Jesus  God and Man

Pannenberg, W

Pannenberg, W., Jesus  God and Man
https://myrrh.library.moore.edu.au:443/handle/10248/14150
Downloaded from Myrrh, the Moore College Institutional Repository
This material has been provided to you pursuant to section 49 of the Copyright Act 1968 (the Act) for the purposes of research or study. The contents of the material may be subject to copyright protection under the Act.

Further dealings by you with this material may be a copyright infringement. To determine whether such a communication would be an infringement, it is necessary to have regard to the criteria set out in Part 3, Division 3 of the Act.
WARNING

This reading is NOT complete.

Copyright restrictions limit the amount included in this file.

To complete the reading the book may be borrowed from the Moore Theological College Library, or purchased through Moore Books.
WOLFHART PANENBERG

JESUS—
GOD AND MAN

Second Edition

Translated by
LEWIS L. WILKINS
and
DUANE A. PRIEBE

THE WESTMINSTER PRESS
Philadelphia
CHAPTER
8
THE IMPASSE OF THE DOCTRINE
OF THE TWO NATURES

Jesus’ unity with God is not to be conceived as a unification of
two substances, but as this man Jesus is God.

The unity of God and man in Jesus Christ is the concluding and crowning
theme of Christology. Our first area of consideration led us from Jesus’ resur­
rection to the confession of his divinity. The second part was dedicated to the
activity and fate of Jesus in his humanity. Now we must ask how the two
are interrelated, how the divinity of Jesus can exist together with the authen­
tic humanity of his activity and his fate. We must be careful to keep in view
everything that has been established up to this point about the basis of the
recognition of Jesus’ divinity and about his human activity and fate. The
question of the relation of the divine and the human in Jesus may not be
posed apart from the concrete elements and interrelations that provide its
basis on both sides. This is not the question about a unity of God and man
in general, but only the question about the unity of this particular human
life with the God of Israel as he is revealed in Jesus. Therefore, this question
can be put only now, at the conclusion of Christology.

From the very beginning Christian theology was forced to say both that
Jesus is truly God and, at the same time, truly man. Vere deus, vere homo is
what the Formula of Chalcedon says. It had already been used by Irenaeus,
who emphasized that Christ as God and man is “one and the same.”¹ The
formula vere deus, vere homo is based on the pattern of the double evaluation
of Jesus “according to the flesh” and “according to the Spirit,” which appears
as a fixed formula in Rom. 1:3. F. Loofs has called attention to the signifi­
cance of this pattern for subsequent theology.²

¹ Vere homo, vere deus (Irenaeus, Adv. haer. IV, 6, 7 [MPG 7/1, 990]). Cf. the Formula
of Chalcedon, H. Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum (31st ed.; Freiburg:
und sprachliche Vorbereitung der christologischen Formel von Chalcedon,” Chalcedon,
Vol. 1, p. 36.
² F. Loofs, Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte, § 14, 5a, p. 70; § 21, 2c,
p. 109.
The formula of the two natures or substances in Christ, which appeared first in Melito of Sardis\(^8\) and subsequently became characteristic for patristic dogma, affirmed something completely different.\(^4\) Thus the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which brought the Christological conflicts of the fifth century to a preliminary conclusion, was not satisfied with the *vere deus, vere homo*, but added that Christ is "one and the same" in two natures (*en duo phuseon*). Christ did not become a single individual "from" two natures (*ek duo phuseon*) as Cyril thought. Divinity and humanity, according to the Chalcedonian decision, are to be conceived as unmixed (*asygchytos*), unchangeable (*asireptos*), indivisible (*adiairetis*), inseparable (*achorintis*) in the one Christ (Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum*, 302). The uniqueness of both natures is maintained, even though they are united in a single person (*hypostasis*).

What constitutes the real distinction between the two-sided statement *vere deus, vere homo* concerning the one man Jesus and the doctrine of the two natures? The formula of the true divinity and true humanity of Jesus begins with the fact that one describes one and the same person, the man Jesus of Nazareth from different points of view. The unity of the concrete person Jesus of Nazareth is given, and both things are to be said about this one person: he is God and he is man. The formula about the two natures, on the contrary, does not take the concrete unity of the historical man Jesus as its given point of departure, but rather the difference between the divine and the human, creaturely being in general. Certainly the fathers at Chalcedon also were concerned ultimately about true divinity and true humanity with regard to the historical Jesus Christ. To this extent, Edmund Schlink is correct when he calls for a new interpretation of the Chalcedonian statements "not by placing them in contrast to the history of Jesus, but by understanding them as guidance for praise of the historical Christ."\(^5\) This intention, however, did not make itself adequately felt in the Chalcedonian formulation as was the case in the controversies preceding it. Throughout, the contradiction between God and creature is the logical starting point for thought; from this perspective the attempt was made to understand the unity of the two in Jesus, the relation between divinity and humanity in him. The pattern of thought thus moves in the opposite direction from the formula *vere deus, vere homo*. Jesus now appears as a being bearing and uniting two opposed substances in himself. From this conception all the insoluble problems of the doctrine of the two natures result.

It should be mentioned once again that these comments, like the discussion that will follow, contain no objection to the true divinity and true humanity of Jesus. *Vere deus, vere homo* is an indispensable statement of Christian theology. Nevertheless, the notion asserted by the two-natures formula of two substances coming together to emerge as one individual is problematic. On this point the Chalcedonian decision merely shared the general problem of its contemporary theological situation. Chalcedon probably did not intend to go beyond the formula of Irenaeus that it wanted to interpret. Schlink, too, emphasizes the distinction between the intention of the decision at Chalcedon and its doctrinal formulation, which was open to misunderstanding even in the discussion of its own time: "The Chalcedonian declaration is not concerned with the two natures as such, but with the completeness of Jesus' divine and human nature without which his substitution would be illusory."

In § 96 of his dogmatics, Schleiermacher undertook a critique of the church's Christology. Here he temperately summarized and augmented the results of the critical dissolution of Christological dogma by the Enlightenment. His criticism had great influence on subsequent theology.

Schleiermacher takes exception to the uniform application of the term "nature" to God and man. "For how can divine and human be so subsumed under any single concept, as if both could be mutually coordinated as more precise specifications of one and the same universal; as, for example, even divine Spirit and human spirit cannot be compared in this way without confusion" (§ 96, 1). Thus in the interest of God's otherness over against everything creaturely, Schleiermacher rejects using any expression uniformly or in the same way for God and for man. According to Schleiermacher, however, the expression "nature" is especially misleading because it should only be applied to "a limited being existing in opposition to others," only to finite being, and thus it is completely inappropriate to God's infinity. This second argument probably does not meet the patristic doctrine, since its concept of nature is interchangeable with the concept of being, but without implying the distinction from finite beings that Schleiermacher presupposes. But his first argument scores a direct hit: one cannot speak of divine being and human being as though they were on the same plane. To be sure, this was not the intention of the patristic Christologies,\(^7\) but just in this respect the two-natures doctrine is objectionable.\(^8\)

Albrecht Ritschl and the research into the history of doctrine that resulted from his school made a critique of the two-natures doctrine that is much less

---

8 Loofs, ibid., § 21,5, p. 115. Cf. MPG 5, 1222 f., fragment 7.

---

\(^{8}\) Ibid., p. 84; see in general pp. 80 ff.
\(^{7}\) Werner Elert, *Der Ausgang der altkirchlichen Christologie* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1957), pp. 37-70, has correctly emphasized the significance of the superiority the infinite God has over all the finite and creaturely for the history of the problem of patristic Christology. Cf. also p. 240.
\(^{6}\) Schlink also emphasizes "that 'nature' does not mean the same thing in statements about Jesus' human and his divine nature. . . . The total superiority of the divine nature over the human excludes any complementary dependence of the statements about the divine nature upon those about the human nature" (*Der kommende Christus und die kirchlichen Traditionen*, p. 86).
convincing than Schleiermacher's. Adolf von Harnack thought that there could be no consideration of a "physical" community of God with Jesus, but only of an "ethical" community. This critique was rightly rejected by the so-called dialectical theology. Emil Brunner established the basis for this rejection in 1927. Karl Barth retains the language of the "two natures" in his doctrine of reconciliation, although he expresses reservations similar to those of Schleiermacher about applying the concept of nature uniformly to God and man. He stresses that their unification in Jesus Christ involves the union of what is otherwise ununifiable.10 Brunner himself, strangely enough, rejects the pattern of the two natures once again in his dogmatics,11 because it is not appropriate to the personal reality of Jesus' unity with God. Similarly, Friedrich Gogarten says that the identity of Jesus with God in the sense of Phil. 2:6 ff. "is not of a natural or substantial sort, but is demonstrated precisely in the obedience in which he assumes the form of a servant."12 According to Gogarten, "the problem of personal being can never be explained" in the ontological perspective of Greek thought bound up with the concept of nature.

Such a contrast can probably only be seen as a retrogression to the one-sidedness of Ritschl's and his school's critique of patriarchic Christology. Today one merely contrasts personal community instead of Ritschl's ethical community to the unity of nature in the patriarchic dogma. Both cases involve the exclusion of the general ontological problematic from Christology. In contrast to such attenuations it can make good sense to retain the formula "two natures." Thus Paul Althaus in fact affirms the two-natures doctrine as insurance "against the moralistic leveling and dissolution" of the incarnation.13

Our discussion has not yet come to the real center of Schleiermacher's critique of the two-natures doctrine. It resides in the question about the relation between nature and person. "In complete opposition to all normal usage, according to which the same nature belongs to many individual beings or persons, here one person is supposed to participate in two wholly different natures" (§ 96, 1). Schleiermacher thinks that a vital unity could not exist here without one nature giving way to the other. For just this reason presentations of Christology have "always wavered between the contrasting false paths," namely, they have either combined the two natures to form a third or split the two natures and oriented the concrete picture of Jesus exclusively to one or the other.

Here Schleiermacher saw with penetrating insight the weakness of the two-natures doctrine. This insight was previously formulated as early as Apollinaris of Laodicea:14 two beings complete in themselves cannot together form a single whole. In distinction from the formula *vere deus, vere homo*, the effort to conceive the unification of originally independently existing divine and human natures into a single individual in whom both natures nonetheless remain distinct leads inevitably to an impasse from which there is no escape. If divinity and humanity as two substances are supposed to be united in the individuality of Jesus, then either the two will be mixed to form a third or the individuality, Jesus' concrete living unity, will be ruptured. This impasse of the two-natures doctrine is reflected in three stages of the problem: (1) in the antithesis between the Nestorian and the Monophysite understandings of the incarnation; (2) in the problematic of the *communio idiomatum*; (3) in the doctrine of the self-emptying (*kenōsis*) of the God-man in the condition of his humiliation or of the Logos in the incarnation.

I. UNIFICATION CHRISTOLOGY AND DISJUNCTION CHRISTOLOGY

I. The Council of Chalcedon and the Contrast Between Alexandrian and Antiochene Christology

The formula of unity produced by Chalcedon in 451 bears the marks of a compromise.15 It was intended to overcome opposing solutions to the incarnation problem as it had developed in the Alexandrian theology of Egypt on the one side and in Syrian Antioch on the other. The fate of the Chalcedonian dogma was that it was only a compromise formula which did not lift the problem to a new plane, but which tried simply to force together the theological antitheses on their own plane.16 But these antitheses are necessary results of a Christology that begins with the concept of incarnation and were not, therefore, ultimately overcome by the Chalcedonian formula but broke out again and again in new forms.

