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Theodore the Studite's Christology
Against Its Logical Background

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Abstract:
Theodore the Studite resolved the logical problem posed by the second Iconoclasm in an explicitly paraconsistent way, when he applied to Jesus the definition of the human hypostasis while stating that there is no human hypostasis in Jesus. Methodologically he was following, albeit without knowing, Eulogius of Alexandria. He, in turn, was apparently followed by Photius, but in a confused manner.
Keywords: Theodore the Studite, Patriarch Photius, Iconoclasm, Christology, paraconsistent logic.

> Perhaps the most surprising thing, then, is how easily considerations of consistency can be detached from these notions [truth, negation, rationality, and logic], and so how non-integral they are to them. This makes the traditional view of the centrality of consistency to these notions even more surprising. The dead hand of Aristotle has, it would seem, weighed on the topics, preventing philosophers from applying to them the critical spirit which is their due.
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> Graham Priest [39, pp. 208-209]

1. Introduction: From Under "The Dead Hand of Aristotle"

Dealing with the logic used by the Byzantine patristic authors in their theological reasoning, the modern historians are facing a major problem. At the first glance, they still are in a familiar realm where the Aristotelian logic – whatever the word "Aristotelian" could mean for Byzantium – is not only valid but also considered as *the* logic, that is, the only possible way of sound reasoning. The basic laws of this logic – those of identity, non-contradiction, and excluded middle – are markedly respected. From time to time, however, the steady flow of logical argumentation is interrupted by acceptance of some facts claimed to be "beyond reason and understanding" (ὑπὲρ λόγον καὶ

ἔννοιαν) – to use a formulation from an often repeated at the Byzantine Vespers hymn by John of Damascus.[1] Such facts – also at the first glance only – appear to be illogical at all.

So far, so good. There is *the* logic on the one hand, and there is something "beyond *logos*" on the other. We can preserve such an impression until the moment when we look at the thin interface between the two realms. There, an "Aristotelian" logician, face distorted in horror or distaste, begins to notice a pulsation of some inference, that is, appearance of some conclusions from some premises. The rules of this inference, in general, respect none of the three basic laws of classical logic. Indeed, nobody in the Middle Ages has pretended to include them into the logical textbooks. Nevertheless, the rare thinkers who were attacking them as illegitimate at all (such as John Philoponos[2] or Barlaam the Calabrian,[3] to name only the most known today) were always in danger to be condemned for a heresy. One must confess, however, that many less radical theologians have experienced severe difficulties when they were turned out to admit one or other blatant disruption of the Aristotelian logical laws. As we will see below, among them was even Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople.

From a modern point of view, we would prefer to call "logic" anything where there are some procedures of inference, regardless of their particular rules. If the inference is convincing for – or, at least, understandable to – at least, somebody, we can reasonably conclude that the rules of this inference exist. In our modern sense, they also form a logic.

Moreover, there must be a kind of continuity between this n0n-Aristotelian logic and the Aristotelian logic of, say, demonstrative syllogisms that were used in Byzantine theological discussions. Within the Byzantine theological thinking, the Aristotelian "laws" were, indeed, respected, but not on the level of the universal laws *sensu stricto* (there was only one person, in Byzantium, who dared to insist on their applicability even to the divine reality, John Philoponos). Instead, their value was limited to that of the contingent rules of a given domain, namely, the domain of the created.

The proper rules of inference within the interface between the divine domain and the created world could be extracted from the Byzantine theological works and translated into our modern logical language. Here I will propose one case study, that of the Christology of Theodore the Studite.

The unity of the whole system of reasoning in theology was preserved, nevertheless, by the mainstream Byzantine theologians, but not on the level of "laws" or rules but on the level of logical connectives, such as negation or conditional, having the same meaning in all the possible domains of thinking.[4] In general, the most fundamental logical notions which are truth, negation, and rationality were respected throughout the domain of theological reasoning, but the price was logical inconsistency – incompatible with the Aristotelian very notion of thinking.

In the twentieth century, especially since the 1970s, many non-consistent logics are described.[5] These so-called paraconsistent logics made our modern logical thinking ready for grasping logically the meaning of apparently illogical statements of the Byzantine Fathers.

2. Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople in the Dead End of the Classical Logic

Throughout the history of the Christian world, there have never been such things as *the* iconoclast theology or *the* theology of icon veneration. On the contrary, there were many different iconoclastic doctrines as well as many different meanings of icon veneration, often incompatible with each other.[6] Fortunately, our present task is limited to a unique and quite specific iconoclastic doctrine as well as a unique and specific kind of theological defence of the holy icons.

At the outbreak of the second iconoclasm (815-842), there was no ready answer to the new version of the iconoclast theology. The iconoclasts managed to show that the current teaching of their opponents is illogical in the pernicious sense, that is, that its logical clarification would lead to either iconoclastic doctrine or Nestorian Christology. This challenge was eventually answered by Theodore the Studite. The logical problem that will be resolved by Theodore the Studite becomes

more understandable against the background of the contemporaneous failed attempt to do the same by Patriarch Nicephorus.

The iconoclasts were perfectly consistent in their demonstration why the icons have nothing to do with the incarnation of the Logos. Their line of thought could be recovered as following:[7]

Starting from

(1) the majority view of the Chalcedonians (shared by the defenders of the icons) that the Logos is incarnated into the common nature of humankind and

(2) a strict conviction shared by all the anti-Nestorians that there is only one hypostasis in Christ, that of the Logos, they have argued, with a reference to

(3) the standard textbook definition of hypostasis (hypostasis = nature + hypostatic features, *idiomata*),[8] that the Logos did not receive the hypostatic features (*idiomata*) of the human personality of Jesus – unless Jesus becomes an additional (human) hypostasis in Christ, beside the Logos.

