*The Blessed Tome from Rome: the Political and Theological Aspirations of Pope Leo I in the context of the Robber Synod of Ephesus and the Council of Chalcedon.*

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"There is nothing more serious than the sacrilege of schism, because there is no just cause for severing the unity of the Church."[1] With these words, Augustine, the bishop of Hippo Regius, firmly opined that those who embraced theological and doctrinal tenets, incompatible with catholic and orthodox teaching, were culpable of severing the unity of the Church. This particular criticism was leveled against the Donatist factions of Northern Africa, a sect of rigorists who denied the validity of the sacraments when administered by *traditores*, literally 'the one[s] who had handed over' the Scriptures and the names of their fellow Christians during the Roman persecutions. However, by the time Augustine wrote these words, the church had already weathered several waves of divisive theological controversies and several additional schisms, specifically pertaining to the nature of Christ, loomed on the horizon. The First Council of Ephesus in AD 431, the so-called Latrocinium, or Robber Synod of 449, and the Council of Chalcedon in 451 would all attempt to resolve these controversies and the bishops and patriarchs of the major sees would play substantial roles in the attempted clarification of orthodox christology. However, beneath the veneer of theological debate, these bishops and patriarchs sought not only to implement their own christology but also to further the political power of the disparate episcopal sees. Leo I of Rome (c. AD 400-461) provides a prime example of these overlapping theological and ecclesio-political ambitions. Through numerous epistles, sermons, and his dogmatic Tome to Flavian, he strategically used political compromise and shrewd theological interpretation in an effort to resolve the fifth-century christological controversies, to mend the rift between the Antiochene and Alexandrian factions, and to establish papal primacy over the various ecumenical sees, bringing them into communion with Rome.

[1] Augustine of Hippo, *De Baptismo Contra Donatistas,* Book V, Chapter I. trans. Rev. J.R. King, revised Chester D. Hartranft. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series,* Vol. 4. ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1870). 640.

An examination of earlier christological heresies may help to contextualize and illumine the later debate surrounding the fifth-century controversies. Psilanthropism, the belief that Jesus Christ was born merely as a man, but was later adopted as the Son of God by the descent of the Holy Spirit, had been condemned at the Synod of Antioch in AD 268, and again at Nicaea in 325.[2] Apollinarianism, the belief that Jesus had a human body and lower soul, but retained a divine mind, was similarly deemed heretical at the Council of Constantinople in 381.

One of the most prevalent and dominant heretical sects of the early church was undoubtedly 'Arianism,' also referred to as Homoean Christianity.[3] Its founder, Arius, was a late third-century Christian priest of Alexandria, who held particular and distinctive ideas regarding the nature of the persons of God. His teachings sparked a theological movement that would permeate the Roman Empire and continue long after the barbarian invasions. 'Arianism,' which had asserted that Christ was begotten at a point in time, was of a substance akin to the Father, but not identical, and was, for these reasons, subordinate to the Father, was firmly rejected by the Council of Nicaea.[4] In fact, specific anathemas were included that directly attacked the 'Arian' positions.[5] In the process of affirming the orthodox position on christological and trinitarian

[2] Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils*, 'Council of Nicaea I, 325.' (Michael Glazier Inc., Wilmington, DE, 1983. The Order of St. Benedict, Inc., Collegeville, MN, 1990). 40-41.

[3] The term "Arianism" is somewhat problematic as it is primarily used in a pejorative heresiological context. For more on Homoean Christianity and the other 'Arian' sects, such as Anomoeanism, see Heather and Matthews, *Goths in the Fourth Century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1991). 137-8, 143.

[4] Even after Nicaea I, Arianism remained prevalent and even enjoyed imperial support. In 357, an assembly of bishops at Sirmium, described the Father as 'greater' than the Son 'in honor, dignity, glory, and majesty', and it explicitly excluded use of the term 'essence' (Lat. substantia, Gk. ousia) and its compounds (such as *homoousios* and *homoiousios*) as unbiblical. For more on Constantius and Arianism in the West, see Hilary of Poitiers, *De Synodis*, 11. Also, Raymond van Dam, "Arians and Homoeans in the West," *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity,* ed. Oliver Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[5] Davis, 62-63.

matters, the church routinely rejected controversial teachings and anathematized those who refused to accept and adhere to the accepted doctrine and credal confessions of the ecumenical councils.

Despite the firm rejections made at the Council of Nicaea, 'Arianism' lingered and remained prevalent among the Gothic successor kingdoms of the West, well into the seventh century. In the East, however, the orthodox stance was reaffirmed at the Council of Constantinople and 'Arianism' was gradually expunged following the death of the last Homoean emperor, Valens. Nevertheless, within a century and a half, an additional three ecumenical councils would convene in an attempt to clarify the christological confessions of the orthodox church, Of these three councils, the last, convened at Chalcedon in AD 451, fundamentally fractured the unity of the churches in the Eastern Roman Empire and contributed to internecine, sectarian violence that culminated in a schism between the Chalcedonian and so-called Miaphysite churches. In addition, resolutions made at Chalcedon concretely clarified the orthodox stance on the nature of Christ and further elevated the political status and primacy of Rome and Constantinople above the other imperial sees.[6]

**Christologies in Conflict: Nestorius of Constantinople and Cyril of Alexandria**

In order to understand the complex christological controversies surrounding the hypostatic union, and to provide context for the political machinations of Pope Leo I with regards to the Robber Synod of Ephesus and the Council of Chalcedon, it is necessary to consider the series of events that preceded it. Many of the central issues at hand can be traced back to Nestorius, an early fifth century bishop of Constantinople, of Antiochene descent. He

[6] Richard Price and Michael Gaddis, General Introduction to the *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, volumes 1-3. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005). 50.

quickly became embroiled in controversy for his public support of a preacher who had condemned the term *Theotokos*, or 'Mother of God.' "In addition to offending a broad swath of Christian popular devotion that in the early fifth century was placing increasing emphasis on veneration of the Holy Virgin, Nestorius's stance drew the unwelcome attention of Alexandria's powerful bishop Cyril, who was already annoyed by the former's friendly reception of dissident Egyptian clerics."[7]

Nestorius and his compatriots eschewed the term, *Theotokos*, (literally 'bearer of God') instead favoring *Christotokos* ('bearer of Christ'). In so doing, Nestorius asserted that Mary was merely the mother of Christ's humanity, not of his divinity. This argument not only aggravated the proponents of Marian devotion, but also reignited debate on the nature of the Christ.[8] The argument of the Nestorian faction, which on the surface appears to be inconsequential and picayune, actually implied a separation and distinction between the human and divine natures, a stance which was staunchly opposed by Cyril and a substantial faction of the eastern bishops, many of whom were naturally inclined to oppose any theological decisions that emerged from Constantinople.

Following the conversion of Constantine in the early fourth century, the political and theological center of gravity had shifted rather dramatically to the eastern, Greek-speaking half of the empire. Constantine and his successors had set about establishing Constantinople as the new capital and administrative center of the empire, and with great intentionality had designated Constantinople as a primary city of Christendom. Furthermore, the emperor's profession of faith set a certain precedent that paved the way for an increasing degree of imperial involvement and

[7] Price and Gaddis, 18-19.
[8] Price and Gaddis, 18-19.

intervention in ecclesiastical and divisive theological affairs.[9] The fifth-century councils were organized and held under the auspices of the eastern emperors alone, even though the imperial letters (*sacra*) that summoned the bishops were issued to their western colleagues as well.[10] The declining state of the imperial government in the West only furthered the relative status of the new imperial city, which was ultimately elevated to second in honor among the various sees at the Council of Constantinople in 381.[11]

The emperors already wielded substantial political and military power, following the reign of Constantine. This immense influence only expanded during the rule of Theodosius II, and decisions, even on theological matters such as the convening of church councils and the more difficult ecclesiastical appointments, were gradually incorporated into the purvey of imperial governance. So, when Sisinnius, the Patriarch of Constantinople died at the end of 427, and the bishops, clergy, and monks were unable to reach a consensus on who should be appointed to succeed him, the decision was deferred and committed to the emperor, Theodosius II. Theodosius was not able, or was perhaps unwilling, to select a successor to the position from among the eligible ecclesiastics in Constantinople, and instead appointed Nestorius of Antioch to the throne of the patriarchate, with the hopes that the selection might resolve some of the factionalism that had previously divided the church of the imperial capital.[12]

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[9] Price and Gaddis, 4.
[10] Price and Gaddis, 4.
[11] As is noted in J.B. Bury's *History of the Later Roman Empire Volume I*, this decision made at Constantinople to grant precedence to Constantinople on account of its status as New Rome was met with opposition from the remaining sees in Antioch and Jerusalem, and with particular vehemence from the patriarchate at Alexandria. Tensions between the sees were aggravated by the struggle between Theophilus and Chrysostom, so that by the time of Cyril and Nestorius, the rivalry had only further intensified.
[12] Nestorius, consecrated on 10 April 428, would do little to resolve any factionalism. See Socrates, HE 7.29; Nestorius, *Bazaar of Heracleides*, Bedjan, 377-82, trans. Driver and Hodgson, 274-7.