The real founder of Alexandrian Christology is Athanasius. This church father's conception of the incarnation was heavily influenced by the world view of Stoicism.17 The divine Logos rules the whole world, giving it life

---

10 Karl Barth, *CD*, IV/2, pp. 60 ff.; cf. also pp. 25 ff.
13 Ibid., p. 496, n.
16 This fact in the history of the church may not be obscured by Otto Weber, *Grundlagen der Dogmatik*, Vol. II, p. 135 ff., with the all too easy way out of such cases, that "the paradox is the only appropriate mode of expression" (p. 136). See below, pp. 303 f.
17 Differently, O. Weber, ibid., p. 159, who evaluates the controversies following the Council of Chalcedon as a mere relapse into "the contradictions that [the Council] had already substantially overcome."
18 A. Grillmeier, in *Chalcedon*, Vol. I, pp. 5-202, emphasizes the significance of Stoic thought both for Athanasius and for the Cappadocians (on Athanasius, pp. 81 ff., and gen
and order. It animates the cosmos, so to speak. The power of the Logos can concentrate itself particularly in individual beings, above all in man who is in an exceptional sense the being that has the Logos (saim logos echon). The Logos was incorporated in Jesus Christ in the highest possible concentration so that the Logos has become the bearer of all Jesus' spiritual functions of life. "The human in Christ is borne by the Logos." The dynamic of the Logos provides the background of all Jesus' actions. The flesh is only its tool, its instrument.

This conception of the divine-human unity of Christ in the Logos-sarx pattern as the unification of the Logos with the flesh inevitably has a tendency to replace the human spirit-soul in Jesus with the Logos. Since the human spirit was understood in any case as participating in the Logos, this was an easy solution. Nevertheless, this solution was problematic, not least because the Arians also drew the Logos as deeply as possible "into the flesh," in order to extend the assertion of Jesus' true divinity ad absurdum. This explains the extreme reaction by Eustathius of Antioch in separating the two natures in order to save the divinity of the Logos. Apollinarius of Laodicea was also concerned with the divinity of the Logos. However, he brought this intention to expression within the Logos-sarx pattern by interpreting the unification of the Logos with the flesh as the deification of the sarx instead of the dilution of the Logos, as the Arians had done.

With Apollinaris the tendency of the Logos-sarx pattern to set the Logos in Jesus in place of the human soul attained its climax. His doctrine was rejected in Alexandria in 362 because the soul and spirit (nous) of man, not only the flesh, must be saved through Christ. Against Apollinaris, Gregory of Nazianzus proposed his basic statement that what is not assumed by God is not redeemed. In the same direction Theodore of Mopsuestia maintained that sin did not happen only in the body, but decisively through the soul. "Thus Christ must assume not only a body, but a soul as well; the soul had to be assumed first, and then for its sake the body." Thus in this Christology the pattern Logos-man was substituted for the pattern Logos-sarx. A whole man, not only the flesh, was conceived at the opposite of the Logos with which the latter united himself.

Here for the first time the formula of two complete natures became significant. In the Antiochene Christology, the man Jesus became just in this way so independent that the unity of God and man seemed to be threatened. Apollinaris had previously established that two natures complete in themselves could not become one. The Antiochene theologians left unexplained how man and God could be united in the one person of Jesus. Even though Theodore of Mopsuestia spoke of one single person and hypostasis (pp. 153 ff.), the meaning remains obscure within the context of his conception. It appeared to point toward a third hypostasis uniting the divine and the human.

Thus Antiochene Christology did not prevail over the Logos-sarx Christology of Athanasius, because the Antiochene theologians, restricted by their conceptuality of the "two natures," did not succeed in making clear the unity of God and man in the man Jesus. Under the presuppositions of this terminology and method, this unity could be made clear only by Alexandrian Christology, for which the Logos was the bearer of Jesus' concrete behavior. Thereby, as we have previously seen, Jesus' full humanity was threatened.

This Alexandrian unification Christology was developed further in the fifth century by Cyril along the lines of Athanasius. Cyril went beyond Athanasius and entered into the anti-Apollinarian argumentation to the extent that he did not connect Logos and sarx directly together, but clearly affirmed that Jesus' body possessed its own life and its human soul (pp. 171 ff.). "The natural impartation of life, which Christ's body needs, is no longer attributed to the Logos as Logos, but is appropriated to the soul. The idea of making alive (ζωοποιις), like the organon concept, could have validity for Cyril only in the supernatural sphere of the God-man's life" (p. 174). Nevertheless, I cannot find that the Logos-sarx Christology with its dangers really has been overcome in Cyril, as Grillmeier assumes (p. 173). Human nature, even if a soul now belongs to it, was for Cyril as for Athanasius only the "garment" of the Logos (Cyril, Ep. 45, 2). Above all, Jesus' human nature possessed no hypostasis of its own and for Cyril, as for a long time after him, this meant that the human nature of Jesus by itself was not individual. Jesus became an individual only through the Logos. The Logos, which already was an independent hypostasis previously, assumed human nature at the incarnation, but not an individual man. Loofs is right when he sees in this point the most profound antithesis of Alexandrian to Antiochene Christology. Precisely in

22 Duo teletai hen genesthai ou dynatai, Pseudo-Athanasius, Contra Apollinaris 1,2 (MPG 26, 1096B).
23 Corresponding to the Reformed tradition, this positive side of the Alexandrian conception is unfortunately underestimated by O. Weber, Grundlagen der Dogmatik, Vol. I, pp. 133 ff. The contrast of the Christological schools thus appears in his presentation as an unambiguous, black or white situation. This is paralleled, to be sure, by an inverted version of the same thing in the Lutheran Christological tradition. Neither version, however, corresponds to the historical facts of the matter. Rather, the reasons that made it impossible to achieve a solution acceptable to both sides must be seen.
24 F. Loofs, Leonior von Bysanz (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1887), p. 43; idem, Dogmengeschichte, § 37, 2, p. 232. Adolf von Harnack has found the origin of this tendency of Alex-
this point, in the strength of this Christology, in its understanding of the Logos as the bearer of Jesus' self, its insurmountable weakness also resides: here Jesus could not be conceived as a real, individual man.

The understanding of the divine-human unity in Christ was perhaps advanced the farthest by the heretic Nestorius at that time, as Grillmeier has recently shown. To be sure, Nestorius' efforts were completely submerged by the polemic of the period, and it is ironic that he, the supposed heretic father of the disjunction Christology, wrestled with special intensiveness with the understanding of the unity of God and man in Jesus Christ. In contrast to Cyril, Nestorius still regarded the hypostasis as an element that belongs to the completeness of the particular nature. For him, the hypostasis is the ultimate basis of the individual being. Nestorius conceived the unity in Christ as a unity of outward appearance (prosōpon). By the word prosōpon he referred to the totality of properties that make a concrete hypostasis, an individual being, out of the universal essence. Because each of the two natures has its own prosōpon, the prosōpon that unites both must be a third, which emerges as the result of the mutual interpenetration of the two natures and through the "interchange" of their outward appearances. This third prosōpon common to both natures appears concretely in the volitional unity of the man Jesus with God. Nestorius is here on the path later taken by Theodore of Pharan (see below). But certainly even he could not overcome the limitations of the two-natures doctrine. Because he construed the concept of nature as a static, isolated substantiality, he could only bring the two natures together in such a way that the two outward appearances are connected in a third prosōpon, neither divine nor human. It is obvious that this also could not be a satisfactory solution.

Thus the Christological conflict of the fifth century resulted in a dilemma. At the incarnation, the Logos on the one hand may have assumed a whole man. Then this complete human being is presupposed as already independent. This was the Antiochene position. Therefore, Nestorius said that Mary was to be designated only as Christotokos, mother of Christ, not as Theotokos, mother of God. The Logos united himself only with the completed man Jesus. Their unity is a third thing beside the divine Logos and the man Jesus, both of whom were previously independent beings. Then, however, the man Jesus is no longer as such one with God so that he could not be conceived of apart from that unity.

The other possibility, which is just as problematic, is that at the incarnation the Logos found only the universal human nature; whether with or without a soul is a secondary question. In any case, human nature was formed into an individual man only through the incarnation itself. Here Jesus as man is in fact what he is only by virtue of his unification with the divine Logos. But then Jesus possessed no specifically human individuality, and human nature without individuality is a mere abstraction. Accordingly, Jesus as an individual was never a man, but from the very beginning was a superman, the God-man. This is the tendency of Alexandrian Christology. The Monophysite tendency is present here at its root. Whether one can draw such a rash conclusion as did Julian of Halicarnassus in the sixth century that the body of Jesus was already saturated with the imperishable divine life even before the resurrection is a matter for itself. In this thesis the docetic tendency of Alexandrian Christology certainly becomes obvious. But the problem of Monophysitism is its beginning neither here nor with the rejection of the Chalcedonian formulation of the unity of Christ "in two natures" instead of Cyril's "from two natures." It begins rather with Cyril, and indeed is really present in Athanasius.

The dilemma of these two Christological solutions is insoluble so long as Christology is developed from the concept of the incarnation, instead of culminating in the assertion of the incarnation as its concluding statement. This false point of departure is common to both the Antiochene conception that the Logos assumed a whole man at the incarnation and the Alexandrian conception that the Logos only assumed human nature. Therefore, neither of the two conceptions was simply right in contrast to the other. Each repre-

andian Christology in Gregory of Nyssa, while it is "only slightly suggested" in Athanasius (History of Dogma, tr. by Neil Buchanan [7 vols.; Russell & Russell, Inc., Publishers, 1958], Vol. III, p. 297, cf. p. 301). For Cyril what is characteristic "is his express rejection of the view that an individual man was present in Christ, although he attributes to Christ all the elements of man's nature" (ibid., IV, p. 176). Differently, Karl Holl, Amphiplatus: von Ikonium in seinem Verhältnis zu den grossen Kappadozern (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1904), pp. 222 f.; R. Seeborg, Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, Vol. II, p. 201, n. 1; most recently W. Elen, Der Ausgang der altkirchlichen Christologie, pp. 146f., cf. pp. 91 f. But even Elen can defend the "historicity" of Cyril's understanding of Christ only with respect to the reality of Jesus' suffering, including a particular spiritual suffering that presupposes, in an anti-Apollinarian way, the existence of a particular human soul for Jesus. However, Elen cannot meet the objection that Jesus' human nature as such was not individual. Even the passage in MPG 75, 1324D, which Elen cites (p. 95) against Harnack cannot show this, because here Christ is contrasted to the collective nature of humanity not as a human individual but as the God-man. Cf. also Grillmeier, in Chalcedon, Vol. I, pp. 168 f. More weighty are the arguments presented against Loofs by Joseph Lebon, "Propositions de monophysisme syrien," in Chalcedon, Vol. I, pp. 425-480, esp. p. 517 f. Cyril can present the unification of the two natures as a connection of two pragmata (MPG 76, 1200C; MPG 77, 396C, even speaks of the coming together of two hypostases; cf. 401A). Nonetheless, Loofs did not pull his interpretation out of a hat, as shown by the subsequent, explicit discussions of the question (Ch. Moeller, in Chalcedon, Vol. I, pp. 694, 698, 701).