(4) There is, however, in Christ nothing depictable except these *idiomata* of Jesus – this point was also shared by the defenders of the icons. Therefore, it follows

(5) **the iconoclastic conclusion:** Christ as the incarnated Logos is indepictable, whereas all the human (depictable) features of Jesus are accidental in respect to the incarnated Logos. In other words, the depictable features of Jesus were not those in what the Logos was incarnated and, therefore, are unworthy of any veneration.

According to the ninth-century iconoclasts, Jesus – that is, the conjunction of the personal human features of the incarnated Logos – is *totally* accidental to Logos's incarnation. For the iconophiles, there was no argument about saying that *some* of such human features of Jesus are accidental – those that are accidental to any human (such as the stature or facial expression) – but never those invariant features which make one human individual discernible from all others. For the iconoclasts, however, even those human features that were not accidental to Jesus were accidental to the incarnated Logos.

The defenders of the holy icons shared with their opponents the first four points enumerated above but refused to accept their conclusion as clearly (at least, to them) opposed to the Church Tradition. According to them, something somewhere gone wrong. But where?

Point (2) was certainly out of discussion since the fifth century.

Point (4) was obvious to the two sides of the conflict.

Point (1) has been discussed during the sixth and even the early seventh centuries, but –temporarily – ceased to be under discussion after the victory of the "Maximites" over the Monotheletes;[9] the discussion will be reopened in the eleventh century[10] but not in the ninth.[11]

Point (3) was the weakest point in the whole chain. It has been already dealt with by Maximus the Confessor, but the "Maximites" of this period knew his teaching too superficially to become able to apply it here. Thus, formally, the "school" definition of hypostasis remained unshaken.

The iconoclasts were then, during the second period of Iconoclasm, perfectly fitting with the mainstream theological standard of the epoch but in an apparent conflict with the already ancient custom. Their opponents were in conformity with the custom but without any appropriate theological language at all.

Patriarch Nicephorus was a hostage, if not a victim of the situation of such a theological "mutism."[12] He was able to express his Christology as following: "Nobody of those who have the intellect would accept that either the Logos took the passions or that the flesh undertook the miracles."[13]

This text is not only in contradiction with the "Neo-Chalcedonian" Theopaschism, but even with the Justinianic "Symbol of faith" *Oh Monogenes* (*CPG* 6891), which was then an obligatory part of each Eucharistic liturgy according to the rite that Nicephorus followed himself: "Oh the Only-Begotten Son and the Logos of God… who hast crucified, oh Christ God…"[14]

Moreover, such a Christology contradicts to another part of Christology of the same Nicephorus: he was certainly convicted that the image of Jesus's flesh encompasses the Logos – but he turned out to be unable to explain why.

We see, in Nicephorus, a case when a theological doctrine is completely inadequate to its logical package – a case when *the new wine* of the Orthodox theology runs out from *the old wineskins* of the Aristotelian logic (Lk 5:37). There was an urgent need of new wineskins for preventing the pouring out of the theological wine.

3. The Christology of Theodore the Studite: Its Central Point

A completely new approach has been formulated by Theodore the Studite. There is no direct connexion, as one can see now, between Theodore and the relevant details of the Christology of Maximus the Confessor. In the ninth century, Maxim was still too little known in Byzantium.

Probably, the best description of Theodore's theology as a whole is now provided by Dirk Krausmüller [20]. Therefore, I can go directly to Theodore's main Christological idea.

According to Theodore, the Logos became "one from us" as Jesus – but there was no, in Jesus, a distinct human hypostasis. There was no Jesus as a separate man, but there is Jesus as someone – namely, the divine Logos – having all the features of a separate man, that is, the human nature and the *idiomata* of the separate human hypostasis:[15]

Οὐκ ἄρα μόνῳ τῷ προσηγορικῷ, ἀλλὰ γὰρ καὶ τῷ κυρίῳ ὀνόματι κέκληται ὁ Χριστός· τὸ χωρίζον αὐτὸν τοῖς ὑποστατικοῖς ἰδιώμασιν ἀπὸ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνθρώπων· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο περιγραπτός. <…>	Therefore, Christ is called not only with a common noun but also with a proper name [*sc.*, Jesus. – *B. L.*] that separates him, *via* the hypostatic features (*idiomata*), from the remaining humans. This is why he is describable. <…>
Οὐκοῦν εἷς ἐστι καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς, εἰ καὶ θεὸς ὁ εἷς τῆς Τριάδος· ὡς ἐκεῖ ἀπὸ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Πνεύματος, τῷ υἱκῷ ἰδιώματι διακεκριμένος· οὕτως αὐτὸς ἐνταῦθα ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοῖς ὑποστατικοῖς ἰδιώμασιν ἀφοριζόμενος· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο περιγραφόμενος.	Therefore, he is one from us, even though he is God that is one of the Trinity. In the same manner, as he is distinguished there from the Father and the Spirit with the *idiom* of sonship, he is also separated from all the humans here with the hypostatic *idiomata*. And this is why he is describable.

One can feel that Theodore said here something sounding non-Aristotelian. Let us see, however, in more details, what happened here to the three Aristotelian "laws."

4. The Three "Laws" of the Classical Logic in Theodore's Reasoning

4.1. The "Law" of Identity

Aristotle's verbose formulation of the principle of identity in *Metaphysics* IV, 4 implies that anything that could be described in some particular way is always precisely the same thing that can be described in this way.[16] Later Leibniz succinctly put it in a more abstract form: "Ce qui est, est; Chaque chose est ce qu'elle est."[17] This Aristotelian definition of identity through description was further developed into the so-called Leibniz's principle that postulates identity of any two individuals whose all properties are identical. Leibniz himself, during the last months of his life in 1716, acknowledged that "his" principle is not as universal as he himself was arguing shortly before – thus allowing difference between the objects that have absolutely identical properties including

the spatial coordinates (as we see now among the quantum objects such as electrons).[18] This was not, however, compatible with any interpretation of identity that was known to the Antiquity.