Nestorius's rhetoric pertaining to Marian devotion and his implications that the divine and human natures of Christ were separate and distinct from one another was already inflammatory, but Cyril's response deepened the rift between the two christological schools of thought and inflamed the already difficult relations between Alexandria and Constantinople. As David Gwynn explains, in the Third Letter to Nestorius, to which the Twelve Anathemas were attached, "Cyril insisted in uncompromising terms on the undivided unity of the Incarnation, foreshadowing Eutyches's later teaching of one nature in Christ after the union."[13] Furthermore, Cyril alleged that Nestorius's attempts to align his teachings with the orthodoxy espoused at Nicaea were problematic because of a faulty understanding of the Nicene doctrine. "It is not enough for your Reverence only to agree in confessing the symbol of the faith previously set out in the Holy Spirit by that holy and great synod formerly gathered in Nicaea, for you have not understood or interpreted it correctly, but have perverted it even though you may have confessed it verbally."[14] The debate between these two patriarchs would continue for years, both leading up to and following the 431 Council of Ephesus. During this time, Cyril proved a skilled political player while the comparatively inept Nestorius was often unable to sway popular opinion or rally influential political and ecclesiastic allies towards his cause.[15]

Particularly indicative of this disparity in political acumen is the reception of Pope Celestine to the letters from both of the patriarchs. Seeking papal support, both men had sent missives detailing their stances on the various christological issues. However, while Cyril thoughtfully had his letters translated and rendered into the Latin, Nestorius's epistles, written

[13] David M. Gwynn, "The Council of Chalcedon and the Definition of Christian Tradition," *Chalcedon in Context*, (ed. Richard Price and Mary Whitby, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2011). 11-2.
[14] Cyril of Alexandria, *Third Epistle to Nestorius. Select Letters*, ed. and trans. L.R. Wickham, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).
[15] Price and Gaddis, 18.

entirely in Greek, remained untranslated and unread for months.[16] The length at which Nestorius's letters remained untranslated is indicative of the rapid decline in literacy and comprehension of Greek in the fifth century, caused in part by the permanent political division of the empire, the increasing dangers of travel resulting from invasions, and the erosion of public order in the West. Even a century prior, a Latin pope would likely have had little difficulty in procuring a qualified translator for Greek texts, and yet Celestine's dependence on Cyril's translated epistle demonstrates the deterioration of imperial education in Greek.

Worsening matters for himself, Nestorius agreed to provide sanctuary to numerous western clerics who had fled following the papal condemnation of Pelagianism as a heresy.[17] Pope Celestine, who lacked the same understanding of the eastern christological issues as his successor Pope Leo I would prove to have, reached a determination that Nestorius's teachings on the incarnation were akin to Pelagianism and accordingly refused to engage Nestorius in any form of dialogue, instead issuing a "stern peremptory demand that Nestorius renounce his views or be excommunicated.[18] Understanding the matter only through a frame of reference provided him by Cyril's letters, Celestine effectively left it up to Cyril to define the terms by which Nestorius's orthodoxy or heresy would be judged."[19]

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[16] See Cyril's letter to Celestine, *ep.*11, and Celestine's epistles to Cyril and Nestorius, both from 430 AD. See *Select Letters, The Fathers of the Church*, 'Cyril of Alexandria,' Vol. 76, Letters 11-12 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010).

[17] Pelagianism, named for the ascetic British monk Pelagius (c. 350-c. 425) who propagated it, is the belief that God would not mandate perfection if it were impossible to achieve and that therefore the human will should be capable of leading a life free from sin. This set of beliefs was widely condemned by the western church and deemed to be heretical doctrine.

[18] The conflation of Nestorian two-nature Christology with Pelagianism makes little sense and can likely be attributed to Celestine's relative unfamiliarity with the eastern christological debate and his focus on the much more western-oriented Pelagian controversy.

[19] Price and Gaddis, 19.

**The Cyrillian Agenda at Ephesus 431**

The Council of Ephesus, convened in the summer of 431, was a largely chaotic proceeding that once again demonstrated Cyril's political acumen. "Cyril, whose allies and followers packed the streets of Ephesus, decided to summon the council into session before John of Antioch, and his fellow Syrian bishops, all supporters of Nestorius, had arrived in town. The first session, on 22 June, was called by Cyril with only a day's notice, over the protests of many bishops – and against the express wishes of Count Candidian, the emperor's representative, who found himself helpless to restrain the course of the proceedings."[20] With assistance from his allies, Memnon of Ephesus and Juvenal of Jerusalem, and with the support of the 150 bishops in attendance, predominately from Egypt and Asia Minor, Cyril steered the course of the proceedings and formally summoned Nestorius three times to address the charges of heresy brought against him. Unwilling to appear before such a tribunal, thereby granting some degree of validity to it, Nestorius refused to appear.[21] The Cyrillian assembly therefore tried Nestorius *in absentia*.

This council and trial of Nestorius marked an important shift regarding the process by which doctrine was deemed orthodox. In previous councils, overt debate by the assembled bishops and competitive scriptural exegesis, or critical interpretation of scriptural text, had been used to reach official consensus. However, at the First Council of Ephesus, the bishops in attendance instead compared the extensive letters written by both Cyril and Nestorius. Cyril's letter to Nestorius was deemed to be orthodox following its recitation and subsequent

[20] Price and Gaddis, 20.
[21] Interestingly, Nestorius's followers would term the 431 Council of Ephesus a 'Mercenary Council' on account of the unfair and illegitimate manner in which it was convened and conducted. This bears a great deal of similarity to the 449 Council of Ephesus, which was formally granted the title Latrocinium, or 'Robber Synod' after the envoys of Pope Leo I were not received.

comparison to the Nicene Creed and several other writings of the fourth-century fathers. In contrast, Nestorius's preaching and writing was likened to the teachings of Paul of Samosata, a third-century Apollinarian bishop, who was condemned as a heretic for his excessive emphasis on the humanity of Christ.[22] This process set precedent for future ecumenical councils, where Christological doctrinal disputes could be resolved not by scriptural analysis alone but by comparison to the writings of the orthodox early Church fathers. Alternatively, individuals could be condemned and their beliefs dismissed as heretical on account of perceived similarities to the teachings of known heretics.[23]

Having passed their judgment on Nestorius, the Cyrillian faction was incredibly swift in their subsequent maneuverings. Official proclamations were sent out in the name of the entire council and additional sessions were convened upon the arrival of the papal envoys. Then the council reiterated its decision on the teachings of Nestorius and Rome formally endorsed the condemnation of the Nestorian faction along with the other decrees.[24] Despite these measures, John of Antioch, along with a separate convention of Nestorian bishops held a counter-synod, and reached a differing theological conclusion. Each council purported to be legitimate and anathematized the other. Instead of the vigorous debates that had dominated previous ecclesiastical councils, each council had reached decisions with comparative unanimity and the

[22] Price and Gaddis, 21.
[23] Once Nestorius's guilt was established, this same strategy could later be used to impugn the orthodoxy of other Antiochene theologians based on their associations with him.
[24] Prior to this, Cyril had been presiding over the council in the name of Pope Celestine, with the official acts listing him as 'Cyril of Alexandria, also representing Celestine of Rome.' However, Cyril controlled the production of the Acts of the Council of Ephesus, and thus had the ability to approve any formal designation for himself. Regardless, Celestine granted formal approval for the decisions made in his stead. The official Roman position, naturally insisted that the Council merely ratified the official judgments passed by the pope. The eastern bishops, however, while appreciative of the papal support received at Ephesus I, certainly understood their relationship to Rome in less subordinate terms.

situation at Ephesus remained at an impasse. Nestorius, continued to enjoy the backing of the imperial court and its representatives, who initially appointed him to the episcopate, but the situation in Ephesus had dissolved into chaos, with militant Alexandrian monks arriving to lend support for the Cyrillian faction.