26 On Julian, cf. W. Elen, Der Ausgang der altkirchlichen Christologie, pp. 100 ff. Elen thinks (p. 104) that the Docetism of Julian's followers destroyed the fundamental intention of the Monophysites, the unity of the picture of Christ, because the humanity of Jesus was thus lost to view. Julian "is not the final logical extension of Monophysite Christology, but its disintegration" (p. 104).
sented an important element of truth: in the Antiochene position, the idea of the real, individual human being of Jesus; in the Alexandrian, the unlimited unity of Jesus with God. But a solution of the Christological problem would have been possible only if one would have overcome the approach that lies at the basis of both theses, namely, the question of the process of the incarnation, of the coming to be of the unity of God and man in Jesus. This would perhaps have been easier within the Antiochene perspective, but it was not achieved there because of bondage to the pattern of the two natures and fixation on the question of how the two natures are apportioned to the manifestations of Jesus’ existence, rather than by seeking the basis of the confession to Jesus’ divinity in the historical particularity of his human activity itself.

The Chalcedonian formula expressed correctly the elements of truth of both schools of patristic theology. This constitutes its truth that the church must never lose: neither the unity of God and man in Jesus Christ nor the truth of his humanity and his being God may be lost from view. However, such definitions accomplish no theological solution for the controversies preceding Chalcedon. It only indicates the criteria that must be unconditionally observed in every Christological theory. As the solution of the Christological problem, the Chalcedonian formula was inevitably suspect from both sides. It appeared to the Antiochene followers of Nestorius as a threat to the real humanity of Jesus. To the Monophysites it seemed a sacrifice of Jesus’ unity with God himself, especially against the background of Pope Leo I’s didactic epistle, which was also declared dogma at Chalcedon. These opposing suspicions resulted from the Chalcedonian formula’s inability to overcome the conceptual dilemma of patristic Christology. The formula rather intended to maintain the elements of truth of the two mutually contradictory elaborations of the two-natures doctrine within the terminology of that doctrine, as developed on the model of the concept of incarnation.

The attempt to force acceptance of the Chalcedonian formula, repeatedly undertaken in the subsequent centuries, proved to be historically fatal and generally unsuccessful. Thus the Chalcedonian formula provided the occasion for the first great confessional schism of Christendom. Heretics were not excluded here, as had been the case in the Arian dispute, but the parties separated for ultimate reasons of Christian concern for salvation, believing the opposing side was not capable of preserving a decisive salvation motif. The consequence of the confessional battles following Chalcedon was the weakening of the Christian empire and ultimately the loss to Islam, almost without a fight, of the Monophysite regions of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. The Monophysite native population of these areas, persecuted in the empire, was no longer ready to offer much resistance to the apparently tolerant Islam. This attitude was surely conditioned not only by religious considerations but by advantages in questions of tax policy as well. National particularities, too, played their role, but just these were brought to a head by the confessional antitheses. Thus the loss of the original areas of Christendom in the seventh century is a staggering example of the consequences of a schism of Christians that did not result from the ultimate basis of the truth of the Christian faith, but only from the inability to hold together opposing concerns of faith in the unity of believed truth and to remain together in the unity of faith over and above the antithesis of theologies.

2. Monothelitism and Dyothelitism

The tensions between Antiochene and Alexandrian Christology, between disjunction Christology and unification Christology, appeared in new form in connection with the efforts of the Greek emperor to achieve peace after the Chalcedonian religious struggles, especially the “energy” conflict and the Monothelite controversy in the seventh century. The great Heraclius, who had decisively defeated the Persian empire, wanted to establish confessional peace in Christendom through a formula that made the Chalcedonian unity of person concrete as the unity of a single divine-human efficacy of Christ (operatio, energeia). The formula mia theandriki energeia was supported by the authority of the Areopagite. The resistance to this monoenergetic formula caused Heraclius to proclaim another new formulation of the unity of Christ in 638. According to the emperor’s Ecthesis, there was only one single will, not two different wills, in Christ. This Monothelite theory has a certain correctness in view of the unity of Jesus’ will with the Father’s will in the act of obedience. With reference to the act of the will, the Monothelite theory is appropriate to the meaning of Jesus’ behavior and corresponds to the New Testament witness to his obedience. Even Nestorius understood the unity in Christ as a unity of will. The matter looks very different, however, when one considers the voluntary capacity as a capability to act inherent in an intelligent being as a function of its nature. In this light it is clear that doubling of nature requires doubleness of will. This is the element of truth in the Dyothelite defense of the Chalcedonian tradition. The Dyothelites were strongest in Rome where the sympathies for a more Antiochene way of thinking had always been dominant. After an initial condemnation of Monothelitism in Rome in 649, the Dyothelites achieved the final victory at the Council of Constantinople in 681. By this time the Monophysite lands

27 Against O. Weber, loc. cit., in n. 16 above.
28 Agit enim uraque forma cum alterius communione quod proprium est: Verbo vol. operante quod verbi est, et carne exaequente quod carnis est (Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum, 294). Cf. Elert, Der Ausgang der altkirchlichen Christologie, pp. 152-164, for Monophysite criticism of this formula.

29 MPG 3, 1072 B; cf. Elert, pp. 227 f.
30 So Maximus Confessor in his disputation with the Expatriarch Pyrrhus of Constantinople at Carthage in 645; cf. Elert, p. 250.
31 Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum, 553-559; cf. Elert, Der Ausgang der altkirch-
were already lost to Islam. Palestine and Syria were conquered in 638, Egypt in 641. Now one had to seek peace with Rome instead of a settlement with the Monophysites. Thus Dyothelitism became the dogma of the church.

With the doctrine of Christ’s two wills, the pattern of the two natures was uncompromisingly carried through, but the perception of the concrete vital unity of Jesus was basically lost. The tendency of the two-natures doctrine to destroy the unity of Jesus Christ became especially clear in the condemnation of Monothelitism, because the basis for affirming Jesus’ divinity lies precisely in his unity of will with the Father in the execution of his mission. This actual unity of Jesus’ will with the will of the Father had been the concern of the founder of Monothelite Christology, Theodore of Pharan. The singleness or doubling of the capacity of will in Jesus, toward which the critique of the Dyothelites was directed, was not his concern. To be sure, the Monothelites could not answer the counterquestion as to whether every act of will does not presuppose a voluntary capacity. One can answer this question only when one takes as the point of departure the voluntary relation of Jesus to the Father, rather than the two-natures doctrine, the God-man, of the Monothelites. The decision about Jesus’ own divinity as the Son can be made only indirectly, through his unity of obedience and mission with the Father.

In the Monothelite controversy, the antitheses of the unification and disjunction Christologies broke out anew, as was unavoidable from the perspective of the two-natures doctrine. Monothelitism was rejected because two voluntary capacities must belong to two natures. However, Dyothelitism thereby stood in acute danger of completely tearing apart Jesus’ unity, since an opposition of two wills was supposed to have taken place in Jesus himself. In the effort to avoid this consequence, the fathers of the Sixth Ecumenical Council proclaimed the determination of the human will in Christ by the almighty divine will. However, taken strictly, this excluded the independence of Jesus’ human voluntary capacity, which constituted the real core of the will according to Maximus the Confessor. Only through this independence (autexousion) of the human will, which is admittedly not expressly mentioned in the text, does a material antithesis exist between the Council and the Monothelites, who rejected such an independence of the human will because it would have signified splitting the unity of Christ.

32 Ebert, pp. 222 f. The dogmatic justification of this concern is also emphasized today by H. Vogel, Gott in Christo, p. 662; idem, Christologie, 1 (1949), 360 ff.

33 Denzinger, Enchiridion symbolorum, 536: Humanam voluntatem ... subiectam divinae eiusque omnipoensi voluntati.

34 Ebert, Der Auszug der altkirchlichen Christologie, pp. 258 f.; cf. pp. 244 f.

35 On the following, see A. M. Landgraf, Ddogmengeschichte der Frühchristiologie, Vol. II/1, pp. 70-137.

36 The dogma of the Incarnation was founded by Gilbert Porreta. It finally prevailed in the thirteenth century, and was also taken over by Thomas Aquinas (Summa theologica III, q. 96, art. 5). The “parts” of the human nature, namely, soul and body, were simultaneously taken on by the Logos and united by him; thus they have their common existence, their subsistence, in the Logos. In Christ, body and soul are united only by the Logos. Thus
only through the Logos did Christ become a human individual. However, this subsistence theory acquires an Alexandrian-Monophysite character, since all activity in the constitution of the human nature originates with the Logos. Is such a man whose body and soul are united by the Logos still a man like us? This question arises completely independently of the fact that such a separation of body and soul is today untenable. At other points in Thomas’ anthropology, the soul was the form of the body; thus the unifying of the body with the soul resulted from the soul’s own activity.

Thus Scholasticism was unable to achieve a solution to the Christological question on the basis of the idea of the incarnation, even though, in distinction to the patristic discussion, the question of Jesus’ human individuality stood explicitly in the field of view. Duns Scotus came closer than anyone else to a solution of this problem. He drew up his Christological theory not on the basis of the idea of the incarnation, but by beginning with a discussion of the concept of person in general. According to Duns Scotus, there resides in created personality the possibility for becoming person either in dedication to God or in rendering one’s self independent from God. While the latter possibility is realized in all other men, Jesus actualized being a person in dedication to God, so that the divine person became the element of his existence which was constitutive for his person. This solution retains a shadow of disjunction Christology only because it understands the dedication to God not as the dedication of Jesus to the Father, but in the pattern of the two-natures doctrine as dedication of Jesus’ human will to the divine will of the Logos. This was done instead of recognizing Jesus’ dedication to the Father as the basis for his identity with the Son or the Logos.

II. MUTUAL INTERPENETRATION OF THE NATURES AS A WAY TOWARD UNDERSTANDING THE UNITY OF CHRIST

From a very early date patristic exegesis was confronted with the fact that the New Testament writings on the one hand attribute divine glory to the man Jesus, especially to the resurrected Jesus, while on the other hand human imperfections are also attributed to the Son of God. This exegetical situation was bound to cause greater difficulties as the distinction between divinity and humanity in Christology was systematically carried out with the increasing recognition of the significance of Jesus’ full divinity and full humanity. On the other hand, this situation also pointed the way and rendered help in clarifying the systematic question of how the divine and the human in Christ could be united without damage to the distinctiveness of each. The solution seemed to be a mutual interpenetration of the two “natures,” through the indwelling of the one in the other and through a “communication of attributes” (communicatio idiomatum) based on this. Of course, from the beginnings of the formation of Christological doctrine the exaltation of the divine mission and glory was gladly set alongside the humility of Jesus’ human way. One thinks only of Mark 9:31; 10:33 ff. (the Son of Man in the hands of men); II Cor. 5:21 (the sinless one made to be sin), or the parabolical formulas of Ignatius. But apparently only after the Apollinarian controversy did anyone reflect upon the extent to which such an exchange of the divine and human attributes expressed the concrete unity of Christ’s life without detriment to the integrity of these two natures. This happened in contradiction to Apollinarius’ famous dictum that two things complete in themselves can form no unity.

