous metropolitans and bishops, laboured zealously to set in order the affairs of the Church and to prevent the accursed [heretics] from doing injury to the Christians' (*Chronique de Séert* 84 PO XIII, pp. 531-2).
212. It is possible that the confession of faith and the replies to the questions of the Monophysites were composed by Babai himself, though he was not present. See *Chronique de Séert* 83, p. 529.
213. See, for instance, the chapters of Henanisho', a partisan of Babai (*Chronique de Séert* 85, pp. 534-5) in Abramowski and Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts*, pp. 170-9 (101-6).
214. For an excellent study of Isho'yahb II, see L. Sako, *Lettre christologique du patriarche syro-oriental Isho'yahb II de Gdala* (Rome, 1983). This work was published after our Epilogue was typeset.
215. See *The Book of Governors*, p. 70 (125-6).
216. *Chronique de Séert*, pp. 558-9.
217. A later source records the following: 'Then Isho'yahb said "In one thing we find fault with you, that you pronounce an anathema against a man who should not be anathematized, and opposing the truth, you fall into unsound faith." The Emperor replied to him: "If Nestorios held the faith which you have written down, he is by no means anathematized; but if he held another, he is assuredly under anathema. Therefore, to commemorate him is of no import: we are yours and you are ours"' (Mari ibn Sulayman [11th c.], ed. and trans. H. Gismondi, *De Patriarchis Nestorianorum* I [Rome, 1899], p. 50). Although this chronicle is not always reliable, the author made use of some ancient documents (see G. Westphal, *Untersuchungen über die Quellen und die Glaubwürdigkeit der Patriarchenchroniken* [1901]).
218. Judging by Isho'yahb of Nineveh's extremism in the controversy over Sahdona, one may surmise that he was very displeased with the actions of the katholikos. Perhaps it was he who gave a detailed report of the mission to his fellow conservatives.
219. PO XIII, p. 562. The letters are found on pp. 562-79.
220. See ibid. pp. 562-4.
221. Isho'yahb, at least while he was still bishop of Balad, when he wrote the christological letter

published by Sako (op. cit. pp. 165-92), found Chalcedon's "two natures in one person and hypostasis" unsatisfactory, as being a confusion of terms and hence, 'a stumbling-block for many' (§ 44). Because "hypostasis" is nothing but a nature's 'definition and manifestation' (§ 61), its concrete existence, then each of Christ's manifestly existing natures must have its own hypostasis. The bishops, therefore, who gathered at Chalcedon 'are found standing at a fork in the road: they have come to the blessed array of the Orthodox [i.e. because of the confession of two natures in one person] and yet have inclined away from it [i.e. because of the one hypostasis], and neither have they joined company with the assemblies of the heretics [i.e. the Monophysites]. . . . With which side I should number them I know not!' (§ 47, 48). On the other hand, Isho'yahb's own understanding of the expression "one person" is essentially the same as Chalcedon's (see Sako, pp. 110-24). Hence it is likely that the katholikos and the emperor agreed on there being two natures in one person, and left aside the disputed term "hypostasis". In 630 Emperor Heraclios was promoting Monothelitism. Did the katholikos accept this, as the *Chronique de Séert* (p. 560) asserts? To balance their strict Dyophysitism, the Persians often emphasized the union and co-operation of the human and divine wills and energies in Christ. Christ's united will and energy demonstrated the reality of the "union of *parsopa*" they professed. Isho'yahb would not have objected if Heraclios spoke of one will and energy, provided that the emperor did not assert hereby that the human nature was deprived of real will and energy, but only that these co-operated fully with the divine.

