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**THE MYSTERY OF THE LORD'S INCARNATION IN
THE ALEXANDRINE THEOLOGY OF THE FIRST
CHRISTIANS CENTURIES**

SUMMARY

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Content

- Introduction.....
- Current state of research.....
- Why Alexandria?.....

Part I.

Alexandria: historical-geographic and theological considerations

- 1.1.Alexandria: historical-geographic framework.....
- 1.2.The alexandrin compound.....

Part II.

The first Christological elements in pre-Nikean Alexandrian Theology

- Pantaenus.....
- 2.1. Clement Alexandrin-Missionary philosopher.....
- 2.2. Novelty and age: the eternal youth of Christendom found in the Incarnation of the Lord.....
- 2.3. Clement's "stromatic" doctrine.....
- 2.3. Inspired Word and Incarnate Word.....
- 2.4. One and unity at Clement in the context of the Incarnation.....
- 2.5. Incarnation of the Logos at Clement.....

Part III.

Origen, "unlimited hypothesis"

- 3. Origen.....
- 3.1.Contextualization.....
- 3.2. Origen The Philosopher.....

3.3.The Christological Specification.....	
3.4.Origenist errors.....	
3.5.The presence of the Logos in the whole creation and the unity of God.....	
3.6.Logos at Origen.....	
3.7.The <i>omoousiety</i> of the Holy Spirit at Origen.....	
3.8.The timelessness of the birth of the Son and of Christ (!).....	
3.9. The Bible at Origen or the Incarnation of the Lord in Words.....	
3.10.Incarnation as a gradually revealed teaching	
3.11.Origenistic Anthropology.....	

Part IV.

„*Omoousios*” in Alexandrian theology of the first centuries;

St. Athanasius the Great

4. Principled omooussian determinations.....	
4.1.Person and Being.....	
4.2.ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς.....	
4.3.The divine <i>Ousia</i>	
4.4.Arianism.....	
4.5.St. Athanasius.....	
4.6.The Incarnation.....	
4.7. The confusion between <i>hypostaseis</i> and <i>ousia</i>	
4.8. Birth from will.....	
4.9. God's constancy above the fall.....	
4.10. Alexandrian homoousian distinctions: Didim blind.....	
4.11. St. Cyril and <i>Omoousios</i>	

Part V.

Miafisismul ortodox sau unitatea ipostatică

5. Introduction to hypostatic miaphysism.....	
5.1.Ontological distinction.....	

5.2.Μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη.....	
5.3.Incarnation as sacrifice vs. platonic theopaschism.....	
5.4.Middle and Intermediate.....	
5.5.The power of God or the iconomic argument.....	
5.6.The body of God, a life-maker body.....	
• Conclusions.....	
• Bibliography.....	

My thesis is a synthetic work that aims to present the mission and the specifics of Alexandrian theology in the first four and a half centuries. Alexandria is both the coagulating factor of the Christian world and the conflict space of the essential concepts of humanity. Christianity, Judaism, and paganism met here establishing a hierarchy of truth. Or the truth has no plural. Whoever overcame here would be a victor in need anywhere in the world.

The paper is divided into five chapters, preceded by an introductory section and followed by Conclusions and Bibliography.

In the **introductory part** we have written about the connection between Logos, theology and theologian, a link very well exposed by the Alexandrian theologians, who have not lost their actuality over time. Major Alexandrian themes send to the Christian unity, invoked more often today. The essentials of this unit are Trinitarian theology and Christology. Everything else is subordinate to them.

The Romanian theologians who approached Trinitarian Theology and Christology are almost all theologians. Some have studied some aspects of substance, others of identity and distinction. Among the oldest, I would like to mention Father Dumitru Stăniloae, Constantin Galeriu, I.G. Coman, Ioan Rămureanu, Constantin Voicu, Isidor Todoran and many others, whose works recommend the Romanian patrological study of Alexandria with objective and first hand. Among the new ones I remember my coordinator Nicu Dumitrascu, who inspired me in the chapter of divine consubstantiality. I also studied the works of Lucian Turcescu, Natalia Manoilescu Dinu, Bogdan Bucur, the Blessed Nicholas Corneanu, His Grace Timothy Sevcicu, Nicolae C. Buzescu, Adrian Gabor, who dealt with the Alexandrian theologians, giving an

overview of the primary theological concepts. I also read the works of the famous orthodox foreign scholars, as well as Catholics and Protestants.

