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**SAINT AMPHILOCHIUS OF ICONIUM
LIFE AND THEOLOGY**

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ABSTRACT

The present study consists of two parts which deal respectively with the life and theology of St. Amphilochius of Iconium.

The first part begins with the childhood of the saint, his family context and education, and goes on to unfold his career in Constantinople, his flight to the solitude of Ozizala and his obedience to Basil the Great and the Church which led him to take up his pastoral mission. Every possible attempt has been made to keep close to the primary sources of his life and work, so that a better understanding can be gained of this saintly man, whom St. Jerome includes in his triad of the great Cappadocians (cf. his *Epist. LXX ad LXXXIV ad Magnum oratorem* 4, MPG 39:276) and whose important pastoral work is praised by his contemporary fathers and church historians. The close and critical study of the old *Life* of the saint (MPG 39:13D-26D; and also Symeon Metaphrastes' repetition in MPG 116:956A-969C) calls into question the views of contemporary scholars who consider it "of no historical value" (cf. P. N. Chrestou, *Πατρολογία*, τομ. Δ' σ. 218, Θεσσαλονίκη 1989). Indeed such views indicate that this saint's work has not been adequately appraised by those who have written on him in recent times. Thus a proper contextualisation of the saint's work has been undertaken here.

The second part of this study deals with St. Amphilochius' theology, as his teaching concerning the Son and the Spirit, i.e. the "economy in Christ", or "the Lord's incarnate economy", as it is expounded in his two major extant works: 1) *Λόγος κατὰ αἰρετικῶν εἰς τὸ: Πάτερ εἰ δυνατόν ἐστὶν παρελθέτω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο*, and 2) *Περὶ ψευδοῦς ἀσκήσεως*, which are studied in the critical edition of C. Datema (CCSG 3, 1978).





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† Ι. Μ. САВВАТΙΑΝΟΥ
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PROLOGUE

At a time when a search for the authentic, an agony for the genuine and a "hunger and thirst" for the manifestation of the truth, come to the fore as man's most vital need, I considered it pertinent - in "studying theology" - to reach down, as far as I could, into the life-bearing springs of the theology of St Amphilochius of Iconium.

The pages which follow are the fruit of my attempt. They required much effort and agonizing research, because they represent the insuperable theology of the saint purged from alien theses and unrelated intentions which have nothing to do with it.

At this point, then, I am grateful to God for his saint and thankful to all those who, each in his own way, contributed to the completion of this attempt.

I thank especially the Most Reverend Archbishop of Crete, Mgr. Timotheos, my spiritual father, for his real interest in this attempt of mine.

Warm thanks are also due to the distinguished specialist in Patristics, Fr Dr George Dragas, for his companionship and support.

Finally, I thank the University of Durham for showing understanding in my difficulties during the course of my research.

INTRODUCTION

The present study deals with the life and the theology of Saint Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium.

It represents an attempt to approach as closely as possible the primary sources⁽¹⁾ of this saint's life and work, so as to contribute to a better understanding of the great personality of "this holy man" -- as Jerome⁽²⁾ characterizes him, when he includes him in the trinity of the great Cappadocians, or as his contemporary fathers and historians call him, as will become apparent in the study of his life which follows. It also aims at a better appreciation of his immense pastoral work.

In the first part of this study we shall

-
- (1) By primary sources we mean the works of other authors who were contemporaries with the saint under examination, which refer to him or contain witnesses about him, as well as those of subsequent authors, which, being closer to his times, have provided a more direct perception of his life and his theology.
- (2) M.P.G. 39:27B, Epist. LXX, al. LXXXIV, *ad Magnum oratorem* 4: *"Extant libri: Cappadocumque Basilii, Gregorii et Amphilochii, qui omnes in tantum philosophorum doctrinis atque sententiis suos refarciunt libros, ut ^{hescias illis} quid in [^] primum admirari debeas, eruditionem saeculi, an scientiam Scripturarum."*

examine first of all whatever concerns the early life of the saint and, secondly, whatever is related to his family context and to his education in general. Then we shall turn to his career in Constantinople and his flight to the remote place of Ozizala and, finally, deal with his obedience to the great Basil and, through him, the Church, as well as considering the saint's undertaking of his mission "on account of his obedience".