222. See J. M. Fiey, 'Isho'yaw le Grand', OCP 36 (1970), pp. 18-19.
223. For a careful study of his life and christology see A. de Halleux, 'Martyrius-Sahdona', OCP 24 (1958), pp. 93-128, and 'La christologie de Martyrius-Sahdona', OCP 23 (1957), pp. 5-32, See also Fiey's somewhat different interpretation of the documents in art. cit. pp. 19-28.
224. For *pro* see de Halleux, 'Martyrius-Sahdona', p. 96; for *contra* see Fiey, art. cit. p. 20, n. 1.
225. See Fiey, art. cit. p. 25. Charismatic personality alone may not have been the cause for his popularity.
226. Ed. and trans. into French by A. de Halleux, *Oeuvres spirituelles*, CSCO 200 (201), 214 (215), 252 (253), 254 (255).
227. CSCO 214 (215), pp. 8-25 (8-25).
228. I.e. the physical aspect of the individual human nature He assumed.
229. P. 16^{5-10} (16).
230. I.e. in his article on Sahdona's christology, cited above.
231 Letter II, 6, *Isho'yahb III patriarcha. Liber epistularum*, ed. R. Duval, CSCO 11 (12) (Louvain, 1904, 1905), p. 129 (97). Isho'yahb likewise writes to Sahdona: 'Understand, our brother, if you can, what are nature, hypostasis (*qnoma*), and person (*parsopa*). These terms are used by the confessors of Christ, and they cannot easily be deprived of their exact meanings and exchanged one for the other, or placed one for the other, or made identical, as you both think and write, and as others also suppose to aver. For just as a man who calls a bull by the name "ass", or a man by the name "horse", is understood by discerning men to be a fool and witless, since the name of each thing cannot be forced to any application one pleases, so, if you speak of *qnoma* by the term *parsopa* or nature, or face by image, or one of these by the term *qnoma*, these terms will not be forced to follow the application you desire. Every term that exists has its own unique meaning' (Letter II, 7, p. 134 [100-1]).
232. P. 18^{27-30} (19).
233. Pp. 18^{30}-19^{4} (19).
234. De Halleux translates this word '*fictif*'.
235. P. 18^{21-23} (18).
236. P. 19^{25} (19).
237. P. 17^{21-23} (17).

238. P. 16 25-26(16).
239. Sahdona uses 'to be called' instead of 'to become' because of the connotation of essential change which the latter can convey.
240. P. 17 11-17 (17).
241. Cf. 'You are body and soul, two natures and one *qnoma*' (p. 21 11-12 [21]).
242. P. 17 24-27 (17).
243. See CSCO 200 (201), p. 43f. (43f.). Thomas of Marga also reports that he composed the life and funeral oration for Rabban Jacob and other Persian saints (*The Book of Governors*, p. 62 [112]).
244. E.g. the expression, cited above, 'this nature of [or, from] our humanity'.
245. The Fathers of Chalcedon did the same (see above, n. 91), although there remains a subtle difference between Sahdona's 'one *qnoma* and one *parsopa*' and Chalcedon's 'one prosôpon and one hypostasis'.
246. As de Halleux points out, in Isho'yahb's mind the problem seems essentially to be one of terminology ('La christologie', p. 10).
247. Isho'yabh III, Letter II, 6, p. 129 (97).
248. E.g. the mirror example cited above in n. 208. See also L. Abramowski, 'Die Christologie Babais des Grossen', p. 244.
249. For further information on the Church of Persia under early Arab dominion see J. M. Fiey, *Chrétiens syriaques sous les Abbassides*, CSCO 420, sub. 59 (Louvain, 1980); H. Putman, *L'Eglise et l'Islam sous Timothée I (780-823)* (Beirut, 1975); E. Tisserant, 'L'église nestorienne sous la domination arabe', *Dictionnaire de Théologie catholique* 11. 187-95.
250. See *Chronique de Séert*, PO XIII, pp. 620-1.
251. See A. Mingana, 'Early Spread of Christianity in Central Asia and the Far East', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 9 (1925), pp. 318-30; F. Nau, 'L'expansion nestorienne en Asie', *Annales de Musée Guimet* 40 (1913), pp. 193-388; E. Tisserant, ibid. cols. 207-18.
252. For a critical edition of the Syriac translations of the important *Gnostic Chapters* see A. Guillaumont, *Les Six Centuries des 'Kephalaia gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique*, PO 28, 1 (Paris, 1958).
253. See R. Draguet, *Les cinq recensions de l'Ascéticon syriaque d'Abba Isaïe*, CSCO 289 (290), 293 (294) (Louvain, 1968).
254. See W. Strothmann, *Die syrische Überlieferung der Schriften des Makarios*, Göttinger Orientforschungen, Reihe Syriaca, 21 (Wiesbaden, 1981).
255. See E. A. W. Budge, *The Book of Paradise*, Lady Meux Manuscript 6, Vols. I, II (London, 1904); also R. Draguet, *Les formes syriaque de la matière de l'Histoire lausiaque*, CSCO 389, 398 (Louvain, 1978).
256. His works were first translated by Sargis of Resh'aina about 530 and slowly worked their way eastward. In the 8th cent. they were re-translated by Jacob of Edessa. G. Wiessner is reportedly preparing an edition of the Syriac texts.
257. See above, n. 118.
258. This text was discovered by S. Brock in the Monastery of Mar Gabriel in Turkey and in the near future will be edited by him with an English translation. We must thank Prof. Brock for making it available to us.
259. The title of the letter identifies Mar Babai as he 'whom the wicked Barsauma slew', referring to Barsauma of Nisibis' alleged conspiracy against Babowai the Katholikos. This identification could be merely the opinion of a later copyist.
260. The Persian martyrdoms published by Bedjan in *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum Syriace* portray a corresponding picture of 5th cent. monasticism.
261. The short notices on 140 monastic fathers in Isho'denah's *Book of Chastity*, ed. J. B. Chabot in

Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire 16 (1896), p. 225f., and Thomas of Marga's *Book of Governors* provide an adequate, but by no means complete, picture of this movement. The renaissance produced by St. Gregory of Sinai on Mt. Athos in the 13th cent. and by St. Paisiy Velichkovsky and his disciples in Russia in the 19th cent. invites comparison.

262. Particularly his teaching on the importance in salvation of free will and its interaction with divine grace, and also on the essentially aberrant propensities of human nature during this life.
263. St. Isaac writes: 'Do not provoke any man or vie zealously with him, either for the sake of the Faith, or on account of his evil deeds' (p. 52).
264. E.g. 'Zeal is not reckoned among men to be a form of wisdom, but as one of the illnesses of the soul, namely narrow-mindedness and deep ignorance' (p. 243).
265. See the text of St. Isaac's homilies, p. 5, n. 15. On Messalianism see J. Gribomont, 'Le dossier des origines du Messalianisme', *Epektasis* (Paris, 1972), pp. 610-25.
266. SO, pp. 227-44 (490-514).
267. 'We confess and acknowledge one Son of God in His divinity and His humanity; and though there be two natures—God in nature and hypostasis, and man in nature and hypostasis—we confess and glorify one Son of God, now and from His coming at the very first, and unto the ages' (SO, p. 234 [500]).
268. 'His humanity that was fashioned in the womb of the holy Virgin Mary is inseparably united to His divinity in one *parsopa* of Sonship' (SO, p. 242 [509]).
269. SO, p. 241 (508).
270. SO, p. 234 (499-500).
271. SO, pp. 236-7 (503).
272. See p. 237 (504).
273. SO, p. 244 (514).
274. It must be acknowledged that most secular historians use the term "Nestorian" merely for convenience. E.g. 'If we henceforth speak of the Christians of Persia as Nestorians, this term should not be thought of in a pejorative sense. Theologically they were Chalcedonians (supporters of the Council of Chalcedon), except that they did not accept the Council's condemnation of Nestorios. Their Monophysite opponents, who habitually speak of themselves as "orthodox", refer to the Nestorians as the followers of Nestorios, or as Diophysites or as Chalcedonians. From the Monophysite point of view, there was no substantial difference between the Nestorians and those who accepted the Council of Chalcedon' (W. S. McCullough, op. cit. p. 128). Fr. Georges Florovsky aptly notes that the term "Nestorian" as applied to the "Church of the East" 'was then a mark of disparagement, probably first thought up by the Monophysites. In truth, the chief authority was Theodore of Mopsuestia, not Nestorios . It was her conflict with the Monophysites which compelled the Church of the East to harden her dogmatical stand' (*θρησκευτική καὶ ἠθική ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία* 9. 420 [Athens, 1966]).
275. Nestorios himself records the impression of the multitudes: 'The bishop, they say, claims that Christ is a mere (*ψιλός*) man' (F. Loofs, *Nestoriana* [Halle, 1905], frag. 262, p. 377).
276. Second Letter to Nestorios (it was this letter which the Council of Ephesus voted on and recognized as expressing the faith of the entire Church), ACO I, 1, 1, p. 28.
277. In defence of this term St. Cyril wrote afterward: 'In fighting against his (Nestorios') doctrine we were constrained by necessity to say that the union came to pass "according to hypostasis", signifying nothing else save only that the nature or hypostasis of the Word, that is, the Word Himself, is in truth (*κατ' ἀλήθειαν*) united to a human nature without undergoing any change or confusion, as we have very often said, and He is conceived to be, and really is, one Christ, the Same, both God and man' (ACO I, 1, 6, p. 115).