Ultimately Theodosius II, in an attempt to preserve civil order, ordered the deposition and arrest of Cyril, his ally Memnon of Ephesus, and John of Antioch. Over the course of the next year, Cyril would slowly curry favor with members of the imperial court, both through his skilled rhetorical prowess and through substantial payment of bribes.[25] Regardless, Cyril managed to impress the empress, Pulcheria, the prominent ascetic, Dalmatius, and numerous Constantinopolitan monks, who assisted him in his endeavor to sway Theodosius II. Ultimately the Emperor reconsidered his position and pushed for reconciliation between the Alexandrian and Antiochene factions, which was ultimately formalized in AD 433 in the Formula of Reunion, signed by Cyril and John of Antioch. In that agreement, the Antiochene faction disavowed and condemned Nestorius and accepted the term, *Theotokos*, while Cyril removed his Twelve Anathemas that had been aimed at the Antiochene approach to scriptural exegesis.[26]

However, while the Formula of Reunion temporarily bandaged the divisive christological disputes in the Eastern Roman Empire, it in no way resolved the central issues that had culminated in Ephesus I. Both sides had agreed to a temporary détente, but the christological and political matters that had served as a catalyst for the controversy remained unanswered. Additionally, the First Council at Ephesus had eschewed the tradition of debate and competitive scriptural exegesis for comparative analysis to the writings of the previous orthodox councils and

[25] Cyril, *ep.* 96 of 433 preserves an itemized list of bribes and gifts paid to members of the imperial court in the aftermath of Ephesus I. Cf. Battifol 1919b.
[26] Price and Gaddis, 23.

set a dangerous precedent for political machinations in future ecclesiastical matters. Both of these factors would have substantial importance on the outcomes of Ephesus II and Chalcedon.

**Leo the Great's Political Adroitness in Vandalic North Africa and Roman Gaul**

While Celestine had certainly utilized some degree of the political influence afforded him by his position as the bishop of the episcopal see of Rome, he remained a remarkably reactive pope, who seemed content to hitch his cart to that of other prominent theologians. His condemnation of the Pelagians and his conflation of the doctrinal tenets of their leader, Pelagius, with those of Nestorius seems to suggest that Celestine did not have a concrete Roman Christology that he could use to refute the more problematic elements of Nestorianism. Instead he aligned himself wholeheartedly with the Cyrillian faction at Ephesus I, throwing the considerable theological weight of Rome behind Cyril and ratifying the decisions of the Council. This more passive papal influence allowed the divisions in the East to deepen over the course of several decades.

However, the Christological concerns in the East were not the only matters besieging the Roman church at this time. The Vandalic conquest of North Africa around 429 and the subsequent establishment of a formal kingdom in Proconsularis, brought with it a resurgence of the strains of Gothic 'Arianism.'[27] With Celestine's death in 432, Leo I ascended to the episcopal see, and immediately began to display far greater political acumen than his predecessor. The

[27] The Vandal conquest of North Africa began in May 429. Augustine died in 430 during the Vandal siege of the city of Hippo Regius, where he had been appointed bishop. According to Prosper of Aquitaine, a disciple of Augustine and later a historian and scribe for Leo I, they had entered Africa from Spain in 427 (the year was actually 428) after the civil war between Boniface and Felix, a pair of Roman generals, left the Mediterranean vulnerable to barbarians and "the sea was made passible…to peoples who had not known how to make use of ships." Prosper, *Epitoma Chronicorum, Clavis Patrum Latinorum ((CPL 2257),* 2nd edition, ed. E. Dekkers, Turnhout, 1995). 535-584.

Vandalic conquests had significantly altered the relationship between Rome and North Africa, and Leo through numerous epistles gradually began to bring the North African churches under the sway of Rome. Celestine had been unable to accomplish similar political maneuvers, on account of the relative independence of the North African churches. Limited cooperation had been possible in periods of significant controversy, but for the most part, "autonomy was prized among the Africans, because there was something uniquely African that had been synthesized into its Christian culture and that intermittently needed to be expressed."[28] During Celestine's papacy, members of the Synod of Carthage, which convened in 424, had expressed their "disdain for papal intervention in local ecclesiastical affairs."[29] However, with the arrival of the Vandals and the strain of Homoean Christianity that accompanied them, many of the churches of North Africa suddenly appeared more willing to cooperate with the papacy at Rome. Leo I, accordingly, took advantage of this opportunity to further the hegemonic influence of the papacy by employing several techniques. He was clearly aware of the presence of Homoean clergy in North Africa but chose to quietly disregard the bishops appointed by the Vandalic kingdom. Wessel comments on this lack of direct papal address on the matter of Homoean bishops:

> That he never mentioned their presence, however, indicates either how little he understood the difficulties of life under Vandal rule, or, more likely, how well he grasped the complexity of bringing the African churches within his jurisdiction. To discuss the problem of Arian bishops openly would have been to acknowledge the gravity of the rioters' situation and even to concede that their violent methods were effective. He was reluctant to do this because he was unwilling to sacrifice the illusion of a unified

[28] Susan Wessel, *Leo the Great and the Spiritual Rebuilding of a Universal Rome*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae (Boston: Brill Publishing, 2008). 106.
[29] Wessel, 97.

ecclesiastical law in order to address the more immediate hardships facing the African churches.[30]

Instead, Leo advocated that the churches of North Africa adhere to a set of canonical restrictions that would ostensibly counteract the abuses of the Homoean bishops and the outright persecution of those who adhered to the tenets of Nicaea.[31] These restrictions would also significantly bring the North African congregations into alignment and communion with Rome.[32]

Similarly, in Gaul, Leo demonstrated his political prowess and his remarkable zeal for extending the hegemonic influence of Rome. Controversies regarding succession to some of the sees in Gaul had arisen, specifically pertaining to the jurisdiction of Arles and Vienne and their authority over the cities in their provinces. Leo decided to attempt a compromise of sorts and split the cities of Viennensis between the two sees.[33] Although this diminished the jurisdiction of the episcopate of Vienne, Leo viewed this as a structured rebalancing, as nearly five years prior, he had temporarily granted much of the jurisdiction of the previous bishop of Arles to the bishop of Vienne.[34]

This type of papal intervention not only actively forced the bishoprics of Gaul to acknowledge the primacy of the apostolic see at Rome; it also demonstrated Leo's willingness to

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[30] Wessel, 102-103.
[31] See Victor of Vita, *History of the Vandal Persecution*, trans. John Moorhead (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992) for more on the Vandal persecutions of the Nicene bishops in North Africa.
[32] Leo, *Epistulae* 12.5, 12.15, Jaffé 410. Most of Leo's canonical restrictions focused on the Eucharist and who could partake in the sacrament. Specific exceptions were granted to young women who had been raped in the Vandal invasions. Ep. 12 also clarified the question of episcopal legitimacy and the requirements that had to be met for a bishop in North Africa to be recognized by Rome.
[33] Wessel, 92-93.
[34] Leo's rebalancing of Gallic jurisdiction was likely affected by the presence of sarcophagi in Arles that depict Saint Peter. These images established a Petrine link between Rome and Arles that both cities would use to legitimize their political and ecclesiastical influence in the region.

compromise on matters of ecclesiastical import, rather than align himself fully with a particular party. Leo's political savoir, his emphasis on bringing the provincial churches of North Africa and Gaul under Roman papal hegemony, and his willingness to encourage compromise on both political and ecclesiastical matters all prefigure his behavior and intentions surrounding the Latrocinium of 449 and the subsequent Council of Chalcedon in 451.

**Eutyches and the Latrocinium of 449**

While Leo was striving to establish a papal ecclesio-political hegemony in the West, the tensions between the Cyrillian and the post-Nestorian Antiochene factions were surfacing once again. The temporary bandage that was the Formula of Reunion quickly began to unravel during the mid 440s, and was completely torn away in 448. Eusebius of Dorylaeum, the same bishop who had denounced Nestorius and his teachings on Marian devotion and the nature of Christ, brought a formal charge of heresy against Eutyches, the archimandrite and follower of the late Dalmatius, who for the past several decades had presided over a community of about three hundred monks on the outskirts of Constantinople.[35] While Eusebius was zealous in his determination that Eutyches be condemned for some of his doctrinal statements, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Flavian advocated a more cautious approach from a spirit of paternalistic correction rather than outright heretical condemnation. This may have been a result of the fact that Eutyches had been one of the most vehement opponents of Nestorian two-nature

[35] Price and Gaddis, 25. It is important to note that the only records of the so-called Latrocinium survive through the *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*. As Chalcedon was explicitly designed to overturn Ephesus II, some of the events described may be distorted or exaggerated. Also of note, Eutyches, in his office of archimandrite oversaw the monks of Constantinople and his monastic background can likely partially color his theological views. Both monasticism and the Miaphysite position, which Eutyches held, enjoyed particularly strong support in Egypt and the see of Alexandria in particular. For more, see David Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

Christology.[36] Eusebius, nevertheless, proceeded with his accusation and ultimately Flavian deposed and excommunicated him.[37] Eutyches became synonymous with an extreme Miaphysite theology that, opponents charged, denied the humanity of Christ.[38]

Eutyches appealed during his trial at the Home Synod of Constantinople, requesting a council of the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Thessalonica, but this request was likely ignored and does not appear in the official minutes of the synod.[39] However, on account of his position in Constantinople and the imperial favor he enjoyed, Eutyches managed to convince the emperor to give orders for the convocation of another ecumenical council.[40] Flavian immediately wrote to Leo explaining the situation and providing his analysis of Eutyches's heretical beliefs. In addition, Leo was invited to attend the Second Council of Ephesus, although he excused himself on the grounds that it broke precedent for the pope to attend the ecumenical councils. He added that Attila and the Huns had invaded Italy and thrown the region into turmoil.[41] Accordingly, Leo sent four papal legates in his place, bearing his epistles to the emperor, Flavian, the Council, and the monks of Constantinople. Among these epistles was the

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[36] Also referred to as dyophysitism (Gk. δυοφυσιτισμός). While Nestorius did advocate for two distinct natures of Christ, a belief shared with Leo I, the modern Roman Catholic Church, and to a certain extent, Cyril of Alexandria, he preached an extreme variation that held that the two natures of Christ were entirely distinct, as though no link was established in the hypostatic union and there were merely two separate natures of Christ housed in one corporeal body.

