



Communique

Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue
between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches

(Anba Bishoy Monastery, Egypt)

20 - 24 June, 1989

The second meeting of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches took place at the Anba Bishoi Monastery in Wadi-El-Natroun, Egypt from June 20th to 24th, 1989.

The official representatives of the two families of churches of the Orthodox Churches met in an atmosphere of warm cordiality and christian brotherhood for four days at the guest house of the Patriarchal residence at the Monastery, and experienced the gracious hospitality and kindness of the Coptic Orthodox Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and his church.

His Holiness Pope and Patriarch Shenouda addressed the opening session of the meeting and appealed to the participants to find a way to restore communion between the two families of Churches. The participants also travelled to Cairo to listen to the weekly address of Pope Shenouda to thousands of the faithful in the Great Cathedral of Cairo. Pope Shenouda also received the participants at his residence later.

The twenty three participants came from thirteenth countries and represented 13 churches, (list of participants attached). The main item for consideration was the report of the Joint Sub-Committee of six theologians on the problems of terminology and interpretation of Christological dogmas today. The meetings were co-chaired by His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland and His Grace Bishop Bishoi of Damiette. In his response to Pope Shenouda Metropolitan Damaskinos appealed to the participants to overcome difficulties caused by differences of formulation. Words should serve and express the essence, which is our common search for restoration of full communion. " This division is an anomaly, a bleeding wound in the body of Christ, a wound which according to His will that we humbly serve, must be healed ".

A small drafting group composed of Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios of New Delhi, Professor Vlassios Phidas, Prof. Fr. John Romanides, Prof. Dimitroff, and Mr. Joseph Moris Faltas produced a brief statement of faith based on the report of the joint subcommittee, in which the common

Metropolitan Damaskinos *Bishop Bishoy* *Paulos Gregorios*

hypostasis of the Second Person of the trinity has assumed our created human nature in that act uniting it with his own uncreated divine nature, to form an inseparably and unconfusedly united real divine-human being, the natures being distinguished from each other in contemplation (theoria) only.

The hypostasis of the Logos before the incarnation, even with His divine nature, is of course not composite. The same hypostasis, as distinct from nature, of the Incarnate Logos, is not composite either. The unique theandric person (prosopon) of Jesus Christ is one eternal hypostasis who has assumed human nature by the Incarnation. So we call that hypostasis composite, on account of the natures which are united to form one composite unity. It is not the case that our Fathers used physis and hypostasis always interchangeably and confused the one with the other. The term hypostasis can be used to denote both the person as distinct from nature, and also the person with the nature, for a hypostasis never in fact exists without a nature.

It is the same hypostasis of the Second Person of the Trinity, eternally begotten from the Father who in these last days became a human being and was born of the Blessed Virgin. This is the mystery of the hypostatic union we confess in humble adoration - the real union of the divine with the human, with all the properties and functions of the uncreated divine nature, including natural will and natural energy, inseparably and unconfusedly united with the created human nature with all its properties and functions, including natural will and natural energy. It is the Logos Incarnate who is the subject of all the willing and acting of Jesus Christ.

We agree in condemning the Nestorian and the Eutychian heresies. We neither separate nor divide the human nature in Christ from His divine nature, nor do we think that the former was absorbed in the latter and thus ceased to exist.

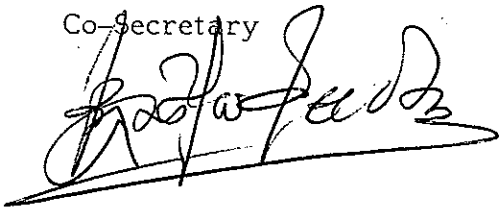
The four adverbs used to qualify the mystery of the hypostatic union belong to our common tradition - without commingling (or confusion) (asyngchytós), without change (atreptós), without separation (achoristós) and without division (adiaretós). Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ, do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union; those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion.

+ Μεταφραση της Ομοσεως; Αφωβ Bishop Paulos Paulos Paulos

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Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland

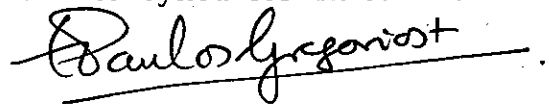
Prof. Vlassios Phidas
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Mr. Joseph Moris Faltas
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