278. 'We confess, then, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, perfect God and perfect man, consisting of a rational soul and body, begotten of the Father before the ages according to His divinity, and in the last days the Same, for us and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, according to His humanity; the Same *homoousios* (consubstantial) with the Father according to His divinity, and *homoousios* with us according to His humanity, for there has been a union of two natures; wherefore we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord' (*The Formulary of Reunion*, ACO I, 1, 4, p. 17).
279. It would probably be inaccurate to call even the radical conservatives Nestorians, in the strict sense of the word. They do, however, represent a movement that rejects every other form of dyophysite Christianity as heretical, and which, therefore, excludes itself from the unity of the Faith of the entire Church.
280. Both from Edessian Persians, such as Narsai, and from the Monophysites, for whom St. Cyril was the champion of Monophysitism *par excellence*.
281. One may also include here the Persian Church's silence regarding the term "Theotokos", e. g. the text cited in n. 179. 'He Who was born of the Father before all ages in His divinity, was born in the flesh from the ever-virgin Mary in the last times, He the Same, but not in the same [nature]'. The Church of Persia believed that the Word of God was born of the Virgin, but could not accept any implication that His immaterial, uncircumscribable divinity *became* somehow corporeal such that it proceeded physically from the Virgin's womb (cf. St. John Damascene: 'For we do not say that God was born of her in the sense that the divinity of the Word took its beginning of being from her, but in the sense that God the Word Himself, Who was timelessly begotten of the Father before the ages . . . did in the last days come for our salvation to dwell in her womb and of her was made flesh and born without undergoing change' [*Precise Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3: 12. PG 94. 1028]). Even Babai would acknowledge that the Word dwelt in the Virgin's womb ('the Infinite in the finite'), but it was the idea of ascribing change to divinity that the Persians abhorred. Although Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus accepted the term "Theotokos", its constant use by the Monophysites caused it to be associated in the Persian mind with the monophysite doctrine of blending and Theopaschism. The term was, therefore, simply avoided.
282. I.e. accepting the attributions of the Eastern Version of the text. A careful analysis of St. Isaac's correspondence with, and divergence from, Theodore in the realm of epistemology, patristic psychology, and soteriology would clearly demonstrate how Theodore's basic principles were accepted, modified, or entirely supplanted (e.g. the concept of *shapyutha* [p. 22], the opposition of rational knowledge to faith, and the revelation of spiritual knowledge [pp. 258-61] seem to form an antithesis to Theodore's views). Unfortunately, such an analysis lies beyond the scope of this survey.
283. St. Isaac's esteem for the writings of Evagrios and Theodore is comparable to the great Cappadocians' esteem for the writings of Origen, from whose works they composed a book of selections entitled *The Philokalia*. When, in the 6th and 7th centuries, certain elements of Origen's teaching were thought to be detected in St. Gregory of Nyssa's writings, and many Palestinian monks were troubled and asked how St. Gregory could be a Father of the Church and yet teach such things, St. Barsanuphios the Great wrote the following: 'All the Fathers who pleased God were holy and righteous and true servants of God (may they ever pray in my behalf!). But do not think that because they were saints they were able truly to comprehend all the deep things of God. For the Apostle says, 'We know in part and we prophesy in part', and again, 'To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit . . .', and all these are not given to one man, but to some in this manner and to some in that manner. . . . Wherefore,