A mutual interpenetration of divine and human attributes in Christ seemed necessary if any kind of unity of God and man were to exist in him. The Cappadocians in the fourth century still conceived this unity rather carelessly as a mixture. The term for mutual interpenetration (perichôrēsis) is, however, mentioned incidentally by Gregory of Nazianzenus. This term subsequently prevailed because it suggested less strongly the notion of a blending of the two natures to form a third. The Cappadocians explicitly strived to express the distinction between the two natures as well as their unity, but succeeded only in a series of figurative illustrations that later became famous. The divinity saturates Jesus’ humanity as fire makes iron glow, and the humanity dissolves itself in the divinity as a drop of vinegar in the infinite sea. The weakness of such figurative expressions is that they were open to completely opposing interpretations. Those who thought along Alexand-
dian lines thought primarily of the penetration of the human nature by the activity of the divine. So, later, John of Damascus spoke of a perichoresis of the natures whose movement runs from the divine to the human nature. On the other side, the Antiochene theologians allowed validity only to a communication of the attributes from both natures to the person common to them, but not to an exchange of attributes between the natures themselves. In order to justify this distinction, they refined to the greatest extent the Stoic ontology of nature, attributes, and hypostasis that had already been used by the Cappadocians. If the attributes in their totality form the hypostasis, the external appearance of the nature, then in Christ the external appearances of the divine and the human are united in a third, common external appearance. Because thereby no interpenetration of the natures themselves took place, but merely a community of the hypostases adjoined to the natures, Nestorius did not want to designate Mary as mother of God but only as mother of Christ. He wanted to affirm that the concrete, whole person Christ was born of a woman, but not that this had happened to the divine nature of the Son of God. It is unmistakable that the unity of God and man in Christ, about which Nestorius was so concerned, is thus called into doubt again.

We shall pass over the further history of the doctrine of the communicatio idiomatum in patristic literature and turn immediately to the controversies of the Reformation. The antithetical positions of the Reformers in the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper brought about a revival of the antithesis between Alexandrian and Antiochene Christology. The essential difference from the discussion of the fifth century was that in the Reformation the unity of person of God and man in Christ was presupposed as a result of the patristic dogmatic formation, while the community of the natures and the transfer of their peculiarities, whether to the other nature or to the entire person and his actions, became the object of controversy. In the fifth century the discussion of the communicatio idiomatum involved the question of what constituted the unity in Christ. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as already in high Scholasticism, the discussion involved the consequences of this unity as unity of person for the relation between the natures. Nevertheless, there is a certain parallel. In spite of the unity of person recognized by all the Reformers, problems and impasses arose on another plane analogous to those that had previously plagued Antiochene and Alexandrian theologians.

While Luther taught the real mutual interpenetration of the two natures and loved the figure of the glowing iron, Zwinglei saw in the communication of attributes a mere figure of speech: one can say things about the person that, strictly speaking, are true only for one of the two natures, but any such statement has only figurative sense, it is only a praedictio verbalis. Zwinglei said nothing of a real community between Christ’s divine and human natures lying at the basis of that figurative speech. The doctrinal antithesis over the Lord’s Supper results from this. For Zwinglei the body of the exalted Christ, like every human body, is spatially limited. If he is present at a particular place (in certo loco) in heaven since the ascension, he cannot be at the same time really present in the Lord’s Supper. Luther, on the other hand, ascribed to the exalted humanity of Christ full participation in the attributes of divine being including omnipresence, so that even after the ascension he is present on earth and can communicate his presence in the Lord’s Supper.

In distinction from Zwinglei, Calvin did not consider the communication of attributes a mere figure of speech. He found its basis in a real transfer of attributes of both natures to the person of the Mediator and to the mediating work or office he performed, but not in a direct exchange of attributes between the natures themselves. Melanchthon expressed himself similarly. In so doing, both followed the conceptions of high Scholasticism, while Luther united certain ideas of Ockham with the teaching of the Greek fathers. In Calvin, too, the understanding of the Lord’s Supper corresponds to the Christological position: although the body of the exalted Christ remains in heaven, the recipient of the Lord’s Supper has community with Christ through the Holy Spirit and thus spiritually with his body as well.

Within Lutheranism a controversy arose between Melanchthon’s disciples represented by Eber, Major, Crell, and Pezel and the stricter Württemberg

T. Clark, 1890), Vol. III, p. 214, rightly emphasizes that “Nestorianism” cannot be charged to Reformed Christology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries because here the unity of Christ’s person was completely recognized in agreement with the patristic councils.

43 On Theodore of Mopsuestia, cf. A. Grillmeier, Chalkedon, Vol. I, pp. 150 ff. Nestorius could even speak of a mutual perichoresis of Christ’s divine and human natures, though only with respect to their forms of appearance; cf. Grillmeier, Scholastik, XXXVI (1961), 351. Nestorius emphasized that the object of this “exchange” is to be found not in the natures themselves but only in their prosofa (ibid., p. 348). The latter united themselves in a single, higher prosofa (see above in text) while the natures themselves remained separate.


45 Here we have to take up primarily the antidosi idiomaton which Leontius of Byzantium developed in connection with his doctrine of the enhypostasis of Christ’s humanity in the Logos (see below, Chapter 9, Sec. II, 2).

46 Therefore, Isaac August Dorner, A System of Christian Doctrine (Edinburgh: T. &
Lutherans. Melanchthon’s disciple Martin Chemnitz attempted to mediate the dispute with the formula that the attributes cannot simply be disconnected from their natures so that they could transfer to another nature, but that nevertheless a real perichoresis of natures in the sense of the figure of fire and iron takes place.\(^9\) This thesis prepares the way for the Christology of the Formula of Concord (Solida declaratio [hereafter SD] VIII).

The Formula of Concord also took over from Chemnitz the famous and, for subsequent Lutheran theology, definitive, three genera of the communio idiomatum.\(^8\) First, according to the genus idiomatum affirmed also by Zwingli, what applies to one or the other nature can be asserted for the person as a whole. Second, the later so-called genus apostolasticum, which stands in the center of Calvin’s thinking, ascribed all actions, including the three offices, not to only one of the two natures, but to the person of the Mediator. Third, the so-called genus maieuticum defended the communication of divine attributes of majesty, as omnipresence, to the human nature itself. It is noteworthy that in this interpretation of the natures, the divine nature as the superior gives to the human nature a share in its attributes, but does not necessarily receive a share in the imperfections of the human nature (in the sense of a genus tapeinoticum). By the assumption of a communication of attributes between the natures themselves, or more precisely, from the divine to the human nature, the Lutherans separated themselves from the Reformed\(^1\) as well as from Roman Catholic Christology. The latter united and unites the natures only though the habitual grace flowing out of the donum unionis.\(^2\) This doctrine was replaced by the Lutherans with the

\(^\text{300}\)
linking up without ultimate unity. Such a juxtaposition is also the case when
the unity of person affects the relation between the natures only in such a
way that Jesus' humanity is joined to his divinity through gifts of created
grace.

One does not escape this dilemma by emphasizing as does Karl Barth "the
dynamic of the history" in which the human "became and is one with
the divine." Just such a dynamic of the incarnation event as is here intended
led the orthodox Lutheran dogmaticians to their doctrine of the penetration
of the human nature with the attributes of divinity. This is especially clear
when one considers the irreversibility of the movement from the divine to
the human nature, emphasized by Lutherans in dependence on John of
Damascus. Whatever may be the deficiencies of this Christological con-
ception, Barth's objection that orthodox Lutheran dogmaticians "abstracted"
from the incarnation event in order to concentrate instead on the "state"
of the human nature in its connectedness with the divine aims too low. The
concepts "static" and "dynamic" are not adequate to describe the problem
here present.

Since Barth conceives his own Christology on the basis of the incarnation,
he is not able to escape the dilemma. When he speaks of the communicatio
gratiarum (CD, IV/2, pp. 91-115), he revives an idea that was developed by
Scholasticism and taken over by orthodox Reformed dogmatists that originally
asserted a supplementary and thus external bond between two natures. To
be sure, Barth intends to say something more, namely, the "complete deter-
mination of Christ's human nature by God's grace" (p. 97). The enhypostasia
of the human nature of Jesus Christ in the Logos is, according to Barth, "the
esence and root of the whole of the divine grace given to him" (p. 100).
But that is now supposed to be "event and not state" (p. 110). What does
that mean? If without reference to this event there is still a separate condition
of the divine and the human natures taken by themselves, this formula moves
along the lines of the disjunction Christology. Barth's language of "event,"
corresponding to the category of the "moment" and similar formulations
in his commentary on Romans, must in fact be understood so punctualistically

83 K. Barth, CD, IV/2, p. 80. Here "history" (Geschichte) means nothing else than
the incarnation event, not the earthly historia of Jesus.
84 Ibid., p. 76, where Barth himself brings out that according to Quenstedt (Theologia
didactico-polemica [1685], III/3, sect. 2, q. 12 et al.), there is no reciprocatio of communica-
tion in the genus maiestaticum in distinction from the genus idiomatum, thus that a
communication of human attributes to the divine nature does not correspond to the
communication of divine attributes of majesty to the human nature.
85 Barth, CD, IV/2, pp. 79 f. It must be said of the rather bold connections that Barth
draws to the modern apotheosis of the human as such from the Lutheran communica-
tion of attributes (pp. 82 f.) that this apotheosis represents a virtual reversal of the direction
in which orthodox Lutheran dogmatists ordered its statements. The following quotations
in the text refer to Church Dogmatics, IV/2.

in the Prolegomena to the Church Dogmatics. If, however, as now seems to
be the case, the meaning of "event" is identical with "the life of Jesus Christ"
and thus includes a continuous temporal duration (p. 110), then it is not
clear where the difference between Barth's position and the unification Chris-
tology of the orthodox Lutheran communicatio idiomatum according to the
genus maiestaticum lies. Barth's emphasis upon the "dynamic" character of
the divine-human unity in Christ does not overcome the dilemma of the
orthodox doctrine of the communication of attributes; it avoids it.

Nor is this dilemma overcome by retreatting with Paul Althaus or Otto
Weber into the "paradoxical" character of the divine-human unity. As
long as Christology begins with the assertion of the incarnation in order to
attain by argument a theological understanding of the historical Jesus Christ
on that basis instead of moving in the opposite direction, the dilemma "dis-
junction Christology or unification Christology" cannot be avoided in the
problematic of the communication of attributes. The difficulties with the
communication of attributes result necessarily from this line of thought, whether
one faces them or not. "No trespassing" signs against "betrayal of the
mystery" (Althaus, p. 448) are of little help. The majority of patristic
theologians, with all respect for the mystery of the incarnation, would surely
have viewed as presumptuous a demand to stop trying to think through a
formulation like "incarnation," which after all only arose from thought about
Jesus, and to let it stand as a mystery. True respect for the mystery can
express itself, among other ways, just in the attempt to understand it fully.
In a certain sense, Althaus is surely right. "The antinomies and negation are
the signs of the truth of the old Christology. With both it protects the
mystery" (p. 447). It protected the mystery by means of antinomies and
negations where the content of Christology, because of the state of the dis-
cussion at the time, could not be positively and coherently expressed without
decisive abbreviations. But patristic theology was never satisfied with such
a situation. It continually made new efforts to transcend the embarrassment
of concrete imperfections in its understanding of that which had been laid
hold of in faith. Only after the attempt to transcend these imperfections may
one greet the difficulties that emerge on a new plane as a sign of the profound
mystery of Jesus' reality, which in spite of the most penetrating understanding
can never be so ultimately resolved that there would remain no reason for
further questioning. To retreat from the problems inescapably bound up with
a particular approach with the explanation that it has to do with a mystery means the abandonment of the effort given to theology to understand critically its own statements. The situation is similar in Otto Weber's critique of the Antiochene theologians who are otherwise quite close to his own position: "They could . . . not think in paradoxes" (p. 133; cf. p. 132). People who are prepared to refuse to continue thinking at specific points are hardly gifted in that particular art. Had the only issue been the "paradox," patristic Christology could have been satisfied with the formulas of Ignatius and saved itself the intellectual wear and tear of the following centuries.