[37] Price and Gaddis, 115-6.

[38] Price and Gaddis, 25-6. Miaphysitism, also known as Monophysitism, (Gk. μονοφυσιτισμός) stood at the opposite christological extreme of Nestorianism. Eutyches and numerous miaphysites held that the divine and human natures blended into one person through the hypostatic union. See Jeff Childers, "Miaphysites," *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity,* ed. Oliver Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[39] *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, I. 818-9 testified to by the deacon Constantine and the patrician Florentius. Eutyches hoped in vain that Leo I might side with him (cf. Leo, *ep*. 20), but he nevertheless found stalwart allies in Dioscorus of Alexandria and Juvenal of Jerusalem. trans. Richard Price, Michael Gaddis, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007).

[40] Ordered on 30 March 449 to convene at Ephesus that August. Theodosius's letter of invitation to Dioscorus is given in *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon,* I. 24.

[41] Davis, 175-77.

Tome of Leo, the twenty-eighth letter to Flavian that concretely outlined Leo's representation of the christology of Rome and the West.

Leo sent four legates to represent him at Ephesus II and carry his epistles to the Council. One of them, the priest Renatus died on the journey. However, the other three legates, Julius, bishop of Puteoli, the deacon Hilary, and the notary Dulcitius arrived, immediately presented themselves and their letters to Flavian, and attended the Council when it officially convened.[42]

Emperor Theodosius II appointed Dioscorus of Alexandria, a stalwart ally of Eutyches and successor of Cyril, to preside over the Council, and it quickly became evident that much of the Council had been prearranged. Many of the bishops from Egypt, Palestine, and Oriens were hand-selected by and therefore amenable to Dioscorus. Additionally, the most prominent of the Antiochene bishops and theologians, Theodoret, was detained and therefore unable to attend the proceedings. Moreover, the legates of Rome were divided and kept apart since Hilary and Dulcitius were not bishops.[43]

The forty-two bishops who had previously condemned Eutyches at the Home Synod were denied the right to participate in the Council and were instead relegated to spectators. Through these maneuvers, Dioscorus quickly dispatched the Eutychian opposition and paved the path for the intended goals of Ephesus II. In a manner similar to Cyril, his predecessor, he governed the proceedings with a firm hand and excluded his opposition from participating. Just as Cyril had done eighteen years previously, he also brought militant Egyptian monks with him to Ephesus to intimidate dissident bishops. With the support of the Emperor, Theodosius II, Dioscorus was effectively given free rein at Ephesus II. However, unlike Cyril, Dioscorus did not enjoy the

[42] Davis, 176.
[43] Davis, 177. This separation was significant because the Bishop Julius did not understand Greek and was therefore unable to participate in the proceedings and fulfill his function as a papal legate.

support of a Roman pope, who would align with the Alexandrian school of christological interpretation.[44] As a result, he attempted to marginalize the papal legates as much as possible.

After the imperial letters convening the Council were read aloud, the deacon Hilary rose and petitioned that the epistles of Leo be read before the assembly. However, Dioscorus repeatedly denied the petition under various pretexts, easily overruling the request of the deacon.[45] Instead Eutyches was brought before the Council and asked for his profession of faith. The Council then read the minutes of the Home Synod, including Eusebius's demands that Eutyches renounce his teachings on the incarnation. Still ignoring the requests of the papal legates, Dioscorus and the Council approved Eutyches's Miaphysite interpretation of the incarnation and by a vote of 111 to 19, declared it to be the orthodox position. Eutyches was restored to his offices of priest and archimandrite.[46]

Then Dioscorus invoked a canon from the First Council of Ephesus, under which it was forbidden to put forward a creed contrary to the one established at Nicaea. It was quickly reaffirmed, and Dioscorus immediately denounced Flavian and Eusebius and demanded that they be deposed for violating the canon.[47] The motion proved to be extraordinarily contentious and at some point in the proceedings Dioscorus claimed to have been attacked and summoned the imperial commissioner and militia. The militant Alexandrian monks, who had accompanied Dioscorus, quickly followed the imperial forces and the Council devolved into chaos. Flavian

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[44] While Celestine remained relatively unfamiliar with the christological controversies dominating the East throughout his papacy and instead allowed Cyril to determine what doctrine was orthodox, Leo proved to be an abler theologian and had prepared a distinctly Roman christological position in his Tome to Flavian.

[45] As Julius, the papal legate who enjoyed the status of bishop, was largely ignorant of Greek, he would be unable to adequately address the situation and press Dioscorus for the reading of the papal epistles. See Davis, 177.

[46] Davis, 177.

[47] Davis, 177. See also, *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, I. 911-61 for the reaffirmation of the canons of Ephesus I and *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* I. 962 for the denunciation of Flavian.

was dragged away from the altar, the papal legates hid under tables and sought refuge inside the sacristy, and despite numerous protestations, every bishop in attendance, including the silenced Antiochene opposition, was compelled to sign the official acts.[48] Despite imperial approval, the Antiochene opposition, the deposed Flavian of Constantinople and Eusebius of Dorylaeum, and Pope Leo I himself quickly challenged this Council. Leo, whose legates had never been heard, branded Ephesus II the Latrocinium, which roughly translates as Robber Synod.[49] Flavian, who had been deposed from his patriarchate in Constantinople, was imprisoned, allegedly mistreated and died shortly after under suspicious circumstances.[50] The acts of the second session of Ephesus II, known as the Syriac Acts, were not read back at Chalcedon and do not survive in their Greek original.[51]

**The Council of Chalcedon**

Despite his efforts in the West, where he rallied the support of the western Emperor Valentinian III and the Empress Galla Placidia, Leo was left relatively marginalized and powerless to invoke a new ecumenical council until Theodosius II's sudden death in July 450. At

[48] Davis, 178.
[49] Latrocinium literally translates to 'service of robbers,' but is also commonly rendered as the Robber Synod. See Leo, *ep*. 43, trans. Charles Lett Feltoe. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895). See also Leo *ep*. 95 to the Empress Pulcheria in July 451: *non iudicium sed latrocinium.*
[50] On the matter of Flavian's imprisonment and uncertainties surrounding his death, see Henry Chadwick, 'The Exile and Death of Flavian of Constantinople: A Prologue to the Council of Chalcedon,' *Journal of Theological Studies 6* (1955). 17-34.
[51] The so-called Syriac Acts are known to us from a sixth-century Syriac translation (c. 535) preserved in a monastery of Mar Eusebius at Kafra D'Bartha. The monastery maintained a Miaphysite Christology that regarded Chalcedon as a false council and Dioscorus as a martyr. For more on the Acts, see *Syriac Acts of the Second Council of Ephesus of 449.* Syriac text ed. J. Flemming, German trans. G. Hoffmann, *Akten der Ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449*, in *Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse*, NF 15 (Berlin, 1917). English trans. S.G.F. Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus* (Dartford, 1881)

that point, Marcian, an elderly imperial general ascended to the throne in the East and set about undoing the work of Dioscorus. As part of this process, a new ecumenical council was called in order to directly counteract the Latrocinium. Leo insisted that this new council be held in Italy under papal supervision. However, the practicality of holding a council attended by primarily eastern bishops in an eastern venue overrode this demand, and Nicaea was selected to host the council.[52] Out of fear of disruption from the Eutychian and Dioscuran supporters and the corresponding need for imperial military presence, the council was relocated to Chalcedon.

Chalcedon enjoyed a far greater degree of imperial presence and supervision than either of the two Councils at Ephesus. Flavius Anatolius, the *magister militum* and former consul, presided and Marcian himself arrived with the Empress Pulcheria to address the council in person during the sixth session. However, while the imperial magistrates oversaw the agenda, the legates of Leo I were recognized as holding formal presidency over the council.[53] Leo, respecting papal tradition, was not in attendance.[54]

The Council proceeded to reverse the Dioscoran agenda of Ephesus II in a relatively straightforward manner. The Acts from the Home Synod and from Ephesus II were read, and a provisional sentence was issued against Dioscorus. In accordance with the tradition of Ephesus I that Christological texts be compared to previously ratified orthodox doctrine, Leo's Tome to Flavian was read alongside the letters of Cyril. The Tome was acclaimed and the bishops proclaimed it to be orthodox. Dioscorus was tried and condemned, and numerous other cases and

[52] The choice of venue served as a deliberate callback to the orthodoxy established at Nicaea I, much as Dioscorus's choice of Ephesus styled him as a second Cyril.
[53] Price and Gaddis, 41-2.
[54] Leo would go on to make statements in his later epistles regarding Chalcedon that the Pope would not condescend to attend the councils as it went against tradition. However, earlier popes had likely not attended the councils on account of the difficulty of travel, the declining understanding of Greek in the West, and the comparatively weak papal understanding of the eastern christological debate.

appeals were heard.

