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THEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSY IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY CONCERNING ACTIVITIES

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ANNOTATION:*The primary purpose of the thesis is to fill the existing gaps in our understanding of various theological and political aspects of the controversy that took place in both Eastern and Western parts of the Roman Empire in the seventh century the main theological point of which was whether Christ had one or two energeiai and wills.*

KEY WORDS: *compromise balance, communalism, mitroism.*

INTRODUCTION

The controversy concerning energeiai and wills in Christ was for a long time understudied. It remained a subject of interest for a few scholars only who touched on it occasionally, often in the context of other problems.1 Only recently a series of researches appeared which dramatically widened our understanding of the controversy in its various aspects. First, a series of critically edited sources on the theology of the seventh century endowed the scholarship with powerful tools of research. Among the most important of these were the acts of the Lateran (649) and Constantinopolitan (680/681) Councils edited by Rudolf Riedinger2, the works of Maximus the Confessor that have been published so far in the series Corpus Christianorum\ as well as biographical materials2 related to him, and the writings of Anastasius Sinaita published by Karl-Heinz Uthemann3. Second, the studies of the history and the background of the controversy have dramatically advanced in recent years. Thus, the relatively old but still valuable researches of Garegin Owsepian4, Venance Grumel5, and Erich Caspar6 were significantly enriched by the extensive studies of Jan Louis Van Dieten7, Pietro Conte1, Franz Dolger2, and most recently Friedhelm WinkeLmann.3 Additionally, the studies on the secular history of Byzantium in the seventh century have advanced dramatically, owing to the work of Andreas Stratos4, John Haldon5, Walter E. Kaegi6 et aU The primary purpose of the present thesis is to fill the existing lacunae in our understanding of various theological aspects of the controversy concerning the energeiai and wills, given that the scholarship has already achieved a significant success in researching its historical background and its sources.

Among the main concerns of the dissertation is to reconstruct the doctrinal systems of Monenergism-Monothelitism and Dyenergism-Dyothelitism, of course as far as these doctrines constituted a system. The two doctrines will be analysed in the coordinates of the notions of hypostasis, nature, natural property, energeia, and will, which constituted the framework of theological disputes in the seventh century. Inquiry into the relations between these notions will help us to understand better the differences and similarities between the two rival doctrines. The writings of the major participants in the controversy will be considered in this framework, in particular of Theodore of Pharan, Pope Honorius, Sergius, Pyrrhus, and Paul the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Cyrus of Alexandria, and Macarius of Antioch among the Monenergists-Monothelites, as well as Sophronius of Jerusalem, Maximus the Confessor, the Popes John, Theodore, Martin, and Agatho and additionally Anastasius of Sinai as the major representatives of the Dyenergist-Dyothelite party.

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The main figure among the Dyothelite theologians was undoubtedly Maximus. However, his theological contribution will not be presented separately, but as an integral part of the response of the Church to the challenge of Monenergism-Monothelitism. I believe it could be misleading to consider Maximus as a self-sufficient theologian or thinker isolated from the context of the Monenergist-Monothelite controversy. The best of his Christological writings were composed in response to the challenge of Monenergism-Monothelitism and constituted only a part, though a very important part, of a major polemical campaign. Therefore, I agree with Andrew Louth who remarks: 'Although Maximus the Confessor is a speculative theologian of genius, he does not see himself, as would some later theologians, as constructing a theological system. He sees himself as interpreting a tradition that has come down to him, and interpreting it for the sake of others.

At the same time, I will be considering the theology of Anastasius Sinaita separately from the rest of the Dyenergist-Dyothelite writings. Firstly, because he did not immediately participate in the controversy, and secondly, because his theological heritage remains virtually unresearched. I intend therefore to complete this omission by devoting a separate chapter to his theology.

Together with the inquiry into the content of the issue of the energeia and will, I will try to locate its place in the general history of Christology, having as an ultimate aim to show that the issue was not one of secondary importance, but actually one of the major challenges that the Christological doctrine faced in its history. I will also try to show that both Monenergism-Monothelitism and Dyenergism-Dyothelitism, in spite of their antagonism, had the same neo-Chalcedonian origin. Monenergism-Monothelitism, in particular, was developed as an attempt to find a compromise with the Severan tradition, an important feature of which was a belief in a single energeia of Christ. Severan Monenergism, however, was not the first Monenergism to have existed, but was preceded by other Monenergisms, which were developed witriin traditions linked to Apollinarius of Laodicea and Theodore of Mopsuestia. One of the tasks of the present thesis is to describe these kinds of Monenergism and to establish what they had in common with the 'imperial' or Chalcedonian Monenergism.

Although the latter was created within the framework of neo-Chalcedonianism, it was contested and consequently rejected by the representatives of the same neo-Chalcedonian tradition. This revealed an internal crisis besetting the tradition in the seventh century. This crisis, however, did not eventually lead to a blurring of the principles of neo-Chalcedonianism, but on the contrary to a more precise definition of its boundaries and to its catharsis.

CONCLUSIONS

It is possible to conclude from the description of the historical context of the controversy that the motives of the imperial and ecclesiastic authorities towards promotion of the Monenergist-Monothelite doctrine were pragmatic.

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