The difficulties of the communication of attributes, as was the case with the doctrine of the unification of the true God with a truly human existence, are connected with the conception of the incarnation as an event that was concluded with the beginning of Jesus' historical existence. If this is true, since in this case—if the incarnation is understood strictly as unification—the character of Jesus' life as human in the sense of all other human lives becomes doubtful, the question arises whether these difficulties might be avoided by a different conception of the idea of incarnation. Could the incarnation perhaps be more appropriately conceived as a process continuing through Jesus' entire life and leading to ever closer unification with God? Thus in modern theology, I. A. Dorner attempted "to conceive the incarnation not as complete at once but as continuing, ever-growing, in that God as the Logos continually grasps and appropriates each new aspect that emerges from true human development, just as conversely the growing real receptivity of the humanly conscious and voluntarily unites with ever new aspects of the Logos."64 In support of such a conception, we might mention that the distinction between the conditions of humiliation and exaltation has hardly ever been wholly without influence upon the doctrine of the person of Christ. Just as one cannot separate Jesus' person from his work or office, neither can one separate it from his historical life, expressed in orthodox dogmatics through the distinction between the "states" of humiliation and exaltation. The uniqueness and identity of a person is not constituted by an abstract self-consciousness, even though it may be in relation to the conception of a Thou, but only by the particular character and unity of his life history.65

The exaltation of the resurrected Jesus, which Dorner certainly does not have foremost in mind, also means something new for the question about

the unity of God and man in Jesus Christ. That this unity only comes fully to expression in Jesus' exaltation formed something like a counterpoint to the incarnational theme in patristic theology. This was especially the case as long as the unity in Christ was sought in the penetration of the human by the divine and the hypostatic unity did not yet seem to reside in a different plane.66 Thus Athanasius understood the penetration of Jesus' humanity by the Logos as a process of becoming that was consummated only in his resurrection.67 Hilary apparently thought similarly that only at Jesus' resurrection was the doubleness of the divine and the human in him consummated in an ultimate unity.68 Gregory of Nyssa, too, saw the merging of the humanity of Jesus into God as consummated only in the exaltation of Christ.69 In tension with the incarnational theme, Cyril of Alexandria maintained the Athanasian judgment about Jesus' resurrection, especially in his understanding of Christ as the Second Adam, which grew out of his exegesis of Paul.70 Severus of Antioch also ascribed the glorification of Jesus' humanity by means of the attributes of the divine nature to Jesus' resurrection, true to the tradition and in opposition to Julian of Halicarnassus. He thought of this glorification as the fulfillment of the unification of the humanity with God, but explicitly not as a disappearance of the human nature.71 Even a theologian such as Theodore of Mopsuestia, who stood opposite to the tradition of Cyril,

64 To this extent Dorner, Christian Doctrine, Vol. III, § 102, p. 308, rightly distinguished, though too schematically, between the approach of pre-Chalcedonian Christology, which sought to attain "the unity of the God-human Ego as a result of the union of the Divine and human side in him," and that of later theologians, which was centered around the question of the possibility and uniqueness of Jesus' personality as a divine-human personality.

65 Contra Arian. III, 35: De incarnatione 1, 8 and 9. Cf. Dorner, History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, Vol. I/2, pp. 252 and 350 f., pp. 838 and 972. Dorner emphasizes this, p. 510, n. 55, against Baur, who considered only the theme of the incarnation and attributed to Arianus the concept of a complete deification of Jesus' humanity—which was then no longer like ours—already at his birth.

66 Hilary even says (De trin. 11, 40): Ut ante in se duos continens, nunc deus tamut sit (MPL 10, 425). However, it is probably questionable whether this formulation can be pressed to mean a renunciation of the human nature in the condition of the completion. Cf. Looij, Dogmengeschichtlicher, § 36, 7a, pp. 324 f.; also, Dorner, Person of Christ, Vol. I/2, pp. 415 ff.

67 See K. Holl, Amplification von Ikonioi, p. 229. Against W. Ebert, Der Ausgang der abkirchlichen Christologie, p. 52, it is not correct to attribute a laying off of the human nature at the consummation to Gregory of Nyssa, but one must rather understand his idea in terms of the consummation of the unification of humanity with God. Dorner, Person of Christ, Vol. I/2, pp. 530, n. 69, calls attention to the fact that Gregory in Antirhetik, c. 57 brought out the progressive character of the deification of the human nature, as a process that reached its goal only at Jesus' resurrection, as an argument against Apollinaris.

68 On this, see R. Wilken, "Homo Futsrus: A Study in the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria" (Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1963). Perhaps one will also be able to interpret the activity of the Logos as ekopoisis, as is presented by Grillmeier (in Chalcedon, Vol. I, p. 174), bearing in mind the connection with the life that has appeared through Jesus' resurrection and not just in the light of the incarnation and mediatiorship of creation.

69 This has been shown by J. Lebon in his studies of Severus' Monophysism. Cf. his contribution to Chalcedon, Vol. I, pp. 425-590, esp. 559 ff.
asserted an increasingly intense indwelling of the Logos in Jesus, which was consummated only at his resurrection.86

Theodore of Mopsuestia makes clear that the concept of a gradual incarnation as such is not capable of making understandable Jesus' unity as person—and thus in the whole of his life—with the divinity. If one follows this conception, Jesus could be one with God at most at the end of his life and thus not in the totality of his person. Then unity with God would be achieved only by the disappearance of that which established his distinctness from God at the beginning of his life. If one recognizes this as a wrong path, it is clear that it is not without reason that in the other aforementioned theologians, the incarnation as an act establishing the beginning of Jesus' life stands in a certain tension to the concept of the consummation of Jesus through the resurrection and exaltation. That which is supposed to be consummated only in Jesus' resurrection has, according to this position, already happened in the incarnation. Logically, these two ideas are hardly reconcilable. But their juxtaposition means that any Christological theory that attempts to find a better solution to this problem must take both elements into consideration. If for the understanding of Jesus' person one neglects the fact that Jesus was completed only at the resurrection, one arrives at a theory of the incarnation that bypasses the real humanity of Jesus. But if one tries to interpret Jesus' unity with God as a process consummated only in the resurrection, one easily loses sight of the necessity for asserting the unity with God of the entire person of Christ, which subsists in just this unity.

Dorner also did not succeed in uniting both points of view. He wanted to conceive the divine-human unity as realized only in a process, but at the same time he emphasized in the final form of his theory—in a distinction modifying its initial form—that in the course of Jesus' human development there never appeared an aspect of human life that was not immediately also united with God. The unity of God with this man and of this man with God was not yet conscious at first, but only because generally consciousness and self-consciousness develop only gradually in men. Nonetheless, in another way divine being could “weave and work even in the beginnings of this human child.”87 Unity with God then also took place increasingly in Jesus' consciousness in proportion to his mental development. "If this is the case, in no moment is there something human in Christ that the divinity had not assumed in order to satisfy his receptivity in the degree to which it was present at any particular time, and so there is no moment in Jesus' life that does not possess divine-human character" (p. 439). Therefore, Dorner could say that the divine-human unity is neither to be conceived as complete from the beginning onward, nor is it to be placed only at a later point in the course of Jesus' life (p. 434). But in his own theory, is that preconscious working of God in Jesus already full divine-human unity? If so, then Dorner's theory is not in principle new over against the older incarnation theories that see the divine-human unity consummated at the beginning of Jesus' life. If Jesus' full unity with God is only attained at the stage of its conscious execution, it did not exist in the true sense at the beginning. Dorner surely had the intention of transcending this dilemma, but his theory does not really open up a way for doing so.

The outline of Christology here proposed shares with Dorner the interest in the becoming of the divine-human unity in Jesus' earthly life (although more in the sense of the old doctrine of states than in Dorner's views about the divine-human self-consciousness of Jesus), but it is distinguished from Dorner in understanding the legitimating meaning of Jesus' resurrection with its inherent retroactive power (see above, Chapter 3, Sec. II, pp. 67 f., and Chapter 4, Sec. II, pp. 134 f.) as the pivotal point for the knowledge of Jesus' person. This makes it possible to evaluate properly the fact that in the history of traditions only Jesus' resurrection is the point of departure for the recognition of his unity with God. On the other hand, however, the retroactive meaning of the resurrection as the confirmation of Jesus' pre-Easter activity and claim makes it possible to conceive what is true from the perspective of the resurrection as true for the totality of Jesus' person from the beginning onward. The retroactive meaning of Jesus' resurrection as divine confirmation of his previous activity and claim thus overcomes the dilemma between a unity with God either already consummated in the beginning or only realized through a subsequent event in Jesus' life. The assertion of the incarnation is thus not to be exclusively related to the beginning of Jesus' life nor only to a subsequent event, but to the whole of the life and the person of Jesus as both come into view in the light of his resurrection. Admittedly, this raises once more the question of how the beginning of Jesus' life is to be connected with the divinity of his person perceived in the light of the resurrection. This leads us to the problem of the kenosis.


A way out of the antinomies of the incarnational doctrine and of the communication of attributes seemed to be opened in orthodox Lutheran dogmatics by the idea of Christ's self-emptying and in a different way in the neo-conservative Lutheran dogmatics of the nineteenth century. Following Phil. 2:7, the concept of the kenosis (self-emptying) of the divine Logos had played a role in patristic Christology, but exercised no determining influence in any

of the Christological conceptions. As Loofs has shown, Origen, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine, and others who connected Phil. 2:7 to the coming of the Logos in the flesh meant by the term "self-emptying" (kenosis, exinanitio) the assumption of human nature, but not the complete or partial relinquishment of the divine nature or its attributes.88 Nor did Hilary, whom Thomasius in the nineteenth century claimed as chief witness for his theory, intend any "relinquishment of the forma dei on the part of the Logos" when he said: Evacuavit se ex forma dei. Rather he expressed thereby only the mode in which the Logos who rules everywhere was in Jesus.89 Because patristic theology was most concerned about the true divinity of Christ for the sake of its understanding of redemption, any relinquishing of divine attributes by the Logos at the incarnation had to be remote from its thought.

This was still the case with the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Lutheran theologians who for the first time saw the key to Christological difficulties in the concept of the Christ's self-emptying. They also did not think of a voluntary relinquishment of divinity in the incarnation. But by connecting Phil. 2:7 to the Logos after it had already become flesh, they were concerned about the way in which the unity with the divine nature was effective in the concrete, human existence of Jesus after the incarnation. Self-emptying and humiliation—these terms seemed to hold back the fatal consequences of the realistic communication of attributes. They seemed to maintain Jesus' real humanity without doctic abridgment in spite of the provision of Jesus' human nature with the divine attributes of majesty. But the concept of self-emptying itself broke apart into contradictory theories.