attempting to be teachers, or rather, being constrained in this by other men, they advanced greatly, even beyond their teachers, and receiving revelation concerning new doctrines, these did they set forth. But at the same time, they yet retained their instructors' traditions, which, in fact, were erroneous. And though they advanced later and became spiritual instructors, they did not pray unto God concerning their teachers' doctrines, to learn whether or not those things spoken by them were indeed spoken by the Holy Spirit. But esteeming their teachers to be wise and erudite, they did not examine their sayings. Wherefore, their own teachings were mingled with those of their teachers; hence, sometimes they spoke from the teachings that they had learned from them, and at other times they spoke from the wisdom of their own minds. This was how it came to be that these words were written in their name. For they received some things from others, and having themselves advanced and become greater, through the Holy Spirit they spoke whatever they learned from Him. But they quoted also from the teachings of their instructors without examining their words; neither did they consider whether they should be informed by prayer and supplication to God as to whether or not these things were true; and thus, the teachings were mingled with one another. Yet, because these words were spoken by the saints, they were also written in their names. If, therefore, you should hear one of them saying that he speaks that which he heard from the Holy Spirit, this then is a revelation and we are obliged to believe it. But, should you find him saying concerning these teachings that they are not by revelation but from the doctrines of his former teachers, then we must attentively listen to them with understanding, discernment, and wisdom, for the saint did not pray to God concerning these doctrines, to learn whether they are true or no' (SS. Barsanuphios and John, Answer 604, ed. Nikodemos Hagioreites [Volos, 1960], pp. 286-7). Although St. Isaac does not quote Theodore in christological matters, and although he used an expurgated translation of Evagrios' writings, yet even in the case that certain of their errors could be found in his writings, he should not therefore be thought to have fallen into heresy, but should be considered as one who transmitted teachings of men greatly esteemed in Persia without examining whether these were true, as St. Gregory of Nyssa may also have done with the teaching of Apokatastasis.

284. See p. 96 on the vision of Ezekiel.

285. Perhaps for this reason a later writer felt it necessary to compose under St. Isaac's name a work entitled *Tract Concerning the Orthodox Confession* which is uniquely concerned with the term "hypostasis" (see L. Abramowski and A. Goodman, op. cit. II, pp. xxxii-xxxiv). If we may assume that the Second Part of St. Isaac's works (see the Introduction, pp. lxxix-lxxxi) is entirely composed by him, the following christological passage is significant because the term "hypostasis" is avoided: 'The Lord Christ is both Firstborn and Only-begotten, for the two [aspects] do not subsist in a oneness of nature [i.e. in a single nature]. He is the "Firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29), but the Only-begotten [in the sense that the Father] did not beget either before or after Him. The two [aspects] are, then, made known in God and man which were united in one Person (*parsopa*), without the natural properties of each becoming confused because of the union' (*First Century on Knowledge:* 49). In St. Isaac's day, when there was so much controversy over the christological term "hypostasis", the omission of the term could not be accidental.