Theodore broke the "law" of identity in the following manner. According to his explanation, Jesus is the Logos with no separate human hypostasis. He is not the same as the hypothetical *Jesus that is a human hypostasis (known to Theodore's contemporaries from Nestorian Christology). However, both Jesus and *Jesus have identical properties, that is, the full set of properties of a human individual called Jesus. Both Jesus and *Jesus are unified with the Logos. This feature, though, is to be factored out, in our comparison between the two, because any possible difference in the mode of union between the Logos and the humanity of either Jesus or *Jesus depends exclusively on the possible non-identity between the two.

According to the principle of identity in its standard (Aristotelian) understanding, as well as its explication in the so-called Leibniz's principle, Jesus must be identical to *Jesus – as the iconoclasts would have said in accusing the iconophiles of Nestorianism. Nevertheless, Theodore did not admit this conclusion from the premises he shared with the iconoclasts, because he did not admit the corresponding rule of inference either – which is the rule ("law") of identity. This was a break with the consistent reasoning.

I would add that such a claim was then very risky. Theodore did not know his patristic predecessors who have already dealt with in details the problems of inconsistency of the logic applied to the theological domain. Nevertheless, he certainly imbibed with education the relevant intuitions of Gregory of Nazianzus and Dionysius the Areopagite.

4.2. The "Law" of Non-Contradiction

The principle of non-contradiction is broken by Theodore straightforwardly. According to Theodore, Jesus *is not* a hypostasis of the human nature, but he *is* a human individual in the same manner as everybody of us – "one of us" (εἷς ἐστι καθ' ἡμᾶς, s. above).

Theodore's Jesus is identical with the object that, according to the school definition of hypostasis, is a human hypostasis called Jesus. In the same time, Jesus is not identical with it. Being both identical and not identical to the same thing (namely, the hypostasis of Jesus according to the school definition; we have designed this hypothetical object as *Jesus) is a contradiction.

Both Jesus and *Jesus are identical – in Aristotelian and Leibnizian sense of having identical properties – to the same object, namely, the object of the school definition of hypostasis of the human nature. Indeed, Theodore denied identity between Jesus and *Jesus, but in the way of refusing to call "identity" the relation that is to be called so from a classical (and any consistent logic's!) point of view. According to Theodore, his Jesus is not Nestorian *Jesus only because the identity of properties (*idiomata*) is still not, for Theodore, an identity. As it was to be expected, the breaking of the "law" of identity leaded him to the breaking of the "law" of non-contradiction (or *vice versa*).

Thus, in classical (and not Theodore's) terms, we obtain a subcontrary (not contradictory nor contrary) opposition: Jesus is identical to *Jesus, whereas it is claimed, by Theodore, that he is not.

In classical terms, this means that $A = B$ but $A \neq B$ simultaneously.
The principles of identity and non-contradiction are so mutually depending that there is no possibility of breaking one without breaking another.

Let us explain Theodore's intuition in a more Aristotelian fashion, using [different variables's values for the same functions, that is] examples of a human and a horse, so dear to the antique philosophers. Then, Theodore's reasoning could be reformulated as following. Some individual (hypostasis) has, for instance, the features (*idiomata*) of both human Peter and horse Pegasus; however, this hypostasis has these features not partially, as a centaur, but of both of them entirely. He is entirely Peter and entirely Pegasus. Even though he is, among the horses, a horse called Pegasus, he is still a human among the humans whose name is Peter.

For a viewpoint of any logic respecting the law of non-contradiction, such a claim is impossible. Instead, such logic would allow only two kinds of compositions: (1) some mixed cases,

such as some hybrid, centaur, resulted from Peter and Pegasus, which is no longer identical to Peter or Pegasus, or (2) a two-individual set formed by Peter and Pegasus taken together as two different elements of the one set. One can easily recognise, in the first alternative, the decision of the Monophysitism, and, in the second alternative, the decision of the Nestorianism.

The first alternative is, from a historical point of view, even more interesting, even though it was not mentioned in the discussions of the ninth century. It is quite important for understanding the origin of the logical problems in Christology that Theodore was facing. As one could guess, it concerns the principle of the excluded middle and breaking thereof.

4.3. The "Law" of Excluded Middle

Some limitations of the "law" of excluded middle were known to Aristotle and other antique logicians who have described the modes of reasoning which we now call modal. Aristotle himself described the first of the known modal logics now called alethic, where he used such categories as "necessarily", "impossibly", and "possibly" instead of the bivalent statements "true" or "false". The alethic modal logic is perfectly Aristotelian, too, but not classical. Thus, it was known to the antique logicians that principle of the excluded middle is not obligatory for making reasoning consistent.[19]

Ironically, among the three "laws" of the classical logic, this one is the only one that Theodore respects. To him, there is nothing in between of Jesus and *Jesus: the real Jesus could be either a hypostasis of the Holy Trinity (Jesus) or a hypostasis of the human nature (*Jesus) but never something third. The latter possibility is excluded *a priori*, whereas the second one (that Jesus is a human hypostasis) only *a posteriori*, as a conclusion of Theodore's theological analysis. This manner of thinking is in the perfect accordance with the principle of excluded middle in a completely consistent and even classical way, albeit Theodore's claim that Jesus has all properties (*idiomata*) of *Jesus without being *Jesus is breaking the consistence of reasoning.

Instead of looking for a *tertium quid* between Jesus and *Jesus, Theodore appropriated *Jesus's features to Jesus in a paraconsistent way. In consistent terms, we have already described this procedure as simultaneous identification and non-identification between the two. Such an operation requires that the binary opposition between Jesus and *Jesus is duly respected and nothing in between of them is introduced.