Part I is a historical-geographic study. If no cultural work can be achieved without a political and economic foundation, to give Alexandria to these first centuries such capabilities, I attempted a succinct historical and social radiography of the Hellenistic, Roman and Christian Mediterranean city. So we have searched in the works of great ancient historians and geographers, pagans and Christians, those events that were decisive for the later Christian metropolis evolution. Studies of recent historians bring new research perspectives to the city whose major archeological site was eradicated in the 18th-19th centuries. However, Egypt has benefited from the most studied history of deeds and of the worshiped pantheon and can be considered the barometer of the godliness of antiquity in what it has produced as a dispersion throughout the Mediterranean. If for David Abulafia the Phoenician cultural influence from Carthage and Cyrenaica overcame the city near Mareotis, most of the researchers head for Alexandria.

In Romanian research there is a perspective of the Alexandrian Hellenistic phenomenon in close connection with the Essenian Jewish, and the exponent of this theory is the erudite Constantine Daniel. He also ruled on the role played by ancient Egypt in the Alexandrian compound, as it gives the ancient Alexandria population a place of prime importance in the elaborate Alexandrian complex.

We have developed such a historical-geographic study to show that the great theological work is accompanied by the great political work, not least the economic one. To Alexandria the world was looking with reverence, both because of the scholarship of its representatives, pagans and Christians, and because of the multitude of themes approached. Alexandria was unique at that time for four reasons: 1. the basis of Egyptian piety, 2. the effect of the priesthood on the masses, 3. the liberalism established by Alexandru Macedon, 4. the Phylonian Platonic-Jewish synthesis.

Part II refers to a theologian sacrificed, primarily because of his study in tandem with Origen. Clement is a converted philosopher, but also a missionary among the Hellenists. He teaches to the Alexandrian philosophers, thirst for the new, that their newest zeal is Christ, and with Christ they can complete their conceptual horizons. Clement's doctrine is not systematically

exposed, but is sustained by a square support: historical, legislative, liturgical and theological. For Clement, Jesus Christ is the brilliant face of the Father, as a revealing person. Of course, in the context of Gnosticism of the third century, Christ is the true Gnostic, the one who brings the true gnosis, the educator, the teacher, more than the God-the central man of the new birth of the world, but we can not reproach this approach to a converted philosopher.

Clement is accused of preexistence, but this preexistentialism does not belong to a pre-existential mistake. The pre-existence of that heavenly plant, as Clement calls man, is more of God's foreknowledge than a state of fact. This text resembles Ambigua II, 7, where the rationals of Creation subsist in God, before being created, including time. To these God is not circumscribed.

Another error attributed to Clement is trihotomism. The ghost at Clement is a state of exalting the heart, which becomes permanent as a state of fact. Christ, according to his own divinity and humanity and Divine Hypostasis, has a unique ontological status: He determines the rebirth of the world as its Creator and not as a confessing witness as is the case with prophets; once come "does not make slaves, as Moses, the servant of God, but makes sons and brothers and heirs together (cf. Romans 8, 17) those who fulfill the Father's will."

The Incarnation of the Logos at Clement is the attempt to delimit the Christian Logos from the *Logos of the neoplatonic philosophy* (represented at that time by Philon), *the logos of the Stoic philosophy*, but also the *valentinian logos*. Clement's purposes were to fight against pseudophyloshoids, polytheistic pseudo-religions, and Oriental mysteries, on the basis of Revelation. These objectives constitute an embryonic plan of Orthodox theology that Clement generated in Alexandrian theology with originality.

Clement is the first theologian who assert the Incarnation as ascendancy. The Son is the Supreme, Timeless Only Beginning, which is not delimited by the Father's Will, and from Him all the sacred ministry declines in perfect harmony. Clement predicts the Nestorian danger of hypostatic separation. One being God, one necessarily must be man. But in divine-human unity, they are not two. The Lord unites the humanity that he recaps in His person, mediating as the archbishop to sanctify this unity to the most intimate detail.