We consider it necessary to state here that modern scholars' characterisation of the Old Life of the saint – the one contained in volume 39 of Migne's *Patrologia*, cls. 13D-26D, and repeated by Symeon Metaphrastes in volume 116, cls. 956A-967C, of the same *Patrologia* – "as a work of no historical value"⁽³⁾ finds us in disagreement. It is difficult, if not impossible, for us to understand the work of the holy father, if we cannot place it correctly in context, especially with regard to the problems of the times and place in which he lived. We shall, however, qualify these reservations of ours in our treatment of his life and theology. Suffice it to say here that such a characterization makes us cautious as to whether the saint has been more generally understood by those who wrote from time to time concerning his life and theology.

In the second part we shall deal with the theology of Saint Amphilochius witnessed in his doctrine concerning "the mystery of the economy of Christ" (τὸ μυστήριον τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ οἰκονομίας),⁽⁴⁾ or of "the incarnate economy of

(3) Panagiotis K. CHRESTOU, *Greek Patrology*, vol. 4, Thessalonica 1989, p. 218.

(4) *Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca* (C.C.S.G.) 3:140, 34/5.

the Lord"as it appears in his two surviving works.⁽⁵⁾

These works are two anti-heretical orations, as they are usually characterized by those who have edited them from time to time: 1) *An Oration of our holy Father Amphilochius Bishop of Iconium against the heretics on the verse, "Father if possible let this cup pass from me"*, and 2) *Against the Heretics, or On false Asceticism*.

For purely practical reasons we shall refer in the course of our present study to the first Oration as *Opus1* and to the second as *Opus2*.

The references to the works of the saint are from the critical edition of his extant works by Cornelius Datema, *Amphilochii Iconienses Opera*, Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca 3, Brepols-Turnhout 1978.

Following these necessary clarifications we may now turn to the life of the saint.

(5) C.C.S.G. 3:186, 160/1.

PART I: THE LIFE OF ST AMPHILOCHIUS

1. Birth, family context, upbringing and education

Modern scholars are unanimous concerning the early life of St Amphilochius. They all agree that he was born at Diocaesarea of Cappadocia between 340-345.⁽⁶⁾

His parents were called Amphilochius and Livia⁽⁷⁾ and they had three children, Amphilochius, Euphemius and Theodosia.⁽⁸⁾

There is disagreement among specialist scholars⁽⁹⁾ as to whether it was Amphilochius or his brother Euphemius that was born first. This matter, however, does not cause any special problems for the present investigation, since it is of no essential consequence.

It appears that it was during the first years of the life of the children

(6) K. BONIS, *Gregory the Theologian, i.e. The family tree of Gregory Nazianzen and his family ties with Amphilochius* (in Greek), Athens 1953, pp. 11-49.

(7) M.P.G. 38:24.

(8) M.P.G. 38:25.

(9) K. HOLL, *Amphilochius von Iconium in seinem Verhältnis zu den grossen Kappaziern*, Tübingen und Leipzig 1905, p. 8. Also, K. BONIS, *op. cit.* p. 23.

that their mother died⁽¹⁰⁾ and so the burden of their upbringing fell on their father. The two brothers received their first education from their father, as we are told by Gregory Nazianzen, who, apparently, had joined them in this venture.⁽¹¹⁾ This point is also confirmed by Libanius, who had previously been fellow-student to Amphilochius the father in the School of Rhetorics in Athens.⁽¹²⁾

After their encyclical lessons beside their father, the two brothers were sent to Antioch for further studies at the School which Libanius ran during the same period.

This took place according to the custom prevailing at that time amongst eminent Roman families, who used to send their children to study at great cultural centres. Antioch was such a place and a good option for the aristocratic family of Amphilochius and his children who were eager to learn.⁽¹³⁾

At Antioch the two brothers were able to make good progress in their studies under the inspiring guidance of their great master. They advanced not only in scientific knowledge but also in cultivating their character to such a degree that Libanius wrote in his Epistle 634 to their father: "there

(10) M.P.G. 38:24.

(11) M.P.G. 38:65.

(12) *Libanii Opera*, ed. Richardus Förster, Teubner Vol. x, p. 612.

(13) *Op. Cit.* vol. x: 581/2.

are not a few reasons which make me a father to them, of which the overarching one is their excellent facility in using the language" (ἐμὲ δὲ τούτοις οὐκ ὀλίγα ποιεῖ πατέρα, ὧν κεφάλαιον τὸ πρὸς λόγους εὖ πεφυκέναι).(14) The teacher's admiration for his students exceeds every measure.