Let us consider another hypothetical situation, when we need to preserve the consistence of reasoning but also to avoid Nestorianism. This is the situation when some consistent *tertium quid* between the Nestorian *Jesus and Theodore's paraconsistent Jesus becomes necessary. This would mean that the divine hypostasis of the Logos, after having become composite with acquiring humanity, formed as well a nature of its own, μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκομένη ("the one nature of the God Logos incarnated") – in some of the meanings of this extremely multivalued expression.

In the consistent reasoning, the Logos could never become a hypostasis of the human nature. If, nevertheless, he accepted Jesus without accepting a separate human hypostasis (that is, without accepting the Nestorian *Jesus), then, the Logos and Jesus are now the same hypostasis. In Theodore's paraconsistent reasoning, the hypostasis of the Logos and Jesus is also the same, but "Jesus" became the name of the Logos according to the human nature – in a paraconsistent way. In our present hypothetical situation, any paraconsistent way is forbidden. Thus, the Logos does not have a name according to the human nature, because he did not become a hypostasis of this nature either. However, "Jesus" is not a name of something belonging to the divine nature – which is obvious unless we accept the extremist Christology of the so-called actistism.[20] Therefore, the object fitting with "Jesus" as its name must be defined as a new separate nature, distinct from the natures of humanity and divinity.

Our hypothetical situation, of course, took place in the history. This is the reasoning by John Philoponos shortly before the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553), when he interpreted "the unique hypostasis" of Christ in the Chalcedonian sense as identical with the "unique nature" of Christ of the n0n-Chalcedonians.[21] This was an anti-Nestorian and completely consistent decision. The

Chalcedonians, in turn, were ready to acknowledge in μία φύσις of Cyril of Alexandria the Chalcedonian "unique hypostasis" but did not agree with this Philoponian reverse moving asking them interpreting their own "unique hypostasis" as the anti-Chalcedonian "unique nature."

The Christology of the second Iconoclasm was also anti-Nestorian and completely consistent, but Philoponos would dislike it for almost the same reasons as the ninth-century iconophiles. For both Philoponos and the iconophiles, the iconoclastic negation of the individual humanity in the incarnation of the Logos would look equal to denying the reality of the incarnation and, therefore, a kind of "phantasiasm," according to the heresiological jargon of the epoch.

Both Theodore and his iconoclast opponents were anti-Monophysite in the sense that all of them denied the Philoponian identification of "hypostasis" and "nature" in Christ. Such a "unique nature" would be a *tertium quid* between the paraconsistent Jesus of Theodore and the Nestorian *Jesus.

5. Patriarch Eulogius of Alexandria, a Theoretician of Paraconsistency

In the epoch opened with the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 843, Photius was the person who undertook a revalorisation of the theological legacy available to him. Maximus the Confessor, as it seems remained mostly beyond his horizon. He became very successful, however, in collecting the works of the authors of the sixth century.[22] Patriarch Eulogius of Alexandria (580-607) was among them.

The sixth among his eleven treatises summarised by Photius was written on the 580s discussion between the Severianist patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, Damian and Peter respectively, and especially against the position of Peter. Thus, this treatise was aimed "against verbiage of those who consider the hypostasis to be only an idioma (ἰδίωμα μόνον)." Damian would look an easy sparring-partner, in such an extent his attitude was at odds with the Cappadocian Fathers.[23] Nevertheless, in fact, it was not so. The problem was in the search of an alternative to the Damianism, which failed to provide his opponent Peter.

According to Eulogius,[24] both opponents were not right. They both misunderstood the meaning of the definition of hypostasis that they quote – for instance, from Basil of Caesarea. Indeed, Basil has said that the hypostasis is a superposition of the nature/essence and the idiomata. This definition, indeed, implies some complexity and, therefore, contradicts to the absolute simplicity of God. Nevertheless, this complexity is strictly limited to the capacity of our mind, whereas there is no complexity in God.

Φασὶ γάρ τινες συμπλοκὴν οὐσίας καὶ ἰδιώματος εἶναι τὴν ὑπόστασιν· ὃ περιφανῶς συνεισάγειν οἶδε τὴν σύνθεσιν, καὶ ποῦ ἂν εἴη τὸ ἁπλοῦν καὶ ἀσύνθετον τῆς ἐν τῇ Τριάδι Θεότητος; Οἱ δὲ καὶ Βασίλειον προϊστῶσι τὸν μέγαν τῆς φωνῆς διδάσκαλον, οὐκ ἐθέλοντες νοεῖν ὡς ὁ σοφὸς ἐκεῖνος ἀνὴρ οὔτε ὅρον οὔτε ὑπογραφὴν ἀποδιδοὺς ὑποστάσεως τὸ τῆς συμπλοκῆς παρέλαβεν ὄνομα, ἀλλὰ βουλόμενος ἐπιστομίσαι τὸν ἀνόμοιον τὴν ἀγεννησίαν καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν εἰς ταὐτὸν ἀγαγεῖν φιλονεικήσαντα, καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸ γεννητὸν τοῦ ἀγεννήτου διαφορὰν εἰς τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον μεταγαγεῖν, ἵνα μὴ μόνον διαφόρους, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀντικειμένας οὐσίας εἰσάγοι ἐπί τε τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ. Διὰ τοῦτο *ὁ τοὺς λόγους οἰκονομῶν ἐν κρίσει*	Certains disent en effet que l'hypostase est l'union [conjunction] d'essence et de propriété, proposition nettement susceptible d'amener la notion de composition ; et d'où serait le caractère simple et exempt de composition de la Trinité divine ? Ces gens-là vont même jusqu'à mettre en avant Basile le Grand qui aurait enseigné cette formule et ils ne veulent pas comprendre que ce grand sage n'a pas défini ou décrit l'hypostase quand il a employé le mot union [conjunction] mais qu'il voulait imposer silence à l'Anoméen qui prétendait réduire à l'identité l'incréé et l'essence et ramener la différence entre le créé et l'incréé à l'idée d'essence pour aboutir, à propos du Père et du Fils, à l'idée d'essences non seulement différentes mais opposées. C'est pourquoi Basile, qui *règle ses paroles en conscience*, dans sa discussion avec