Part III is entirely devoted to Origen. He is unique, both for his age and for the epochs that followed him. Many scholars agree with the Blessed Jerome that, according to the Apostles, he was the second teacher of the Church, but also the greatest fool because of the mixture of scriptural precepts and philosophy, but from this complex was born theology: 1. Scripture, 2. concepts and 3. interpretation. He was the man who sums up the 1st pathos of the Orient, 2. the constant search of the Alexandrian philosopher, 3. the interest in the hidden truth of the Jew, and 4. the existential belief of the Christian, and 5. the imperative of the cultic obligations of the common Egyptian.

In the matter of Christology, Origen recognizes that after the historical Logos reveals the eternal Logos. Behind the Savior is shown the Lord, the Master, but above these realities lies the dwelling in God - the purpose and destination of mystagogic Christianity. God, for Origen, is superior to being, but also being in the full sense, and not an immovable and inclined only to contemplate itself, in the manner of Aristotle, but an everlasting, active, good being that constantly pours out its goodness. This reiterates the Platonic concept, according to which good is identified with being, and evil with non-being.

The Son of God is truly a man in His Incarnation. With two natures, we are dealing with a person with two hierarchical natures, bearing different names. Because God does not create any tension, especially after His *chenose*, it has become one with the soul and body of Jesus.

Origen has made great efforts to define more closely the unity of the person of Christ, but finds the best comparison of this relationship: it compares the union of iron with that of fire that becomes reddened iron; then adds that the body and the soul are not merged with the Divine Verb, but have joined it through a union and a mixture that confers human nature, participating in divinity transformation into God. The terms "transformation" and "participation" will be harshly condemned by the Alexandrian theology of the following centuries, but the metaphor of the red iron will make a brilliant career to the Cabasian Eucharist theology. Origenist participation in divinity is not personal but apocastatic. In Origen's thinking not only man needs to be saved, but all the universe that is in his thought rational creation.

In Origen's thought there is original sin and ancestral sin. This is the reason for the coming of Christ into the flesh - to atone for this sin. His soul, created alongside the other minds, absolutely alone remained faithful to God, because he remains united with His free Logos, but

this spirit has provided for this union to become a long-lasting habit for good, that is why His nature acquires a immutable fixity.

When he affirms that what one accords to one does not always agree with the other, it leads us to believe that at Origen Jesus Christ is not "one and the same" of St. Cyril. He is also not the "Son by yarn" of St. Athanasius, but he is born and uncreated, distinct as hypostasis, not separated from the Father and Son by participation in the essence of the Father. Not through adoption or grace, as extremist subordinates, nor necessarily as Semiarians, but through participation. This concept will be corrected by St. Athanasius.

Not the deity suffered death on the cross, because the Being Principle can not disappear, but the man of pain, because through the Incarnation, the two natures have preserved their identity. The Lord is a composite entity, so communication of attributes is not a mere association or communion, but a real interference which gives the Logos and humanity the status of "One". His humanity, participating in union and mingling with Him (as a person), was transformed (!) Into God.

The body of Jesus is the whole human kind, or perhaps the whole universe created, metamorphosed and sanctified in His Church, whose needs, as the spiritual substance of the Lord, lives or suffers them, although it is impossible according to Its divinity.

Part IV is dedicated to the Theology of the Incarnation at St. Athanasius the Great. To him the Lord is the image of the Father, the One-Born, Who comes as a good from the Father, remaining in the Father.

That is why the Logos is not only in man, but especially in the world, as the Son of Man. Being God, He claims man as a whole, and creation, as master created and invested. Jesus Christ is both a Creator Master and a created master. It is of the same essence as the Father and the Spirit, as God, and of the same essence with us as man. As God He is *autoteos*, not by participation, nor by the addition of grace, but by the same yarn, by *omoousiety*, and as man is the excellency man, the central man of His own creation.

The divine substance, called in theology "incomprehensible", or Superbeing, or above being, does not obey the laws of the Aristotelian being because it transcends the property of producing beings, since any conceptualization of it inevitably leads to the idea of composition - a

foreign sense to the Godhead. *Ousia* is neither content nor circumscription, but it is a living notion, expressing the existence in general, of the existence of the hypostasis, and relative to the Most Holy Trinity, this does not happen either successively, neither by movement nor by bonding or union, which could imply a virtualization of the split. That is why God defines himself to Moses: "I am Who I am!" (Exodus 3:14): a presence.

Birth is an essential attribute of the Person, says in *the third writing against the Aryans*, for God is opening or birth as freedom and knowledge, not by will, nor by necessity, but by nature. If Jesus Christ is not God, true salvation can no longer take place. Being not a *teandrical* work, but only human, has at most a moral, not ontological, effect, Christ is neither man nor God. We follow Jesus, but we live in Jesus.