The Tübingen theologians under the leadership of Johann Brenz assumed that Jesus Christ had not only possessed the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence in his humanity from his birth onward, but also that he had actually used them in acting as a human being, although not publicly. In opposition to this theory of a mere concealment (kryptsis), Martin Chemnitz21 ascribed possession of the divine attributes of majesty to Christ's human nature, but spoke of a partial refusal to use them during Jesus' earthly life. The Formula of Concord did not decide between the two conceptions but formulated alternately, using first one and then the other. Thus in 1619 conflict broke out again over the unresolved question. The Giessen theologians took their positions against the Tübingen heirs of Brenz's ideas. The controversy was ended in 1624 by the deciso Saxonica, following essentially the Giessen conception in rejecting a mere concealment (kryptsis) of the possession and use of the divine attributes of majesty in Jesus' human nature during his earthly life and affirming a real renunciation (kenosis) of their use in the state of humiliation.83 As a consequence of the conception of the Giessen theologians, the distinction between the two states of humiliation and exaltation with regard to the participation of the human in the divine nature was thrown into sharp relief.

This conflict involved, as already mentioned, only the exaltation and humiliation of Christ according to his human nature, not a humiliation and self-emptying of the Son of God himself. It involved the concept that the divine attributes of majesty communicated to Jesus' human nature at the incarnation were kept hidden during Jesus' earthly life or even remained latent, in any case were not really used. In this way, the tendency of the doctrine of real communication of attributes was retarded. A place was made for concrete human life in spite of the communication of divine attributes of majesty to Jesus' humanity. Jesus' glorification, which supposedly had to be connected with his birth because of the doctrine of incarnation, could be returned to its rightful place, to Jesus' exaltation, by means of the doctrine of self-emptying. But the God-man of this Christology who merely declined to use his glory remained a sort of fabulous being, more like a mythical redeemer than the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth.

As we have seen, the antitheses between disjunction Christology and unification theology appeared again within the doctrine of self-emptying.74 The Tübingen theologians maintained without reservation the Lutheran conception of the unity of divinity and humanity in mutual interpenetration. However, by the assumption of a mere concealment of the divine glory by Jesus during his earthly life, they threatened the reality of his historical human existence. The Giessen theologians were right in countering that in this way Jesus' earthly life was transformed into a series of pseudodeeds. The Giessen theologians were not open to such criticism. They, however, threatened the vital unity of the person. For a general renunciation of the use of the divine attributes of majesty by Jesus' humanity during his earthly life excluded a full living unity of the human with his divine nature. Both natures existed side by side, without a vital unity. If the Logos had exercised his rule of the world during the time of Jesus' earthly life apart from his unity with the man Jesus, then the unity of person was broken. The Giessen theologians thus found themselves confronted by the old argument: separate activities require separate persons.75

90 J. Brenz, De divina maiestate Domini nostri Jesu Christi (1562).
91 M. Chemnitz, De dua bus naturi in Christo (1570).
92 Chemnitz' ideas are followed, for example, by SD VIII, § 26 and § 65; Brenz's ideas by SD VIII, § 73 and § 75.

74 This was also seen by Thomasius, Christi Person und Werk, Vol. I, pp. 604 ff. See also the discussion of the origin of the argument in the Monophysite polemic against the Dyophysite Christology,
The renewal of the kenosis doctrine in the nineteenth century76 attempted to avoid these traps. Here it is not the God-man who humiliates himself, not the incarnate Logos, but the divine Logos himself. Thereby connection was made with the most widely held exegesis of Phil. 2:7 in the patristic church. But now the self-emptying of the Logos at the incarnation was no longer understood in the merely moral sense of a humble bending down to humanity, imparting to it unification with God. Rather, a physical self-limitation of the Logos in his divinity was conceived. It was supposed that this idea would harmonize the old Christological dogma with the modern, historical picture of the life of Jesus in his mere humanity.

This conception was first presented by Sartori in 1831. Thomasius developed it fully after 1845 when he first defended the self-limitation of the Logos in the incarnation. Through Thomasius the kenosis doctrine became a part of the neo-Lutheran Erlangen theology. With individual modifications, it appeared in the work of von Hofmann, Frank, and Gess.

Thomasius saw the solution for the difficulties of Christology in the assumption of a "self-limitation of the divine"77 in the incarnation. At the incarnation, the Son gave up the relative attributes of divinity, that is, those which characterize the relation of God to the world: omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence. He retained only the immanent perfections proper to God independent of his relation to the world: holiness, power, truth, and love. Critics have called attention to the fact that just the so-called relative attributes, according to Thomasius given up by the Son for the time of his humiliation, are the really divine attributes. To be sure, they involve God's relation to the world, but that is also true of the incarnation. Therefore, the full divinity of Jesus is not saved by the idea of God's freedom and love, which determine his absolute nature above all in his relation to the world, find their perfect expression in the act of self-emptying (p. 412). Thomasius believed that in this way he had avoided an "abandonment of the divine essence or life" (pp. 444 ff.). If the earthly Jesus was "neither almighty, nor all-knowing, nor omnipresent" (p. 471), then it is "because he did not want to be" (p. 472). Yet apart from the question of how he rules the world as the Logos in the meantime, the opposite objection immediately arises here: a man on whose will it depends to be almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent would be "simply an apparent man, not a real man."78 Therefore, it caused later representatives of kenosis such as Gess to take the further step of interpreting the incarnation as a transformation of the Logos into a human soul. In this Thomasius saw an "abandonment of his divinity" (pp. 443 ff.). His own doctrine remained behind the real humanity of the historical Jesus, in spite of every attempt to make room for the idea of a gradually developing of his consciousness of Sonship (pp. 465 ff.); nevertheless he also did not achieve the concept of Jesus' full divinity.

The claim of this neoconservative theology to represent the true tradition of the church was quickly shaken. I. A. Dorner especially, following his essays about "God's Unchangeability,"79 attacked the kenotic Christology very sharply. Attention was rightly called to the explicit rejection in the Formula of Concord of the conception of self-emptying as relinquishment of the eternal Logos himself of his divine glory. Through this "the way [is] prepared for the condemned Arian heresy, which finally denied Christ's eternal divinity and thus lost both Christ and our salvation."80 That is in fact the danger, less so of the Calvinistic and Philippist opponents of the Formula of Concord, but surely of the doctrine of kenosis. Relinquishment of the "relative" divine attributes results in a "relative de-deification" of Christ.81 The vere homo is achieved only proportionately to subtractions from the vere deus. An incarnation thus understood as incapacitation of the Son necessarily draws the doctrine of the Trinity into difficulties as well. Is not the Son, who had given up his relative divine attributes in the flesh, excluded from the Trinity for this period, since during his humiliation he was apparently not equally God with the Father and the Spirit?

A self-limitation of the divinity at the incarnation results in a transformation in the Trinity. Therefore, the idea of God's unchangeability played an important role in the rejection of a kenosis of the Logos both in orthodox Protestantism82 and in the nineteenth century. Dorner fought the kenosis doctrine by means of an inquiry into God's unchangeability. Against Dorner one can stress the problem of the idea of God's unchangeability itself, which has often enough had fatal consequences in theology. The God of the Bible is ever the same "in his unshakable faithfulness," but not unchangeable in the sense of a "static neutrality." Nonetheless, Otto Weber83 cannot save the modern kenosis doctrine with this justified critique of the concept of God's

77 On this, see E. Günther, Die Entwicklung, pp. 165-200.
78 Thomasius, Christi Person und Werk, p. 608. The following page references in the text are to Vol. I of the 3d ed. of this work.
unchangeability. Beyond the question of whether God’s sameness is to be conceived “statically” or in the historical sense of faithfulness to himself, there remains the question whether in the denial of a self-emptying of God at the incarnation the term *immutabilitas* did not express primarily the concern for the sameness of God as such. Of course, on the basis of Jesus’ unity with God revealed and confirmed in his resurrection, one can say of Jesus’ life that God has humiliated himself by uniting himself with the life of humanity perverted by sin and death. But even in self-humiliation he did not cease to be himself. Attributes essential to his divinity cannot be absent even in his humiliation unless the humiliated were no longer God. But if they were present in Jesus, then the unity of the divine with the human in him remains as incomprehensible as ever.

Even the kenotic Christology of the nineteenth century was thus unable to overcome the fundamental difficulty of an incarnational Christology. It, too, could only conceive the humanity of Jesus, bound to a limited space, limited in power and knowledge, to the degree it ignored his divinity.

In spite of the crushing critique experienced by the kenotic theories and even though their foundation, the relinquishment of a part of the divine attributes, has been generally rejected, certain aspects of the conception have held on with astounding tenacity. Paul Althaus, in spite of all his criticism of the kenotic theologians, nonetheless adopts their main idea: “Incarnation is a ‘self-emptying’ of God. Thereby, God comes into contradiction with his majesty, but does so precisely in the power of his divinity.” Althaus, too, takes exception to the systematic presupposition of the kenotic theories, that “not the entire divinity has entered the man Jesus” (ibid., p. 1784). What does it then mean to say that with the incarnation God comes into contradiction with his majesty? The expression “contradiction” is meaningful only if there were not just a mere self-limitation but a total disappearance of the divine majesty. Or is this just a rhetorically exaggerated expression for the humility of the unification of God (in complete majesty) in Jesus with humanity, which exists in contradiction to him? If so, the dialectical language obscures the problem of how such unification is to be conceived. This is the fundamental problem of Christology.

The express kenotic conception that the Creation was an act of condescension and self-limitation of God the Father is represented today by Peter Brunner. Karl Barth has spoken in his doctrine of creation of the condescension of the Creator without kenotic overtones (*CD*, III/1, pp. 436 ff.). In his Christology, Barth treated the condescension of God in the incarnation in the thoroughly patristic sense of the compromising community with men into which he entered (*CD*, IV/1, pp. 172 f.). Barth not only emphasized thereby that God could not cease to be God (p. 173), but also convincingly criticized the idea that God thus brought himself into self-contradiction (pp. 201 f.). “He appropriates unto himself the being of man in contradiction to himself; but he does not share that contradiction” (p. 202). Nevertheless, some of Barth’s formulations that sound kenotic in spite of all stipulations veil the insoluble problems of an incarnational Christology constructed “from above to below.” To say of God, “He chooses condescension. He chooses humiliation, humbleness, obedience” does not show how it is thinkable that “the one true God” now “is identical with the existence of the humiliated, humble, obedient man Jesus of Nazareth” (p. 217). On what basis does theology accept responsibility for such assertions? How can the presence of the one true God in Jesus of Nazareth be expressed in such a way that this man at the same time remains understandable in his humanity and one with God in the totality of his existence? The humble course of the life of this man is surely not as such that of God. Barth views it as the consequence of an all too human concept of God when one thinks that it is irreconcilable with the divine nature that God “in full unity with himself” becomes creature also, enters into “our being in contradiction” (p. 203). It is surely correct that we have “to re-form completely” our conceptions of God’s being in the light of Jesus Christ, namely, “in view of the fact that he (God) does something like that” (ibid.). But even Barth distinguishes between God and man in Christ. He also cannot avoid the question of how both can be united in Christ. In his *Church Dogmatics* (IV/2, pp. 42-79), he treats thematically the “Event of the Incarnation.” As in his early works, he calls attention to the “irreconcilability” (p. 65) of divine and human being. That God has in Christ nonetheless taken up into unity with himself and his being as God a human being (p. 44) is for Barth here also “the deed of his divine power and divine mercy grounded exclusively in his freedom, in his free love toward the world” (p. 43), which in turn is described as condescension, as “God’s humbling himself” (p. 45), as “humble work” and therefore as work of the Son (p. 47). “God’s humble work accomplished in his Son is the sole ground of this event” (pp. 49 f.). The question of how the togetherness, the unity

84 Of course, these similarities are of a more superficial nature and the corresponding ideas in Barth belong to a different and original conceptual context. This conceptual context is determined by the idea of the humiliation of the Son of God, which at the same time is the exaltation of man (*CD*, IV/2, pp. 99 f., 105 f.). Thus Barth knows of no temporal succession of the two “states” of humiliation and exaltation (*CD*, IV/1, pp. 132 f.). As we have seen, Jesus’ resurrection is only the “revelation” of his history, which was consummated on the cross (*CD*, IV/2, pp. 122 f., 140 f.). The exaltation of man occurs already through the incarnation; it is just hidden until the resurrection. To this extent Barth’s conception has similarities to the old Tübingen *kraus* doctrine, except that in Barth the exaltation of man is conversely the humiliation of the Son of God—and this latter connect Barth with the nineteenth century Erlangen kenosius theologians.