[Ps 111:5] Βασίλειος, ἐν τῷ πρὸς τὸν ἀνόμοιον ἀγῶνι, τῷ κοινῷ συμπλέκει τὸ ἴδιον, ἀσύγχυτον ἡμῖν καὶ διακεκριμένην μεθοδεύων τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας κατάληψιν. Ἀπορεῖ μὲν γὰρ ὁ ἀνθρώπινος νοῦς ἁπλῇ καὶ μιᾷ προσβολῇ τὸ ἑνιαῖον ἅμα καὶ ἁπλοῦν καὶ τὸ τρισσὸν καταλαβεῖν τῶν ὑποστάσεων· διὸ τῇ τῶν ἰδιωμάτων, ὡς ὁ διδάσκαλος ἔφη, προσθήκῃ τὴν ἰδιάζουσαν ἀφορίζει τῶν ὑποστάσεων ἔννοιαν καὶ ἔστι μὲν ἡ μέθοδος ἀσθενείας ἐπίκουρος καὶ τῆς περὶ τὸ ἀκατάληπτον συνεργὸς καταλήψεως, οὐ μήν γε συμπεπλεγμένον τὸ ἁπλοῦν τῆς θεότητος ἢ ὅλως τινὰ τῶν ταύτης ὑποστάσεων οὑμενοῦν οὐδαμῶς ἀπεργάσαιτο. Διὸ καὶ ἐπήγαγεν ὡς ἀμήχανον ἰδιάζουσαν ἔννοιαν Πατρὸς λαβεῖν ἢ Υἱοῦ, μὴ τῇ τῶν ἰδιωμάτων προσθήκῃ τῆς διανοίας διαρθρουμένης. Καὶ ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς προλαβοῦσι συμπλοκὴν ἐκάλεσε, τοῦτο νῦν προσθήκην ὠνόμασε. Σαφέστερον δὲ τὸ εἰρημένον ποιῶν· «Οὐ γὰρ οἱ δεικτικοί, φησί, τῆς ἰδιότητος αὐτοῦ τρόποι τὸν τῆς ἁπλότητος αὐτοῦ λόγον παραλυπήσουσιν· ἢ οὕτω γε ἂν πάντα, ὅσα περὶ Θεοῦ λέγεται, σύνθετον ἡμῖν τὸν Θεὸν ἀναδείξῃ»[25].	l'Anoméen, unit le particulier au commun en nous montrant comment comprendre la vérité sans confusion et dans une clarté absolue. L'esprit humain et en effet embarrassé quand il s'agit de saisir d'un simple et unique mouvement [grasping – *B.L.*] les notions d'unité et de simplicité en même temps que celle des trois hypostases. C'est pourquoi, comme l'enseigne le maître, c'est par l'addition des propriétés qu'il détermine sa propre conception des hypostases, et cette façon de procéder est un secours pour la faiblesse et une aide pour comprendre l'incompréhensible, mais Basile ne transformait absolument pas en un composé la simplicité de la divinité ni, en un mot, aucune des hypostases divines. C'est pourquoi il a ajouté qu'il est impossible de se faire une conception propre du Père et du Fils sans que notre pensée se complète par l'addition des notions de propriété ; et ce qu'il avait auparavant nommé union [conjunction – *B.L.*], il l'appelle maintenant addition. Et pour rendre sa parole plus claire : « Ce ne sont pas, dit-il, les façons de montrer ses caractères spécifiques qui nuiront à sa façon d'envisager la simplicité ; sinon, tout ce qu'on nous dit de Dieu démontrerait que Dieu est un composé ».

Let us ask Eulogius: Ok, there is no complexity in God, whereas the hypostasis is, by definition, something complex. Then, how you insist that there are hypostases in God at all?

For Eulogius, however – as well as for Peter and Damian – the presence of three hypostases in the unique God was out of question. This was simply a received knowledge.

Thus, Eulogius repeats the "school" definition of hypostasis but adds that, in God, there is no room for hypostases, whereas hypostases themselves there are. A hypostasis in God is something that is impossible in God but that is.

Then, one can approach this problem from the opposite side asking Eulogius: Why do you call these logical objects in God "hypostases," if you acknowledge that the hypostasis is, by definition, something else than anything that could occur in God? For answering, Eulogius would refer to an established patristic tradition that could be called "The Correspondence Principle."

6. The Correspondence Principle

Today it became easy to answer such questions. We are in presence of a just another instance of applicability of the principle that Niels Bohr called the Correspondence Principle. In Bohr's Copenhagen interpretation of the Quantum theory, this means that the notions of classical physics continue to be used for description of the quantum reality but in a non-classical way.[26] In the same manner, in Eulogius's explanation, the "classical" definition of hypostasis and the notion of hypostasis itself continues to be used, but not in a "classical" Aristotelian way. In both cases, in Bohr's Quantum theory and Eulogius's Triadology, the "classical" notions change their meaning,

and, in both cases, there is no direct way to make these changes explicit – except an indirect way that is actually used.

The notion of hypostasis applied to God is no more classical than the notion of spatial coordinates applied to an electron.

The Quantum logics proposed for the Copenhagen interpretation of the Quantum theory, especially in the 1990s and later, are inconsistent.[27]

Now we can say that Eulogius of Alexandria has explained that the logic used by the Cappadocian Fathers was, in fact, a paraconsistent one. Let us emphasise an important thing: Eulogius has never said that some classical notions are applied to God in an approximate way and not in the proper sense. He says exactly the opposite: they are applied in their proper and exact sense. However, they are inapplicable. The theological meaning is contained not in the simply procedure of application of some notions to God but in a double procedure of such application joined with insisting of their inapplicability. This conjunction of application and inapplicability forms the difference between the paraconsistent usage of the categories of consistent logic and their approximate usage in a somewhat metaphorical sense.