In terms of the Leonine agenda at Chalcedon, nearly every political and theological decision supported his goals. His papal legates were received, heard, and granted presidency at the Council. His Roman compromise between the competing Alexandrian and Antiochene Christologies was ratified in his Tome to Flavian. The heretical beliefs of both Nestorius and Eutyches were dismissed, Dioscorus was condemned, and the Latrocinium was formally overturned. The only major political or doctrinal decision that passed against Leo's express wishes was Canon 28, reached in the sixteenth session. The canon reads: "above all, primacy and exceptional honor should be preserved for the most God-beloved archbishop of Senior Rome according to the canons, but that the most sacred archbishop of imperial Constantinople New Rome is to enjoy the same privileges of honor, and that he is to have power, on the basis of his authority, to consecrate the metropolitans in the dioceses of Asiana, Pontica and Thrace." [55] The passage of this canon, despite the opposition of the papal legates, formally granted Constantinople primacy in the East and distinguished the imperial capital as having the same primacy in the East as Rome.

**On the Hypostatic Union**

Before consideration is given to Leo's theological and political achievements and shortcomings at Chalcedon, it is necessary to scrutinize the details of the Christological controversy debated in the trial of Eutyches, the Latrocinium of 449 and the Council of Chalcedon. This will help to contextualize the political and theological responses of the various patriarchs and of Leo in particular.

[55] Canon 28, from *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, III.16. 43.

In Christian tradition, the issue of the nature of God has been one of the primary causes for dissension and schism. 'Arianism,' one of the most prevalent heretical sects in the eyes of the orthodox Nicene church, was focused on a particular explanation of the nature of God. Homoean Christians asserted that the Christ, that is God the Son, was the first created being, begotten from the Father, and therefore lesser than the Father. Arius himself reportedly issued the statement: 'There was once when the Son was not.'[56] Despite the decision at Nicaea, orthodox and Arian theologians continued to disagree on the substance (Lat. *substantia*, Gk. *ousia*) of Christ, with claims asserting that Jesus was of a substance identical to the Father and like to the Father, respectively.

Nestorius aggravated a new christological nerve in the early fifth century with some of his sermons and doctrinal writings that pertained to the incarnation. The incarnation of Christ is one of the central tenets of Christian doctrine and holds massive implications for questions of salvation. In Nicene teaching, God the Son, who is of the same substance as the Father, condescended to become man so that he might suffer and die, and ultimately rise again from the dead. A portion of the Athanasian Creed aptly summarizes what would become central to the Chalcedonian doctrine on the incarnation:

> Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that we also believe faithfully the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man. God, of the Substance [Essence] of the Father, begotten before the worlds, and Man, of the Substance

[56] 'Arian' bishops at Sirmium, described the Father as 'greater' than the Son 'in honor, dignity, glory, and majesty', and explicitly excluded use of the term 'essence' (Lat. *substantia*, Gk. *ousia*) and its compounds (such as *homoousios* and *homoiousios*) as unbiblical. Raymond van Dam, "Arians and Homoeans in the West," *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*. See also, Khaled Anatolios, "Arius," ed. Oliver Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

> of his mother, born in this world. Perfect God and perfect Man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, with respect to His Divinity and inferior to the Father with respect to His humanity. Who although He is God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ [*Qui licet Deus sit et homo, non duo tamen, sed unus est Christus*]. One, not by conversion of the Divinity into flesh, but by assumption of the humanity into God [*Unus autem non conversione divinitatis in carnem, sed assumptione humanitatis in Deum*]. One altogether, not by confusion of Substance, but by unity of Person[*Unus omnino, non confusione substantiae, sed unitate personae*].[57]

This assumption of the humanity into God results in a state commonly referred to as the hypostatic union.[58] The conjunction of these two distinct natures of Christ, the divine and human, is doctrinally of paramount importance, as without either nature, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the subsequent resurrection would be meaningless. Without the divine nature, the death of Christ holds no power over sin and death and His death would simply be that of another human. Conversely, without the human nature, the sacrifice of Christ would not extend to humanity, and thus salvation would still be withheld.

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[57] The Athanasian Creed, widely attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296-373) likely emerged at a much later stage in the debate, despite the credal condemnation of widely held Arian beliefs. As Philip Schaff notes in *The Creeds of Christendom*, much of the theology of the creed is rooted in an Augustinian tradition, borrowing from Augustine's AD 415 work, *De Trinitate*. Additionally, the creed is not mentioned in any of the major ecumenical councils up to Chalcedon and is believed to have been composed in Latin. See Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, (New York: Harper Brothers, 1990) and J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964). Also, Augustine, *De Trinitate*, trans. Arthur West Haddan. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, Vol. 3. ed. Philip Schaff, (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887).

[58] ὑπόστασις (person, nature, Lat. persona) stands in contrast to the term οὐσία (substance, essence, Lat. substantia). These terms refer to similar concepts, and much of the christological debate throughout the Late Antique Mediterranean centered on the confusion sparked by the use of these terms. The difficulty in translation between the Greek and Latin, as well as the aforementioned decline in Greek education in the West and reduction in use of Latin in the East, would only amplify the theological debate.

During the fifth-century christological controversies, two distinct views began to crystalize with regard to the nature of Christ and the incarnation. The first of these emerged from the Antiochene school of christological inquiry and is traditionally associated with the term dyophysitism (Gk. δυοφυσιτισμός). Antiochene doctrine was concerned with protecting the immutability of the divinity of Christ while at the same time granting scope for the freedom of His humanity. This led the Antiochene school to stress the distinction between the two constituent elements in Christ. As a result, they used formulae such as 'two realities or beings', even 'two persons', 'conjoined' (not mixed or blended) in 'the person of union.'[59] In its most extreme form, namely that promulgated by the detractors of Nestorius, dyophysitism preaches that there are two distinct persons of Christ both before and after the incarnation. On account of the stress placed on the 'two distinct persons' by Nestorius and other Antiochene theologians, it was fairly simple for their opponents to suggest that Nestorius was preaching 'two Christs' or 'two Sons,' one of the divine nature and one of the human. This confusion over the term ὑπόστασις, or persona, and the reduction of Nestorian theology to that of 'two Christs' sparked the controversy at Ephesus I.

The Alexandrian school of christology, often associated with the term Monophysitism (Gk. μονοφυσιτισμός) stood in relative opposition to their Antiochene counterparts.[60] Cyril of Alexandria, the spiritual successor of Athanasius, instead placed emphasis on the unity of Christ, which he expressed with formulae such as 'one incarnate nature', 'one hypostasis', 'two natures

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[59] This emphasis on two persons is illustrated in excerpts of Nestorius given in the *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, I. 944.

[60] To what degree the two schools actually differed is still debated. See Price and Gaddis, 60. See also, Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Volume 2, Part I, From Chalcedon to Justinian I, (John Knox Press, Westminster, 1986). 3-5. Also of note, the alleged "Monophysites," linked to the Alexandrian school, never used that term for themselves. See Jeff Childers, "Miaphysites," *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*.

in contemplation alone,' that is, distinct as we describe them but not separate in reality.[61] As Price and Gaddis acknowledge: "Since both sides agreed that Christ is both God and man 'without confusion, change, division, or separation' (to use the famous expression in the Definition), the argument over terminology was sterile, and can give the impression that both sides really agreed but were keen to disguise the fact."[62]

However, the Antiochene and Alexandrian schools also differed in their framework for understanding Christology.[63] The Antiochene school presented a human-centric Christology that concerned itself with the humanity of Christ, while the Alexandrians focused on the divinity of Christ and the verse from John: "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."[64] On account of the Alexandrian stress on the unity of Christ, and Cyril's position that the two natures united in Christ preserve their differences, but were no longer two ontologically distinct realities, later Alexandrian theologians including Eutyches and Dioscorus pushed this theology to an extreme. As a result, opponents of Eutyches and Dioscorus alleged that they confused the substances of Christ. This controversy resulted in the confirmation of Eutyches's orthodoxy at the Latrocinium and the subsequent reversal at Chalcedon.