85 P. Althaus, RGG (3d cd.), I, 1783, art. “Christologie III.” Here Althaus gives his own position a stronger kenotic emphasis, above all in the expression “God came into contradiction with himself,” than is the case in his dogmatics (*Die christliche Wehrheit*, pp. 452 f.).

of God and man in this man, is comprehensible without exploding the unity of this man's life is not discussed even when this unity as such becomes the explicit theme (pp. 64 ff.). Instead, Barth only refers once more to that deed of God (p. 67). This corresponds to the fact that Barth introduces the unity of God and man in Christ as a "deduction" (p. 65) from the statement about the humble deed of God's condensation and the resulting existence of God in the human being. We can hardly understand this other than that precisely the reference to the humble deed of God's condensation is Barth's answer to the question about the unity of God and man in Christ.

But how can God become one with man through this act in such a way that both remain distinguished but still form the vital unity of a single person? Is such unity understandable on the basis of God's humble deed? Can it simultaneously make room for man's particular character over against God and consummate his unity with God? Has Barth given any answer at all to the core question of the whole Christological tradition, the question of the living unity of God and man in Christ with continuing differentiation of the two? The descriptions of the determination of the divine nature toward the human and of the latter from the divine nature (CD, IV/2, pp. 74 ff.) appear as a "conclusion" (p. 74) from the statement of the unification of God and man in Christ. Similarly, the subsequent discussion of the two-sided "communication" of the divine and human being, of the communicatio gnostiurum and the communicatio operationum, which unfold the statement of the determination of human nature by the divine, corresponds to the doctrine of the effects of the hypostatic union (p. 79) and thus already presupposes this. For Barth the unity in Christ seems to consist only in the "deed," in the "history," in the "event" of that humble condensation which takes on and determines the humanity of Jesus and thereby humanity in general. It is surely understandable that by the act of God's condensation he respects man's particularity and elects him to community with himself. It is also understandable that Jesus as the humble man to a certain extent participates in God's own act of humility. But is such functional community personal unity?

Barth's failure to answer the question of the understanding of the personal unity of God and man in Christ, the central question of the Christological tradition, is veiled by the kenotic appearance of the language about the humble condensation of God. It is as though the transition from God to man and—since in this movement does not cease to be God—the binding of man to God lay in this movement, in God's transition from his divinity to the human being, that is "incompatible" with the divine. But the transition to the reality of man that is different from God through the act of divine humility would only be really accomplished if this movement were understood kenotically as God's giving up of himself. Barth has repeatedly and rightly rejected this. With God's act of giving up himself, the unity of God and man is immediately lost again. As Barth has seen, God would then no longer be Lord over the contradiction and his entry into what is foreign would no longer be the reconciliation of the contradiction (CD, IV/1, p. 202). Does not this situation show once more that the way "from above to below," even though it be God's own way to unity with Jesus of Nazareth, cannot be the path of our knowledge of this unity? Should not we who are "below" rather attempt here below to make this path of God apparent from its end in the historical life of Jesus?

Heinrich Vogel's Christology boldly avoids the problem of kenosis by representing it as a merely special aspect of substitution. The understanding of the incarnation as paradoxical identity of the otherwise unbridgeable contradiction between the eternal God and sinful man, stated by Kierkegaard and especially developed by Barth, is carried to its last extreme by Vogel's idea of substitution. Even Vogel's introductory discussion of the concept of God's incarnation leads to the idea of substitution, which is not supposed to explain the incarnation but to state it as a mystery (p. 664). Jesus Christ's humanity is then defined in every detail as the humanity of God who took our place by becoming man (pp. 652-673). A distinction results between actual humanity whose place God takes by uniting himself with Jesus and true humanity as united with God in Jesus. In particular, the completeness of Jesus' humanity becomes understandable as the totality of the substitution (pp. 659 ff.). The concept of substitution also demands that Christology begin with Christ's humanity because God is encountered in our place, i.e., as man. Jesus' divinity can be perceived only hidden under his real humanity (pp. 674 ff.), namely, from the fact that the man Jesus claimed it for himself, that this claim is reflected in the confession of men to him and—also decisive for Vogel—that it was confirmed through Jesus' resurrection by God the Father.

88 H. Vogel, Christologie, I (1949). So far Vogel has offered the entire outline of his position only in a short version in his dogmatics, Gott in Christo; we follow the latter in our discussion. Chapter 7, "Das Werk des Sohnes," pp. 601-802, is unfolded in five sections. The central and most important, Sec. III, "The Person," pp. 624-709, follows the two introductory sections, I: "The Question" and II: "The Name." Here Vogel discusses, first, God's incarnation, and second, the mediator. The latter section is subdivided into three parts, treating the humanity, divinity, and divine-humanity of the mediator. This order suggests a Christology "from below," which is, however, built into the context of the pattern of the incarnation moving from above to below. There follows then the treatment of the old doctrine of states, IV: "The Way," and of soteriology, V: "The Work." The page references that follow in the text refer to Vogel's dogmatics.
himself. Here one has to recognize God's essence (Jesus' essential divinity), as (already treated on pp. 664-673) the true essence of this man (Jesus' true humanity), as well as ultimately the unity of God and man in him (pp. 691-709). Vogel intends to designate this unity with the concept of substitution (pp. 694 ff.). "If substitution ... really asserts not just an exchange of places in an external sense, but that the one lives the life of the other, dies the death of the other, becomes guilty of the other's guilt, if substitution really asserts in the strict sense the existential penetration of the one into the existence of the other, then it may not be conceived in the dualism of a divine and a human person merely connected in one existence" (pp. 696 f.). Clearly, on this basis, the problem of the self-emptying has already been overcome. The doctrine of self-emptying becomes a mere footnote to the concept of substitution. Thus Vogel defines his own position in sharp opposition not only to the orthodox Protestant kenosis doctrine (pp. 715 f.) but to the modern, nineteenth-century version as well (pp. 718 f.). He does this because the kenosis doctrine was intensely concerned about saving Jesus' human self-consciousness and as a consequence had to sacrifice his divinity. In contrast, Vogel thinks that in the event of substitution, Jesus' full humanity is preserved in every respect precisely by virtue of the divine act.

At first glance, the concept of substitution may in fact appear to be the saving word for the difficulties of the incarnational doctrine. It is true that one can share the troubles or incurred guilt of another, or even bear them in his place, without losing one's own identity. This is only the case, however, because one does not simply become the other, but takes the other's existence on oneself and precisely in this remains distinguished from that other person. Thus it is questionable whether the concept of substitution can perform the task Vogel's Christology expects of it. If we inquire about its appropriateness to Jesus' historical reality, we cannot disagree that—insofar as Jesus suffered in our place—God himself suffered in our place, as we are able to say from the perspective of Jesus' resurrection because of his unity with God revealed there. Nonetheless, to extend this idea to the whole course of Jesus' existence is problematic. It is highly questionable whether everything that Jesus did was done in our place. Would this not evaporate into an abstraction the unmistakable uniqueness of his historical figure, which surely does not consist exclusively in the total substitution as such? But even if we would concede the extension of the substitutionary concept to the whole of the existence of Jesus Christ, the concept of substitution cannot express the unity of God and man and still preserve intact their respective particularities. How could a man who knew himself to be God, who interceded in our place, still be man as we are? Knowledge of the limit of one's own existence in the open question about the God who is infinitely different from man because of that limit belongs essentially to being human. If Jesus is man in this sense, however, how could this being human be thought of as the result of an act of divine substitution, establishing his existence without this substitution being necessarily understood as at least a partial self-denial on God's part, with all its consequences that Vogel realizes so clearly as "a God who in his revelation ceases to be God" (p. 719)? The concept of substitution merely obscures the problem of self-denial in the act of self-emptying. It does not really embrace the distinctions in such a way that God and man as different are one in Jesus Christ. The self-identity of the one who substitutes rests only on the fact that he never is radically identified with the other whom he represents. For this reason, the extension of the concept of substitution to the Christological problem necessarily hides the radical nature of the difference that is here held together to form a unity. This consequence is contrary to Vogel's own intention, which is directed just toward the radicality of this difference. The failure of the concept lies in the limits of the idea of substitution itself. It is not able to solve the problem of the kenosis because it falls short of the task confronting the kenotic theories and the problem of the incarnational doctrine in general.

Karl Rahner also has attempted to comprehend the incarnation of God from the perspective of his giving of himself. This self-giving in Rahner certainly involves a line from below: the open transcendence of man to God's absolute being that constitutes the particular structure of being human as such and comes to fulfillment in the event of the incarnation of God in man. Rahner sees the basis for characterizing the incarnation from God's side as his self-emptying in the fact that incarnation means a becoming for God, but that a becoming of the unchangeable God cannot take place in himself but only "in the other." Thus, something other than God must first be produced in order for God to become something in this other. This production of the other means first of all that God empties himself. But at the same time he is precisely in this way connected with this other as the result of his self-emptying. Because Rahner sees this dialectic of self-differentiation that implies at the same time both difference and unity within the difference, the term "self-emptying" in his thought signifies no threat to God's identity. On the
other side, and for just this reason, the radicality of real self-giving is not attributed to this self-emptying. We will see subsequently that this comprises the problem of Rahner’s position.