7. The Paraconsistent Logical Core of Theodore the Studite's Christology

The Christological model of Theodore the Studite is derived from the teaching of Gregory of Nazianzus and Maximus the Confessor on the deification of the man.[28] This teaching implies a logical model often called by modern historians *tantum-quantum* (τοσοῦτον-ὅσον): in as much as the Logos became the man, in the same extent the man – any deified man – will become God, and this extent is, of course, "completely." Nevertheless, the deified man does not become a new hypostasis of the divine nature – as well as the Logos did not become a new hypostasis of the human nature.

In fact, Theodore the Studite's Christology was already present in Maximus the Confessor. There were some differences, however. On the one hand, Theodore made explicit some ideas of Maximus: his Christology is in the mirror symmetry towards Maximus's doctrine of deification. On the other hand, Theodore has never elaborated on Maximus's sophisticated concept of τρόπος ὑπάρξεως.

Let us reformulate the main logical notions used in Christology in a more analytical language. We will use a language of a "set theory," but not of one of the set theories presently used in mathematics but of a kind of "naïve" set theory, closer to its original form in Georg Cantor – where all the paradoxes are tolerated, and there is no difference between the notions of set and class.

Then, the notion of hypostatic *idiomata* becomes equivalent to the notion of being a given element of a class. The *idiomata* feature an individual as a specific individual, whereas not within an unordered universe but within a definite class. Thus, the *idioma* of sonship ("to be begotten") is featuring the Son within the divine nature only, whereas within other natures the notion of sonship does not exist in the same sense. Thus, it is important to note that the hypostatic features do not define a specific individual of whatever nature but only an individual of a given nature, that is, within a given class.

Thus, we can write, for an individual x_i, that is, for the i-th individual of the class X, that to have the *idiomata* of x_i, means that x_i belongs to X, $x_i \in X$.

This definition could be easily applied, in slightly modified forms, to the classes whose elements are uncountable or countable in some inconsistent manner only. An example of such class is the class of hypostases of the Holy Trinity. An approximation of this class with a well-ordered set (that as, a set for which exists a bijection between all the elements of this set and the set of natural numbers) would be a source of misunderstandings or errors in triadological reasoning, because if the Trinity is a set, then, this set is not a well-ordered one nor ordered at all.[29] For the further, however, we need only a very weaken conception of ordering: in this sense, "ordered" is every class where the elements could be discerned in whatever way. In this weaken sense, the class of the

hypostases of the Holy Trinity is, indeed, ordered. Therefore, our (weaken) conception of "being the i-th element of a class" is applicable here too, presuming that i here is not a natural number and not necessarily a consistent number.[30]

Now, let us consider the case of the incarnated Logos. Without ceasing to be an element of the class "divine nature", he becomes an element of the class of humans when he takes the human *idiomata* of Jesus. Nevertheless, he does not become an element of the class of humans because the Logos does not become a human hypostasis. Therefore, Logos's inclusion into the class of humans is paraconsistent only, whereas his inclusion into the class "divine nature" is consistent: the Logos is a divine hypostasis, and there is no sense in what the Logos ceased to be a divine hypostasis. Thus, the Logos became a human individual called Jesus in a paraconsistent way only.

In a symmetrical way, we have to understand Maximus's (and Gregory of Nazianzus's) doctrine of deification. A human person Peter continues to be a human person in a consistent way but becomes God (the only God in whom the Christians believe) in a paraconsistent way.

8. The Photian Epilogue

As a historian of Byzantine dogmatic discussions can feel, the paraconsistent claims of one or other outstanding Byzantine theologian have required too much intellectual stress for their adequate adaptation by the official theological mainstream. The philosophical culture of the Byzantine court theologians, *de facto* secular, was one of the main obstacles. This is an important reason why the Byzantine *Dogmengeschichte* was not anyhow smooth but highly turbulent and, to say properly, cyclic. The bright logical ideas have been quickly fossilised within the official "repetitive theology," with an inevitable effect of a new confusion that provoked, in turn, reordering and correcting based on new insights of other bearers of bright logical intuitions for theology. Then, a new cycle has begun.

Any paraconsistent theological claim put into the framework of the "repetitive theology" is fossilised in the same way as a poem paraphrased in prose or a joke "explained" to those who have no sense of humour. What remains after such "repetitions" is not the genuine theological meaning that certainly has evaporated.

The Christological ideas of Theodore the Studite did not escape the common destiny, that is, fossilisation and confusion. The references to the Studite by both sides of the quarrels on the holy icons in the late eleventh-century Byzantium form a sufficient proof of this.[31] It is interesting, however, to trace the reception history of Studite's Christology in earlier times.

Patriarch Photius, writing between 867 and 877, repeated Theodore's Christological thesis when answering to a – imaginary or not – iconoclast opponent.[32] The opponent seemed to push Photius toward iconoclasm starting from Patriarch's expected rejection of the Nestorian idea of the incarnation into a particular man. He then put before Photius an alternative: the Logos incarnated into either particular man (τὸν ἐπὶ μέρους [ἄνθρωπον]) or the man in general (τὸν καθόλου ἄνθρωπον) [48, pp. 14-15]. Photius's answer is "Neither". Following the Studite, he wrote: "We say that even if he [the Logos] assumed human nature, the Logos exhibits [its] features (*idiomata*) as his own."[33] Certainly, Theodore's thesis is "repeated" – in the sense of "repetitive theology," at least.