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[61] For more on Cyril and the Alexandrian emphasis on the hypostatic union, see Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*, trans. John Anthony McGuckin (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1995).
[62] Price and Gaddis, 60.
[63] Antiochene and Alexandrian exegetical processes were fundamentally different. The Antiochene exegetical practices were much more concerned with a typological analysis of the scriptures that related the Old Testament prophecies to the New Testament fulfillment in Christ. Conversely, the Alexandrian exegesis tended to analyze the scriptural texts through a far more allegorical lens.
[64] John 1:14. Καὶ ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, (28th Revised Edition, ed. Barbara and Kurt Aland, Institute of New Testament Textual Research, Münster/Westphalia, 2012).

**Leo the Theologian**

With his Tome to Flavian, along with several other letters and sermons, Leo I attempted to negotiate and present a theological compromise between the Antiochene and Alexandrian schools. This compromise would outright condemn both the Nestorian and Eutychian extremes, branding them both as heretical, and would seek to establish a Roman interpretive *via media* between a christology of division and a christology of fusion.[65] This balanced approach to the matter is made apparent through the terminology displayed in the Tome to Flavian, where the Alexandrian focus on unity meets the Antiochene separate divine and human attributes following the incarnation.

In much the same manner as Celestine had received letters from Nestorius and Cyril at the height of the Nestorian controversy, Leo received both a petition from Eutyches and a letter from Flavian of Constantinople, prior to the Home Synod and the Latrocinium.[66] Just as had been the case leading up to Ephesus I, the petitioner's letter was largely dismissed by the papacy and the letter charging heresy proved to be the basis for the papal response. Flavian wrote at Leo's request of the specifics of Eutyches's "impious opinion," detailing that Eutyches had alleged that "Before the Incarnation of Jesus Christ our Savior, there were two natures, the Godhood and the Manhood, but that after the Union there has become one nature."[67] Flavian then proceeded to elaborate on the heresy of Eutyches, commenting that "as your Holiness knows, the union of the two natures which meet together in Christ made no confusion of their properties in the union: but the properties of the two natures continue unimpaired and entire even

[65] Grillmeier, 3-4.
[66] In this case, however, both Flavian and Eutyches wrote in Latin, eschewing the need for translation from the Greek.
[67] Flavian of Constantinople, *ep*. 26, St. Leo's Epistle to Flavian: The Tome of St. Leo, trans. Rev. Charles A. Heurtley (London: Parker & Co., 1885). 13.

in the union."[68] This Antiochene-oriented response from Flavian emphasized the distinct two natures of Christ following the hypostatic union. Furthermore, it immediately attempted to sway the papal determination with the assumption that the papal christology was perfectly aligned with Flavian's. Flavian again expounded on the depths of the Eutychian heresy and alleged that Eutyches had made potentially Docetic arguments concerning the substance of the body of Christ and had denied that the flesh of Christ was consubstantial with the flesh of Mary and the rest of humanity.[69]

These assertions made by Flavian, and tacitly accepted by Leo, demonstrate some degree of misunderstanding with regard to the Eutychian premise. While Eutyches did hold that there was only one nature after the Union, he was neither denying the divinity of Christ nor questioning the reality of the incarnation. Nevertheless, as a response to these charges, Leo begins his *Tomus ad Flavianum* with a swift dismissal of Eutyches, remarking: "This Eutyches, who seemed to be an honorable presbyter in name, is shown to be ignorant in much and inexperienced beyond measure."[70] Only after his initial condemnation of the Eutychian heretical extreme does Leo present the Roman Christological argument on the incarnation:

> For He who is true God is also true man, and in this union there is no lie, since the humility of manhood and the loftiness of the Godhead both meet there. For as God is not changed by the showing of pity, so man is not swallowed up by the dignity. For each form does what is proper to it with the co-operation of the other; that is the Word

[68] Flavian of Constantinople, *ep*. 26, 13.
[69] Docetism, a doctrine highly influential in Gnostic writings, alleges that the body of Christ was not human but either a phantasm or of real but celestial substance. As a result, the sufferings of Christ and his physical death on the cross are questioned in Docetic writings.
[70] Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum*, St. Leo's Epistle to Flavian: The Tome of St. Leo, trans. Rev. Charles A. Heurtley, (London: Parker & Co., 1885). 17.
*Quibus Eutyches, qui presbyterii nomine honorabilis videbatur, multum imprudens et nimis imperitus ostenditur.*

> performing what appertains to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what appertains to the flesh. One of them sparkles with miracles, the other succumbs to injuries.[71]

This passage from the Tome fully embraces the Antiochene emphasis on the distinct natures of Christ. In the Roman christology, neither the divine nor the human attributes of Christ are blended in the hypostatic union, but each nature operates in union with the other.[72] Despite the Antiochene language of two distinct natures in Christ used in this passage of the Tome, this theology also aligns with the Cyrillian concession that the attributes of each nature remain distinct even when conjoined in one ontologically distinct person. The deliberate use of *cum alterius communio, quod proprium est*, acknowledges the unity and communion of the two natures in one person of Christ, and yet maintains the separation of attributes.[73]

The Antiochene language of two natures is routinely balanced against Leo's alignment with the old Cyrillian variation of Alexandrian Christology throughout the Tome:

> Just as, therefore, it is not part of the same nature to be… pierced with nails, and yet open the gates of paradise to the robber's faith: so it is not part of the same nature to say, "I and the Father are one," and to say, "the Father is greater than I." For although in the Lord, Jesus Christ, God and man is one person, yet the source of the degradation, which is shared by both, is one, and the source of the glory, which is shared by both, is another. For His manhood, which is less than the Father, comes from our side: His Godhead, which is equal to the Father, comes from the Father.[74]

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[71] Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum,* 23.
*Qui enim verus est Deus…aliud succumbit injuriis.*
[72] Price and Gaddis, 60.
[73] Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum,* 23.
*Agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communio, quod proprium est.*
[74] Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum,* 24.

Leo's focus on the distinct attributes of the two natures, which are conjoined and united in the person of Christ, heavily incorporates language and ideas from both of the christological schools of thought and astutely strikes a balance that mirrors the orthodoxy of Cyril, while successfully marginalizing the extremes of each faction. Both Nestorian and Eutychian Christologies are deemed heretical doctrinal extremes and effectively excluded.[75] Instead, Leo embraces Cyril's doctrine on the Unity of Christ and takes advantage of Cyril's own concessions on the distinct attributes of the two natures to incorporate Antiochene language.

As the Bishop of Rome and a devoutly religious man, Leo doubtlessly believed the doctrine and Roman christological arguments espoused in his Tome. However, the balance between the two conflicting schools of scriptural exegesis and christological interpretation, the alignment with Cyrillian doctrine that had been deemed orthodox at Ephesus I, and the language of compromise that permeates the Tome speaks to a certain theological shrewdness on the part of Leo. This deliberate balance of theology and language in the Tome contributed to its ratification at Chalcedon, where it would definitively shape the Definition of Chalcedon.

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*Sicut ergo, ut multa praeteream, non eiusdem naturae est…de Patre illi est aequalis cum Patre Divinitas.*

[75] In addition to the immediate refutation of Eutychian Christology in Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum*, the Tome also dismisses the Nestorian doctrine of entirely distinct and separate natures in the body of Christ, with *Agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communio, quod proprium est,* and *aliud tamen est, unde in utroque communis est contumelia, aliud unde communis est gloria.*

While Leo refutes the doctrinal tenets of Nestorianism in his Tome and other epistles, it seems probable that the doctrine of two distinct personae somehow joined together that is commonly imputed to Nestorius would likely have been repudiated by him. As has been noted earlier, much of the controversy centers on interpretation and misinterpretation of the terms persona, substantia, ὑπόστασις, and οὐσία. See J.F. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and his teaching: a fresh examination of the evidence*, (Cambridge University Press, 1908). The main evidence of this book posits that Nestorius was orthodox, aligned with the theology of the Tome of Leo, and was not, in fact, a 'Nestorian.' This is further corroborated by Nestorius's approval of Chalcedon, about which he remarks: "The same one is twofold."

**Leo the Politician**

The Epistles, Sermons, and to an extent the Tome of Leo the Great, were not simply to be understood in a christological vacuum. Leo clearly intended for these theological and exegetical writings to outline a novel Roman christological interpretation of the incarnation, but his dogmatic texts are also littered with political language. Indeed, his entire epistle pertaining to Canon 28 of Chalcedon, addressed to Emperor Marcian, seems to focus on the political dynamic of the early church and on the relationship between the major episcopal sees, particularly that of Rome and the imperial capital of Constantinople.[76]

The exegetical schools of Antioch and Alexandria were without question at odds with one another throughout the fifth-century controversies, but their relationship is much more complex than that of simple christological rivals. Each of these cities held a patriarchal episcopal see within the ancient church. Of the five major sees, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, the first four had enjoyed ecclesiastical prominence from the first century. Constantinople had risen to the fore during the fourth century when the city became the imperial residence and administrative capital of the East. The bishops of each of these sees naturally wished for their city to hold political and dogmatic influence over the others, and so active political objectives can often be found beneath the veneer of Christological debate.