We do not have to do with any division of the substance or its multiplication, being self-sufficient and self-determining in its happiness. By using the term *omoousiety*, the identity of the essence of the Son is emphasized, while affirming both the divinity of the Son and his timelessness. If the "ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς" expresses "provenience", "ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρὶ" implies rather the identity. Not the essential origin of the Father makes the Son *homoousios*, but his birth, above all law expresses his determination, and if we affirm the birth without division, without effluence, the Son remaining in the Father and after His glorious birth, we shall see that the term consubstantiality is as humanly expressive.

Part V of my work interprets another aspect of the Alexandrian specific, namely the unity and uniqueness of Jesus Christ. In the chapter presented here, we have dealt specifically with the Cyrilian concept *mia fisis*, which expresses the hypostatic unity of Christ.

The Person of Incarnation is God-Incarnate Word. St. Cyril states that neither the Word of God separate from human nature, nor the temple born of a woman united with the Word, should not be called Christ Jesus. For by Christ is meant the Word of God united with human nature through an ineffable union.

If, in a dialectical approach, the two notions appear to be two parallel lines, one underlying the linearity of time, the other transfiguring eternity, that is never in tangent to elements, for St. Cyril, according to John and Paul, the horizontal unification without the failure of their integrity was the most difficult not the indissoluble unity, which senses the unity by

thought. Even if the mind perceives the dual nature of the Lord's person, and an indefinable distinction between natures, the same mind must admit the concurrence of the two elements in union: so far removed from all consubstantiality and separated by an immeasurable difference, divinity and humanity, in one thanks to the iconomy.

The concept of hypostatic unity is not the original idea of St. Cyril. St. Athanasius the Great draws the program of understanding the accuracy of the Incarnation terminology, and his successor, Cyril, does not violate it. Thus, from his forerunner, we know that the Logos mastered those of the body as his own.

If we were to ask who Jesus Christ is for us, we would say to a simple answer: Son of God Incarnate. No one would present a comparison or a distinction, but a unite name.

St. Cyril of Alexandria, beginning from above, from the reality of the person of God the Son, and coming to the salvation of the human race, but passing through the received humanity, affirms the close unity of godness and humanity in Christ, being the first to assert that God the Word, still remains One, while claiming that the full human nature (rational body and soul) does not imply a particular person to the Word but, by iconomy, the Word itself is the subject of this complete nature, in an indissoluble union, without mixing or change.

What was necessary for the life of the Church was the guarantee of one person's dogma. Without this, the cult of the Church would have diluted itself to a non-personalistic docketizing that did not offer the guarantee of real salvation and did not sustain a new beginning in the human race. The multiprosopistic perspective is extremely sad because it eliminates all the joy of meaning of the unity of our incarnation by grace, and the guarantee of this creation, or at best a joy without guarantee.

Mia fisis does not show a utopia but in appearance, in fact it expresses a mysterious reality. We can not speak of a work of human nature unless it is received by Logos. Indeed, the human nature in Jesus Christ is not a hypostasis, because beyond the Person of the Word it does not exist by itself and by itself, therefore, St. Cyril does not call it the proper yarn, but an indefinable feature that subsists in the hypostasis of the Word, called humanity.

Christ is the Servant Mediator, but also He Who claims to us as His own. It is not the myth of Anteu, nor an Anteus extended to infinity, as the Aryans tried to idealize, but, as St.

Cyril, God and man without conflict, without progress, without consecutiveness or concoction, but with One and the Same Servant, and His sacrifice is synonymous with the self-indulgence of man to God, the perfect pedagogy of worshiping the Divinity.

St. Cyril feels the mysterious existence of human nature in the Logos by affirming human nature as whole, but belonging to the Logos, and at the same time being His own body. Christ does not invent a hierarchy of life, a reference to another, an infinite scale of life, or rather the source of life, but it is Life itself that does not receive life elsewhere nor exhaust itself.

The Conclusions of this paper are the conclusions of the aspects of unity, the distinction of the person of Christ. The Lord is God in the world and God in the flesh, but not as a necessary Entity. Christ is not a construct to function by union, but a unitary, necessary for us, sacrificial and eternal gift.