Nevertheless, a new problem arose, and, so far, it remains unknown in what extent Photius resolved it or, at least, realised it.[34] In the present answer, Photius failed to provide an explicit treatment of distinction between the notions of "the man in general" and "the human nature." As the first step, he follows an argument of the earlier iconophilic theologians stating that "the man in general" that is not instantiated in any particular human individual is an abstraction without any real content and, therefore, is incompatible with the reality of the incarnation.[35]

Then, however, he uses against his opponent a classical argument of the anti-Chalcedonians against the Chalcedonians, known since, at least, *ca* 519, the discussion between Severus of Antioch and the Chalcedonian Sergius the Grammarian:[36] the common is to be seen in plurality of hypostases; thus, if Christ is "the man in general", he must have many hypostases, viz. those of the whole human genus.[37]

This argument is at odds with the previous one. If "the man in general" is a mere abstraction, as it has been just stated, it contains no hypostases at all, but if "the man in general" is to be instantiated in plurality of hypostases, it is not a mere abstraction. If it is not a mere abstraction – which was, in Byzantium, the majority opinion – one would like to know what is the difference between "the man in general" in this sense and the human nature assumed by the Logos. Photius failed to provide any explanation. He confused different understandings of *universalia* and, apparently without knowing, repeated a standard anti-Chalcedonian argument. In this way, his argumentation was in a mirror symmetry with Nicephorus's verbal "Nestorianism."

Photius did not look for a recourse to the paraconsistency. Instead, he added two more arguments – demonstrating in what extent the very idea of logical paraconsistency was repulsive to him. The following two questions [48, p. 15.11-19] go immediately after the argument we have just quoted:

συμβαίνει δὲ καὶ μὴ εἶναι ἡμῖν αὐτὸν ὁμοούσιον· ἀναληφθέντος γὰρ τοῦ καθόλου ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ οὐκέτι ἡμεῖς ἄνθρωποι λεχθείημεν· πόθεν γὰρ τοῦτο ὑπάρξει ἡμῖν, καὶ κατὰ τί κοινωνήσομεν τῷ Χριστῷ ;	Moreover, it follows [from the supposition of the incarnation into the man in general] that he [the Logos] is not consubstantial to us. Indeed, if the man in general is assumed into the God Logos, we are no longer to be called men. On what ground he will be so [*sc.*, consubstantial] to us, and in what sense we will have communion with Christ?
πρὸς δ᾽ αὖ τοῖς εἰρημένοις καὶ ἕτερον ὑπάρξει ἀτόπημα, τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἕκαστον καὶ ἄνθρωπον εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἄνθρωπον· ἕκαστος γὰρ ἡμῶν κατὰ τὸν ἀληθῆ λόγον ἄνθρωπός ἐστί τε καὶ ὀνομάζεται· τοῦ δὲ καθόλου, καθ᾽ ὃ πάντες ἄνθρωποι εἶναι ἐλέγοντο, παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου ἀναληφθέντος, πῶς ἐσόμεθα ἄνθρωποι ;	Moreover, in addition to the already said, there will be another absurdity: everybody from the men would be man and not man. Everybody from us is in the true sense man and is [so] called. However, if the general, according to which all [men] are called to be men, is assumed [*sc.*, withdrawn] by the God Logos, how we will be men?

In both questions, the humanity supposedly assumed by the Logos is taken as different from our humanity – without becoming, however, a humanity of an individual human being. If the universal humanity is assumed by the Logos, it becomes withdrawn from us. Photius showed a clear intuition that the universal humanity could not be shared with us by the Logos in any consistent way, and, therefore, he provided his example of bad inconsistency where we are both to be and to be not men. Photius, thus, tried to avoid dealing with the general humanity in his Incarnation doctrine and, instead, explained the Incarnation as assuming of the human *idiomata* by the Logos. Nevertheless, he had no option to stop calling this fact "assuming of the human *nature*." Then, what means, in this text of Photius, the notion "nature", if he clearly distinguished it from the general humanity (τοῦ καθόλου), "according to which all [men] are called to be men"? I guess that this problem has never been thought through by Photius.

This example of Photius shows that if you throw paraconsistency out of the door, it will come back through the window – in this case, through a confused usage of the terms for universals.

9. Conclusion

Theodore the Studite has been forced to explain why the normal rule of superposition of the classical categories, φύσις + ἰδιώματα = ὑπόστασις, does not work in the case of Jesus: not because this rule is erroneous but exactly because it is correct. Its correctness becomes forceless, thus showing the paraconsistent logic of the divine incarnation overcoming the consistency of human rationality.

If Jesus's human features are not accidental, despite what the iconoclasts claimed, the only remaining solution within the framework of the "Neo-Chalcedonian" Christology is paraconsistent.

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Abbreviation

PG – Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeca. Accurante J.-P. Migne.

Acknowledgment

Notes

1. Octoechos, theotokion dogmatikon, tone 7 (ἦχος βαρύς), inc. Μήτηρ μὲν ἐγνώσθης. Cf., for bibliography, [12, p. 425], [47, p. 244]. Cp. the complete text in English translation by Fr. Lawrence (Campbell) of Jordanville (later monk John): "Thou wast known as a Mother beyond nature, O Theotokos; Yet thou didst remain a Virgin beyond reason and understanding; no tongue can expound the marvel of thy child-bearing; for while thy conceiving, O Pure One, was wondrous, the manner of thy child bearing cannot be comprehended, for wherever God wills the order of nature is overthrown. Therefore as we all acknowledge thee to be the Theotokos we implore thee insistently: Intercede that our souls may be saved." The traditional attribution to John of Damascus is not certain but, at least, corroborated with the manuscript tradition [50].

2. For the overwhelming "Aristotelian" rationalism of John Philoponos (*ca* 490-*ca* 570) that resulted into his so-called "Tritheism", [46], [11]. Cf., for a larger historical context, [35, *passim*].