With this political undercurrent in mind, several of Leo's epistles and sermons can be understood in a fresh light. At Chalcedon, one of his primary goals was to overturn the Latrocinium, not merely because the Robber Synod had vindicated the heresy of Eutyches, but also because Dioscorus of Alexandria had entirely ignored the political and ecclesiastical

[76] Leo, *ep*. 54 to Marcian, trans. Charles Lett Feltoe. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895).

prominence of Rome. The papal legates had been ignored, overridden, and ultimately forced to hide and then flee for their lives, while the dogmatic epistle, Leo's Tome to Flavian, was never read. As a result, Leo immediately began to marshal political opposition to Ephesus II. With his epistle to the Emperor Theodosius, he complained of Dioscorus's tyrannical behavior at the Latrocinium and asserted that "the declaration effected by him is of such a nature as to injure all the churches."[77]

Leo continued: "I entreat you therefore before the undivided Trinity of the one Godhead, which is injured by these evil doings, and which is the guardian of your kingdom, and before Christ's holy angels that all things remain intact as they were before the judgment, and that they await the weightier decision of the synod at which the whole number of the bishops in the whole world is gathered together."[78] He requests the restoration of the orthodoxy established at Ephesus I and then requests another Council to be convened in order to address the concerns which arose from Ephesus II. However, the language used in this epistle is deliberate and reflects his political acumen. He requests Theodosius II to "command the assembling together of a special Synod in Italy, in order that all opposition may be expelled or pacified, and that there may be no deviation from or ambiguity in the Faith."[79]

Similar epistles were sent from the imperial court in the West. Eudoxia, Theodosius II's daughter and the wife of the Emperor Valentinian III, in her letter to the Eastern court demanded that a new synod be convened to review Ephesus II on account of the unscrupulous

[77] Leo, *ep*. 43 to Theodosius II, (trans. Charles Lett Feltoe. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895).
[78] Leo, *ep*. 43 to Theodosius II.
[79] Leo, *ep*. 43 to Theodosius II.

proceedings.[80] Similarly Galla Placidia sent a letter to Pulcheria in which she urged her to dismiss the case that had been made against Flavian: "That whatever was decided by that tumultuous and wretched council ... be overturned by all the virtue and by all the integrity that endures, the episcopal case should be sent [for review] to the apostolic see."[81]

This would be the only time in Leo's career that he elicited help from the imperial western court. The reasons for this become fairly apparent. Prior to the Latrocinium, Leo had remained relatively untangled in the eastern christological controversies, and had instead focused on unifying the western churches in Gaul and North Africa under the primacy of Rome. As a result, his first epistle to Theodosius on the matter is brimming with papal authority and confidence that it is the place of the apostolic see to resolve ecclesiastical controversy.[82] When this epistle, along with its numerous appeals to papal primacy and Petrine supremacy, was ignored, Leo attempted a different tack. By appealing to the emperor's pragmatic sensibility, Leo hoped to encourage the emperor to apply the same standards of justice to settle the religious controversy that he used in secular affairs: "We ask ... that you afford in [your] treatment of divine matters what is granted by the equity of your laws in secular affairs, so that human

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[80] Leo, *ep*. 57, (trans. Charles Lett Feltoe. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895); *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* 2.1.1. It is fairly clear that both imperial princesses, Eudoxia and Galla Placidia, and the western emperors in general wrote at Leo's behest.

[81] Leo, *ep*. 58, (trans. Charles Lett Feltoe. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895); *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* 2.3.1.

ut quidquid in illo tumultuoso miserrimoque concilio constitutum est, omni virtute submoveatur et omnibus integris permanentibus ad apostolicae sedis ... episcopatus causa mittatur.

[82] See Wessel, 263-4. See also, Leo, *ep*. 43, Jaffé 437, *Epistula Leonis ad Theodosium augustum* and *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* 2.4.

Olim et ab initio in conciliis celebratis tantam nos percepimus a beato Petro apostolorum principe fiduciam, ut habeamus auctoritatem ad veritatem pro nostra pace defendendam, quatenus nulli liceat sic eam munitari in aliquo commovere.

presumption may not inflict harm upon Christ's gospel."[83] Only when these two letters were met with imperial silence, did he turn to the imperial court in the West for assistance, as this deference to secular authority likely weakened his political capital.[84] Nevertheless, when Theodosius died the following year in a hunting accident, Leo found a much more sympathetic and compliant ally in Marcian and was swiftly able to arrange for the convocation of a new ecumenical council that would undo the political damage of the Latrocinium.

**Roman Primacy as the Endgame**

Clearly, Leo was an able theologian and an incredibly shrewd political bishop, who was concerned with establishing the primacy of Rome. Arranging Chalcedon and overturning the Robber-Synod of Ephesus were certainly effective political maneuvers, but just as he had accomplished with the bishops of Gaul and North Africa, Leo looked to use the divisive Christological controversy in the East as an opportunity to further establish Roman primacy. When disputes had arisen between Arles and Vienne, Leo had struck a political compromise on the jurisdiction of the two bishops. When Arianism rose to prominence in North Africa during the Vandal invasions, Leo used the political and ecclesiastical turmoil to bring the traditionally independent African churches into communion and alignment with Rome. The particular language that he uses in his addresses to Flavian and the imperial authorities in the East, along with his sermons, establish his intent to not only to resolve the Christological controversy in the

[83] Leo, *ep*. 44.2, Jaffé 438; *Epistula Leonis et sanctae synodi ad Theodosium augustum.* Acts of the Council of Chalcedon 2.4.

quaesumus ... quodque in saecularibus negotiis legum vestrarum aequitate conceditur, in rerum divinarum pertractione praestate, ut Christi Evangelio vim non inferat humana praesumptio.

[84] Although no response was granted to the first epistle, the deacon Hilary failed to deliver the second, and as a result, little can be read into Theodosius II's reaction to Leo's petition.

East but also to use the opportunity to align the other ecumenical sees with the Christology of Rome.

In one of his early sermons, Leo established that the political authority of Rome derived from the city's connection to Peter the Apostle, but that such authority was not limited to Peter and his offspring, but was granted to the bishops of Rome in perpetuity.

> For the solidity of that faith, which was praised in the chief of the Apostles, is perpetual, and as that remains which Peter believed in Christ, so that remains which Christ instituted in Peter. For when, as has been read in the Gospel, the Lord had asked the disciples whom they believed Him to be, amid the various opinions that were held, and the blessed Peter had replied, saying, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,"* the Lord says, *"Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and flood has not revealed it to you, but My Father, who is in heaven. And I say to you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock will I build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven."*[85]

The apostolic see of Rome certainly held an influential position while Rome remained the imperial capital. However, when that honor was transferred to Constantinople, the Roman see

[85] Leo, Sermon III, delivered on the anniversary of his elevation to the Pontificate. (trans. Charles Lett Feltoe, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895). This papal primacy was based on Mt. 16: 17-19.

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ Μακάριος εἶ, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι ἀλλ' ὁ Πατήρ μου ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. κἀγὼ δέ σοι λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πύλαι Ἅιδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς. δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. τότε ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ εἴπωσιν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός.

was quick to maintain that the secular significance of the imperial capital was not the primary reason for the primacy of the Roman see. This doctrine of Petrine succession did not begin with Leo, but he made full use of it, both in his interactions with the other episcopal patriarchs and with the imperial courts of the empire.

In his letters to Theodosius II, he asserts that the papacy has "received such freedom of speech from the most holy Peter, chief of the Apostles, as to have the power both to maintain the Truth in the cause of peace, and to allow no one to disturb it in its firm position, but at once to repel the mischief."[86] He repeatedly invokes Peter throughout the epistle, instructing Theodosius to "keep before your eyes the blessed Peter's glory." His letters to Flavian and the responses that he received indicate some degree of success in establishing this view of Roman primacy. Flavian addresses Leo as "most holy Father" rather than the more typical fraternal invocation, and he acknowledges that "the matter requires your influence and aid that by your cooperation the present confusion may be changed to tranquility and peace."[87]

His actions pertaining to the Latrocinium and his reaction to the appointment of Anatolius as the successor of Flavian to the patriarchate of Constantinople further display his political intent to advance the primacy of Rome. The dismissal of the papal legates by Dioscorus could not be allowed to stand, and Leo refused to recognize Anatolius, who had formerly been Dioscorus's representative, until the man signified acceptance of both Cyril's Second Letter to Nestorius and his own Tome to Flavian.[88] As a direct result of the Latrocinium and his inability to sway Theodosius II, Leo maintained a healthy correspondence with both Marcian and the Empress Pulcheria and attempted indirectly to sway the resolution of the christological

[86] Leo, *ep*. 43 to Theodosius II.
[87] Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum,* 15-6.
[88] Davis, 179.

controversy in the East.[89] This correspondence would ultimately pay substantial dividends as Marcian not only convened the Council of Chalcedon to resolve the aftermath of Ephesus II, but he also granted presidency to the papal legates, who were allowed to read Leo's Tome to Flavian and able to guarantee that the Roman christology would be deemed orthodox.