286. E.g. 'In the same manner things pertaining to the Lord's divinity (which are not compatible with human nature) are said with respect to His all-holy body; and again, lowly things are said concerning His divinity which pertain to His humanity. Many, not understanding the intent of the divine words, have stumbled here with a stumbling from which there is no recovery' (p. 18). Those who have 'stumbled' are the heretics who have misconstrued the scriptural practice of the "exchange of properties", i.e. the Arians and the Theopaschites. See also, 'Nature remains totally unconfused and it does not suppress its properties' (p. 20).

287. P. 381.
288. P. 224.
289. P. 345. Bedjan cites a passage in his Introduction, pp. viii-ix (found also in his text on p. 220), which is absent in the Greek and exists in at least four different forms in the Syriac MSS. Wensinck suggests that the passage is an interpolation (p. 149, n. 1), but Bedjan, presuming that the MS from Alkosh preserves the original text, finds it to be conclusive proof of St. Isaac's adherence to Nestorianism (p. x). Bedjan's text is as follows: 'May we be deemed worthy to attain to such derangement [see the context in the present translation on p. 159] by the worshipful mercies of our God, Who from our race took a mediator [i.e. a concrete human nature] and gave us these things through it, even [through] that which was tried, like us, in all our things save sin because of the oneness of the natural flesh with us, and [because] forever, without confusion, in a union which preserves the properties of the natures, He has vouchsafed it the sitting at the right hand, such that through it glory, dominion, and worship may be to Him, now and in the life without end, unto the ages of ages. Amen.' The sense of this passage is that the immaterial God, i.e. God the Word, could not undergo the trials of suffering and death for our sake without employing the mediation of a concrete, perfect human nature (cf. St. Athanasios: 'Transcending all, God the Word, as was meet, by offering His own temple and corporeal instrument in behalf of all as life for life by death made good that which was owed' [*On the Incarnation of the Word* 9. PG 25. 112]). Because Christ's divine nature is always with the Father's, it was His human nature that was 'vouchsafed the sitting at the right hand' (cf. Narsai: 'Our dust has ascended to the lofty rank of Thy being. . . . On Thy right hand our body sits, robed with glory' [Ed. Mingana, 1, p. 268]). Through His concrete human nature He has bestowed the many blessings which Christians enjoy, since these divine things needed a mediator (cf. St. Isaac: 'Everything that is alien and comes from without requires a mediator' [p. 138]), and through it creation offers glory to Him Who in His divinity is invisible and incomprehensible (cf. Phil. 2:9, 10). Persian theology placed great emphasis on Christ's concrete human nature as being the means whereby all creatures can come to know, hence glorify, God. Narsai writes: 'In him [Adam] I [God] reveal My hiddenness / to noetic natures, // and in him I show forth My sovereignty / to both rational and irrational creatures. // As an image I place him / for created beings that they may gaze on him, // so that through love for him, / all by him may come to know Me' (Ed. Mingana, 2, p. 188). 'In Christ, the Second Adam, the image is found in reality', but the First Adam possessed it only figuratively (ibid. p. 190). Since man alone of all creatures was made in the image of God, and Christ, in His human nature, is the only perfect Man, then through His humanity all creatures come to know and glorify God rightly (that God is invisible to the angels, see St. John Chrysostom: 'God . . . Who is inscrutable to the angels, unseen by the Seraphim, uncomprehended by the Cherubim, invisible to the Principalities, Dominions, Powers and, in short, to all creation' [*On the Incomprehensibility of God*, Homily 3. PG 48. 720]). The 'mediator', then, is not a separate person from God the Word, but only the concrete human nature He assumed for our salvation. In Bedjan's view, the text of the Alkosh MS is the most "Nestorian" and therefore the most authentic; however, when understood aright, even this form of the text is free of real Nestorian doctrine.