3. For Barlaam the Calabrian's (*ca* 1290-1348) logical scepticism in theology – an attitude diametrically opposite to that of John Philoponos – [41], [42], [15]. From a logical point of view, the most detailed explanation of the difference between the approaches of Barlaam and Gregory Palamas is provided by Ivan Christov (the only scholar who approached the sources having a logical training in background) [51].

4.   Whether these connectives have the same meaning in all possible logics, is a controversial matter and the core of the modern discussion on the logical pluralism, namely, pluralism about the very notion of logical consequence; cf., for a pluralist viewpoint [7] and for a monist viewpoint [39, pp. 194-209]. Be this as it may, for the Byzantine thinkers, a fundamental unity of *the* logic on the level of connectives – but not on the level of the Aristotelian so-called "laws" – seems to me certain.

5.   Cf., as an up-to-dated introduction to the field [43]. As a short introduction [38].

6. Cf., for a review of different theologies relevant to Byzantium [35].

7. See for details [28], [2], [3].

8. As a textbook view of the pre-Iconoclastic epoch, I would quote the definition of the anonymous florilegium *Doctrina Patrum de incarnatione Dei Verbi* (*ca* 700): οὐδὲν γὰρ ἕτερόν ἐστιν ἡ ὑπόστασις κατὰ τοὺς θεοφόρους πατέρας ἢ οὐσία μετὰ τῶν ἰδιωμάτων "thus, the hypostasis is, according to the God-bearing Fathers, nothing than the essence with (its) features" [10, p. 72.1-2].

9. Cf. [35], [29], [18], [20], [21].

10. See Dirk Krausmüller's series of three articles on Nicetas Stethatos [19], [17], [16].

11. For the late ninth century, see below, section 8, for Photius's attitude.

12. For a detailed account of his Christological ideas, see [35], [29].

13. Nicephorus of Constantinople, *Antirrheticus* I, 22; [36, col. 252 B]: οὐδεὶς γὰρ τῶν νοῦν ἐχόντων ἀποφανεῖται, οὔτε τὸν Λόγον παθήματα φέρειν, οὔτε τῆς σαρκὸς τὰ θαύματα ὑπολήψεται.

14. Ὁ μονογενὴς Υἱὸς καὶ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ… σταυρωθείς τε, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός…

15. *Antirrheticus* III, 18-19; [44, cols. 397 D-400 A].

16. Cf. "First then this at least is obviously true, that the word 'be' or 'not be' has a definite meaning, so that not everything will be so and so" (*Metaphysics* IV.4) [5, p. 1589].

17. *Nouveaux essais sur l'entendement humain* IV, 2 [25, p. 361].

18. See [8].

19. Cf. [37], [49].

20. On the actistism [35], [28].

21. See especially [22].

22. Cf. [45].

23. For Damian and his triadology [11], [35]. The most complete bibliography in [27].

 24. [14, pp. 44-45].

25. Basil of Caesarea, *Adversus Eunomium*, 2 [6, col. 640.27-30].

26. A number of Bohr's works on this principle are addressing an audience with philosophical interests but without any special training in physics. See most of them in [40].

27. Cf. [1], [9]. To this approach focused on contradiction, add the treatment of identity [13]. Strictly speaking, these logics are inconsistent in a different way than that we are dealing with now; cf., for a detailed review [34].

28. As the best analysis of the doctrine in question [23].

29. Cf., for the problems related to the order in the Trinity or the lack thereof [31] and [26].

30. Cf., for in what sense "three" in the Holy Trinity could be called "number" and similar problems [26].

31. See [33].

32. S. an analysis within the historical context in [4].

 33. [48, p. 15.27-28]: λέγομεν ὅτι ἀνελάβετο μὲν τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν, ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ δὲ ὁ λόγος παρέσχε τὰ ἰδιώματα.

34. The dogmatic views of Photius are studied surprisingly little, especially in their central topic, Christology. Therefore, below, we will interpret one short text by Photius in a very preliminary manner.

35. "For if Christ had assumed a general man, this would mean that He did not become man in reality or in sensual [perception] but only in thought and imagination (for such is the existence of general things). And in this case He would not have been circumscribed in space according to human nature, for general things are not circumscribed in space" (tr. by Baranov [33, p. 372]); εἰ μὲν γὰρ τὸν καθόλου ἄνθρωπον ἀνελάβετο ὁ Χριστός, συμβαίνει αὐτὸν μὴ καθ᾽ ὕπαρξιν μηδ᾽ ἐν αἰσθήσει γενέσθαι ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπινοίᾳ μόνῃ καὶ φαντασίᾳ, αὕτη γὰρ ἡ τοῦ καθόλου ὕπαρξις (lines 3-7; [48, pp. 14-15]).

 36. [24, pp. 166-172/130-134 (txt/tr.)]. The relevant chapter II, 18 is entitled "Investigatio confutationis clare significans hanc assertionem: 'Christus est in duabus substantiis secundum commune substantiae [οὐσίας-*B.L.*] significationem (ܪ̈ܘܢ ܟ̈ܘܐ ܪ̈ܝܘܐܒ)' ad stultissimam ducere blasphemiam, *scilicet* ad id, quod sancta Trinitas toti humanitatis generi incarnata censeatur" [24, pp. 166/130]. For further literature, see above, note 9.

 37. [48, p. 15.8-11]: ἔτι δὲ καὶ εἰ τὸν καθόλου ἄνθρωπον ἀνελάβετο ὁ Χριστός, τὸ δὲ καθόλου τοῦτό ἐστιν, τὸ ἐν πολλαῖς ὑποστάσεσι θεωρούμενον, ἔσται ὁ Χριστός, ἐπεὶ τὸν καθόλου ἀνείληφεν ἄνθρωπον, ὑποστάσεις πολλαί, μᾶλλον δὲ ἄπειροι ("And also: if Christ assumed the man in general, then, given that the general is seen in many hypostases, Christ would be, since he assumed the man in general, many hypostases or, more exactly, infinite [number thereof]").