In the first place, Rahner’s concept of self-emptying, similar in content to Barth’s conception, is superior to all other usage of the term today because of the conceptual clarity in his dialectic of self-differentiation. Apparently, the Hegelian dialectic of the concept, to be identical with itself in the other, is in the background of Rahner’s formulations. Thus, he says of God’s activity as Creator, “He constitutes the differentiation to himself by retaining it as his and, conversely, because he truly wants to have the other as his own, he constitutes it in its genuine reality” (p. 148). This means that God remains himself precisely in the other, but also that he becomes something, thus “that God establishes the other as his own reality precisely by emptying himself, giving himself away through this” (p. 148). God, however, is not always absolutely identical with himself in the other that he has distinguished from himself. This is true in Hegel’s sense only of the immanent Trinity, and Rahner’s presentation attains first only God’s inner-Trinitarian self-differentiation (to follow for the moment this way of thinking),92 not, however, the concept of incarnation. Where the direction becomes radical—as is the case with the emergence of finite creatures—the other identity of creaturely reality is no longer absolutely God’s own reality. It is, of course, possible, from the human point of view, that he may perceive himself in his creature as its Creator, but that is something other than an identity of the creature with God himself. Of course, Rahner knows this also. The decisive question, however, is how “the other” established by God, after it has once become radically other over against God in creation, can again be united to God, reconciled with God. In order to answer this question, Hegel had to go through the whole of intellectual and religious history, thus the history of the elevation of man to God—in Hegel’s language: the open transcendence of man to the absolute being—and even then his answer turned out to be inadequate because he had smeared over the distinction between God and creation by means of the concept of the Spirit. When Rahner jumps directly from God’s “being with himself in the other” to God’s unity with the “other” in the figure of the man in the act of the incarnation, he avoids the abyss of the distinction between God and creature, which the incarnation must bridge. To the extent that it shows how God can be one with himself in the other, the dialectic of self-differentiation forms an important aid to the understanding of the incarnation. It does not yet show, however, how God can be one with what is distinguished from him, provided that this difference is to be taken seriously. Thus, from the perspective of the concept of God’s self-emptying in the sense of the dialectic of self-differentiation, Rahner is not yet in a position to conceive the incarnation. On the other hand, the idea of the openness of man to God stands remarkably unrelated, though convergent, alongside this train of thought. The theory of the incarnation, however, must involve the connection of the two points of view. Can one attribute more than metaphorical truth to the concept of God’s self-emptying? Is it more than an expression for the relation of Jesus’ historical reality to God gathered from that historical reality itself, if one wants to avoid Hegel’s attempt to contain God in the concept and prefers to speak with Rahner about the divine mystery, always superior to every penetration by means of our thought?

All modern continuations of the nineteenth-century kenosis have emphatically excluded even a partial renunciation by God of his divinity, of definite divine attributes, in the execution of the self-emptying. Thereby the idea of self-emptying loses the radicality of self-relinquishment. This became clear once more in the case of Rahner. Only by means of this element, however, did the later kenotic theologians such as Gess arrive finally, by way of the divine self-emptying, at the existence of the historical man Jesus of Nazareth, who was really differentiated from God. The merit of the kenotic theology of the last century consists in its at least approximate grasp of the depth of this difference bridged in the incarnation. With this, certainly, the problem of the entire conception also becomes apparent. It can connect Jesus’ historical human existence with the traditional Christology only by the concept of a self-relinquishment of the Logos; but in so doing it loses the possibility of conceiving God as one with this historical man.

If God’s self-humiliation to unity with a man is conceived only as manifestation of the divine glory93 and not as sacrifice of essential elements of the divine being, this expression does not help make the full humanity of Jesus in the incarnation intelligible; for then Jesus would remain an almighty, omnipiscient, omnipresent man, even though he humbly hides his glory. Or he remains a dual being with two faces in which divine majesty and human lowliness live and work parallel to one another, but without living unity with one another. A human consciousness of Jesus is unthinkable in propor-

92 In our judgment, Hegel’s idea of God as the absolute concept or absolute subject, who both lives in himself and produces the world through the dialectic of his self-differentiation, can also have only the value of a parable that is not adequate to the mystery of the divine reality. This is true, since the activity of grasping which includes both the act of differentiation and the synthesis of what is differentiated, like the analogous structure of the self-assertion of the ego in dedication to that which is differentiated from it, always presupposes the reality of an other which the ego and the concept take possession of through the dialectic of self-differentiation—which only comes into play in response to this external stimulus. The self-differentiation of the ego (or of the concept) occurs in the circle of our experience neither in self-satisfied subjectivity (as would have to be presupposed for God’s inner-Trinitarian life if the latter were to be appropriately described by means of this conceptuality), nor is it creative in the strict sense of a creatio ex nihilo (rather only in the sense of a transcending of the other which is thereby presupposed). Therefore, as Hegel unfortunately did not see, the value of these categories as explanations applied to God is limited.

tion to the degree that a living unity is affirmed. Thus Monophysitism on the one hand and the alternative of disjunctive Christology on the other remains the grievous dilemma. One can attain the goal of kenotic Christology, preservation of Jesus' humanity, only at the price that Geß had to pay for it: at the price of God's identity. But if God remains the same, he is still God even in the deepest humiliation, and the question remains unsolved as to how he can at the same time and in unity with his divinity be a man as we are.

Of course, the problem of the kenotic theologians—how the divinity of the Logos existing from all eternity could be united with the man Jesus without dissolving the humanity of his life in the divinity—is still there. Even though we cannot describe this unity from "above," from God's perspective, but only \textit{a posteriori}, from the perspective of Jesus' human history, it is still necessary to inquire into the conditions under which Jesus' unity with God (see above, Chapter 4, Sec. I, 5; also Sec. II; below, Chapter 9) as the "incarnation" of God is compatible with our understanding of God in general. The first of these conditions is that God in all his eternal identity is still to be understood as a God who is alive in himself, who can become something and precisely so doing remain true to himself and the same. The discussions of God's self-emptying have contributed to this insight. This has been expressed especially clearly by Rahner. However, God's becoming and his sameness in so doing remain true to himself and the same. The change cannot be held remote from God's inner being. But this does not necessarily affect his identity. To be sure, such identity can be conceived together with a becoming in God himself only if time and eternity are not mutually exclusive. This is the critical point for the question of God's sameness if one may reject the idea of a purely conceptual, timeless becoming as a mere chimera. In the context of Christology the problems of the relation between time and eternity cannot be discussed in great detail. Perhaps, however, it is possible to conceive eternity in the Augustinian tradition, which is at this point un-Platonic. Then the presence of eternity is to be thought of as included in itself and uniting what is separated in the succession of temporal events.  

The act of the incarnation as a new work of God, could be conceived without infringing upon the divine eternity. But the incarnation does not involve a becoming in general, but God's becoming one with something different from himself.

Thus, in the second place, for an understanding of the incarnation, we must presuppose that dialectic of the divine self-differentiation which Rahner has developed. That God can be himself in creating what is differentiated from himself, in devoting himself and emptying himself to it—and not only in exclusion of everything outside himself—is certainly not yet God's unity with what is differentiated from himself, as we saw. But it is the presupposition of such unity from God's side (or in our understanding of God). Perhaps one may even speak in this connection of a tendency in God to such unity.

In the third place, an element of God's becoming and being in the other, in the reality differentiated from himself, is one with his eternity requires that what newly flashes into view from time to time in the divine life can be understood at the same time as having always been true in God's eternity. This can be expressed in the form of the concept that the "intention" of the incarnation had been determined from all eternity in God's decree. However, the truth of such an assertion is dependent upon the temporal actuality of that thing, thus in this case the incarnation. What is true in God's eternity is decided with retroactive validity only from the perspective of what occurs temporally with the import of the ultimate. Thus, Jesus' unity with God—and thus the truth of the incarnation—is also decided only retroactively from the perspective of Jesus' resurrection for the whole of Jesus' human existence on the one hand (as we have already seen) and thus also for God's eternity, on the other. Apart from Jesus' resurrection, it would not be true that from the very beginning of his earthly way God was one with this man. That is true from all eternity because of Jesus' resurrection. Until his resurrection, Jesus' unity with God was hidden not only to other men but above all, which emerges from a critical examination of the tradition, for Jesus himself also. It was hidden because the ultimate decision about it had not been given. One could speak differently only by depriving the event of the resurrection of its contingency, of its element of newness, by means of some sort of theological or physical determinism, or if one wants to deny the

\[\text{86} \text{ Rahner apparently intends it this way when he distinguishes: "One who is in himself unchangeable can himself become changeable in the other" (Schriften zur Theologie (1960), Vol. IV, p. 147; cf. ibid., n. 3). The change of God which takes place "in the other" occurs, however, in the same way also "in himself." Cf. only the dialectic of "something and another" in Hegel's Science of Logic, tr. by W. H. Johnston and L. G. Struthers (2 vols.; The Muirhead Library of Philosophy; The Macmillan Company, 1951), Vol. I, pp. 129 ff. Rahner himself refers to Hegel at this point.}

\[\text{87} \text{See, e.g., Augustine, Conf. I,10, and XI,1.3 and 16. In a still very preliminary way,}

\[\text{88} \text{The eschatological element could be formulated on the basis of the idea of God itself as a special, fourth condition for the conceivability of the idea of God's incarnation. Only the occurrence of what is ultimate, no longer superseded, is capable of so qualifying that whole of the course of time, beyond the moment of its own occurrence, that it can be strictly conceived as true (permanent) in eternity and thus as united with God's eternity. Here we see once more that the eschatological character of Jesus and his history as a prolepsis of the end is the correlate and, for our perception, the foundation of his unity with God.}

320
significance of Jesus’ resurrection in general for the question of Jesus’ unity with God. The confirmation of Jesus’ unity with God in the retroactive power of his resurrection makes the hiddenness of this unity during Jesus’ earthly life comprehensible and thus makes room for the genuine humanity of this life. It accomplishes what the theory of kenosis attempted with the impossible idea of a resignation of certain divine attributes at the incarnation: the reconciliation of the idea of divine-human unity existing from the very beginning of Jesus’ life with the genuine humanity of his activity. If these considerations lead us in the right direction, the concept of the incarnation can be paraphrased in terms such as these: out of his eternity, God has through the resurrection of Jesus, which was always present to his eternity, entered into a unity with this one man which was at first hidden. This unity illuminated Jesus’ life in advance, but its basis and reality were revealed only by his resurrection. How this unity was effective in advance in Jesus and thus really constitutes the unity of his earthly life still remains to be considered. This consideration takes us, however, beyond the realm of the two-natures doctrine, even though we will characterize this unity as a personal one.

The problem of the two-natures doctrine does not so much lie in the concepts of “nature.” This term could be used in a satisfactory sense. The problem results from speaking of “two” natures as if they were on the same plane. This poses the pseudotask of relating the two natures to one another in such a way that their synthesis results in a single individual in spite of the hindrances posed by the idea of a “nature.” Thus the real problem of the two-natures doctrine is its attempt to conceive what happened in the incarnation as the synthesis of the human and the divine nature in the same individual. It is not the desire for an explanation (in the broader sense of the word) that must be rejected in the two-natures doctrine—as if one would come too close to the mystery in seeking to understand it. Rather, the point of departure of this explanation is false. The concept of the incarnation, inescapable though it is, cannot explain the unity of God and man in Jesus Christ because it is itself an expression of this unity, which must be explained and established on other grounds. The impasse reached by every attempt to construct Christology by beginning with the incarnational concept demonstrates that all such attempts are doomed to failure. We found repeatedly that either the unity of Jesus Christ as person or else his real humanity or true divinity were lost to view. This was the dilemma beginning with the Christological controversy in the fifth century, then in the Monothelite controversy, in the discussion of Latin Scholasticism, in the contradictory positions over the communication of attributes, and in the struggle about the kenotic theology of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.

The unity of Jesus with God, of the concrete historical Jesus of Nazareth, who in many respects is always enigmatic but still so uniquely characteristic, with the God of the Bible, of the Old Testament, whom Jesus called “Father”