**The Problem of Canon 28**

Although the Tome was compared to the writings of Cyril, deemed orthodox, and official statements were made at Chalcedon, acknowledging that Peter spoke through Leo, the papal legates were unable to prevent the passage of Canon 28, which elevated the status of Constantinople and granted it the same rank as the Roman apostolic see.[90] This canon of the Council was strongly opposed by Leo's representatives, but was nonetheless passed by the majority. Leo's consent was sought afterwards. It was not granted. Leo's letter to Emperor Marcian, written on 22 May 452, details his stance on the matter:

> Let the city of Constantinople have, as we desire, its high rank, and under the protection of God's right hand, long enjoy your clemency's rule. Yet things secular stand on a different basis from things divine: and there can be no sure building save on that rock which the Lord has laid for a foundation. For the privileges of the churches determined by the canons of the holy Fathers, and fixed by the decrees of the Nicene Synod, cannot be overthrown by any unscrupulous act, nor disturbed by any innovation. And in the faithful execution of this task by the aid of Christ I am bound to display an unflinching devotion; for it is a charge entrusted to me.[91]

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[89] Wessel, 271-2.
[90] Grillmeier, 111.
[91] Leo, *ep*. 54 to Marcian, trans. Charles Lett Feltoe. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 12. ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895).

Peter was the Apostolic founder of Rome and Antioch. Mark had established the church in Alexandria. Constantinople, on the other hand, owed its foundation to the emperor. No Apostle had founded it and any priority it claimed could not be justified on the grounds used by the older sees. Leo's own representatives had protested: "The apostolic see ought not to be humiliated in our presence, and therefore we ask…that whatever was transacted yesterday in our absence in prejudice of the canons be nullified. But if otherwise, let our formal objection be recorded in the minutes, so that we may know what we ought to report to the apostolic man, the pope of the universal church, so that he may pass sentence on either the insult to his see or the overturning of the canon."[92]

While the implementation of this canon certainly complicated Leo's bid to extend Roman primacy, it did not prove to be as great of an insult or as catastrophic of an event as the papal legates had suggested. Canon 28 granted Constantinople primacy over the sees in the East, but the imperial capital still remained second in rank and honor behind Rome. Political complications over the primacy of the two sees would not emerge until much later in the debate. Additionally, Leo still succeeded in crafting an influential Roman Christology that was accepted as orthodox at Chalcedon and that brought the other sees into alignment with Rome. Pope Leo regarded the doctrinal controversy as having been definitively settled by his Tome. Since Chalcedon acknowledged and confirmed the doctrine of the Tome as the definitive ruling on the points at issue, Chalcedon remained a crowning achievement in his papal legacy. The teaching of the heir and successor of Peter was not simply one among a plethora of competing voices but was heralded alongside the writings of Cyril of Alexandria as a definitive orthodox solution to the Christological controversies. The language and theology that Leo used in his Tome would

[92] *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, 3.91.

pointedly influence the language used in the Definition of Chalcedon. The Definition reads:

> We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body; consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably, the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.[93]

The focus in the Definition on the "distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son" bears a great deal of similarity to Leo's commentary in his Tome to Flavian. The roman christology establishes that "in the Lord, Jesus Christ, God and man is one person, yet the source of the degradation, which is shared by both, is one, and the source of the glory, which is shared by

[93] *Symbolum Chalcedonense*, Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom,* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1990). See Appendices for the full Greek and Latin translations.

both, is another."[94] The distinctions of natures that Leo establishes in his Tome resurfaces in the established orthodox Definition and demonstrates the extent to which the Tome was used in crafting a christological solution at Chalcedon.

**Conclusion**

Whereas Celestine had allowed the Roman see to be parasitically carried to ecclesiastical supremacy via Cyril's political, theological, and rhetorical acumen, Leo actively countermanded the eastern sees and rejected the extremes of their theological framework. Celestine merely affirmed Cyril's condemnations of Nestorianism, which was flawed in its complete division of the natures of Christ. However, his relatively weak grasp on the political and theological concepts in play meant that he rarely went beyond affirming Cyril's condemnation and orthodox position. Leo, in contrast, demonstrated in his major theological treatise, the Tome to Flavian, a much more nuanced and developed understanding of the christological debate than his predecessor, and he actively furthered an agenda that amplified the already respectable position and influence of Rome. Furthermore, his shrewd political and ecclesiastical machinations succeeded in drawing vast portions of the West and Arian North Africa under the sway of the Roman apostolic see. Taking similar advantage of the ecclesiastical turmoil in the East, he developed a unified Roman christology that provided a rational *via media* between the extremes of Eutychian Monophysitism and Nestorian two-nature christology.

From Leo's perspective, the eastern bishops had pushed back too far in the matter of their rejection of Nestorianism, swinging the proverbial pendulum towards the opposing extreme. The Tome to Flavian attempted to marginalize the two extremes, and reconcile the diverging and

[94] Leo, *ep*. 28, *Tomus ad Flavianum*, 24.

increasingly polarized views of the Antiochene and Alexandrian schools of Christology. To that end, Leo balanced the Antiochene language of two natures and the emphasis placed on the distinct attributes of each nature with the old orthodox Cyrillian position that had been accepted at Ephesus I. Much as Cyril had accomplished at Ephesus I, and Dioscorus had attempted at the Robber Synod of Ephesus, Leo successfully introduced an orthodox position that attempted to settle the christological controversies in the East by exerting substantial political and ecclesiastical influence over the proceedings of the council. Chalcedon may not have proved to be the final solution to the questions surrounding the incarnation of Christ and actually became a stumbling-block that would culminate in a schism that split the imperial church and continue up to the present. Yet Leo was certainly not the cause of Chalcedon's controversial status among the ecumenical councils. He merely saw an opportunity to correct the Christological errors of Alexandria and Antioch and to bring the eastern sees under the primacy and theological influence of the Roman apostolic see.

## Appendices

*Greek Text of Symbolum Chalcedonense*

Ἑπόμενοι τοίνυν τοῖς ἁγίοις πατράσιν ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖν υἱὸν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν συμφώνως ἅπαντες ἐκδιδάσκομεν, τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν θεότητι καὶ τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι, θεὸν ἀληθῶς καὶ ἄνθρωπον ἀληθῶς τὸν αὐτὸν, ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα, καὶ ὁμοούσιον τὸν αὐτὸν ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον ἡμῖν χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας· πρὸ αἰώνων μὲν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα κατὰ τὴν θεότητα, ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτων δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν τὸν αὐτὸν δἰ ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου τῆς θεοτόκου κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Χριστόν, υἱόν, κύριον, μονογενῆ, ἐκ δύο φύσεων [ἐν δύο φύσεσιν], ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως γνωριζόμενον· οὐδαμοῦ τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνῃρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν, σωζομένης δὲ μᾶλλον τῆς ἰδιότητος ἑκατέρας φύσεως καὶ εἰς ἓν πρόσωπον καὶ μίαν ὑπὸστασιν συντρεχούσης, οὐκ εἰς δύο πρόσωπα μεριζόμενον ἢ διαιρούμενον, ἀλλ᾽ ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν καὶ μονογενῆ, θεὸν λόγον, κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν· καθάπερ ἄνωθεν οἱ προφῆται περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ιησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐξεπαίδευσε καὶ τὸ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῖν καραδέδωκε σύμβολον.

*Latin Text of Symbolum Chalcedonense*

Sequentes igitur sanctos patres, unum eundemque confiteri Filium et Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum consonanter omnes docemus, eundem perfectum in deitate et eundem perfectum in humanitate; Deum verum et hominem verum eundem ex anima rationali et corpore;

consubstantialem Patri secundum deitatem, consubstantialem nobis eundem secundum humanitatem; 'per omnia nobis similem, absque peccato' ante secula quidem de Patre genitum secundum deitatem; in novissimis autem diebus eundem propter nos et propter nostram salutem ex Maria virgine, Dei genitrice secundum humanitatem; unum eundemque Christum, filium, Dominum, unigenitum, in duabus naturis inconfuse, immutabiliter, indivise, inseperabiliter agnoscendum: nusquam sublata differentia naturarum propter unitionem, magisque salva proprietate utriusque naturæ, et in unam personam atque subsistentiam concurrente: non in duos personas partitum aut divisum, sed unum eundemque Filium et unigenitum, Deum verbum, Dominum Jesum Christum; sicut ante prophetæ de eo et ipse nos Jesus Christus erudivit et patrum nobis symbolum tradidit.

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