The end of the course at Antioch marks also the end of Amphilochius' and his brother's formal education and the beginning of a new era in their lives. It is the era of their common attempt to become professionally settled, which, however, as it turned out, suddenly and ingloriously, came to an end altogether. Just at the time of Euphemius' preparation for his wedding his death brought grief and sorrow. So suddenly did death come that the young man's noble plans could not be fulfilled, as Gregory Nazianzen sadly points out in his 29th funeral epigram which is dedicated to Euphemius:

*While Euphemius' beard was first growing and eros
was calling him into the bridal chambers, he left, O suffering!
Instead of his beloved virgin he found a grave and
the day of bridal songs was followed by a day of lamentations.*(15)

The unseasonable and tragic end of Euphemius' life was a source of deep sorrow both for the members of his family (his father and his brother and sister), and also for many other relatives, as Gregory Nazianzen's

(14) *Op. Cit.* vol. x: 611/2.

(15) M.P.G. 38:25.

epigram reveals. It was especially tragic because it followed the death of his mother.

2. Career in Constantinople

It is not known how much the two family deaths affected Amphilochius. What is known, however, is that around 361 Amphilochius is found in Constantinople working as an advocate.⁽¹⁶⁾

Gregory Nazianzen's Epistle XIII,⁽¹⁷⁾ written at about this time or a little earlier, speaks on the one hand about the presence of Amphilochius in Constantinople and on the other hand about the great success which marks his work as advocate. In this Epistle Gregory invites Amphilochius to undertake the defence of Nicoboulos and does not miss the opportunity to exalt his excellence and his impeccable character, saying, "... we invite you to help us ... if you find that we are ill-treated. But if not, we do not want you to be captured by the opposition so that for a tiny profit you sell your freedom, which we know to have been acknowledged always and by all as your special virtue".⁽¹⁸⁾ His was a diamond-like character, "acknowledged by all" and not only by a relative's encomium, which became, nevertheless, the target of false accusation.

It was long after Gregory had written this Epistle that he was forced

(16) Cf. BONIS, *op. cit.* p. 26.

(17) M.P.G. 37:45.

(18) M.P.G. 37:45B13/C3.

to write three others (Epistles XXII, XXIII and XXIV), which this time were not addressed to Amphilochius, but to Lallianus, Caesarius and Themistius, asking them to help Amphilochius, who had found himself falsely accused "on account of his simplicity rather than his evil manners".⁽¹⁹⁾

Things changed, not because Amphilochius' character changed, but because of his "impeccable goodness" (καλοκαγαθίας) -- "for what blame ever touched him" -- [his] "most precious son" Amphilochius was found accused -- "being dragged by false accusations".⁽²⁰⁾ The man who, according to Themistius, is a philosopher "because he has done no injustice", is accused of having done "something indecent for money".⁽²¹⁾

These three Epistles of St Gregory are the best historical and perhaps most indisputable witness to the life of St Amphilochius during this period. They must be appraised accordingly, so that we can understand Amphilochius' actions in the rest of his life.

These characterizations which Gregory attributes to Amphilochius when he recommends him in the respective Epistles⁽²²⁾ to Lallianus, Caesarius and Themistius, should be studied more closely. They are not words of a "false" witness,⁽²³⁾ but of what is accepted by all. These characterizations truly reveal Amphilochius' real personality.

(19) M.P.G. 37: 57A13/14.

(20) M.P.G. 37:57A/B.

(21) M.P.G. 37:60A/C

(22) M.P.G. 37:57A-60C24.

(23) M.P.G. 37:60B4.

The confidence with which Gregory embraces Amphilocheus in such difficult circumstances, may give rise to questions. How true are his words? How true are they to the actual course of events? How far were they dictated by the family bond, or "the paternal friendship" (ἡ ἐκ πατέρων φιλία)?⁽²⁴⁾ The answer to these questions is clearly negative: there is certainly no partiality here at all! This answer is explained not only by Amphilocheus' own action, namely his departure for the remote place of Ozizala after his acquittal from the false accusations,⁽²⁵⁾ but also, and especially so, by what Gregory writes to Themistius ("And besides, my Amphilocheus is paternally a friend of yours; and I shall add that he is such a friend that he did not bring shame to his fathers' generation, nor to our friendship, if I am not a false judge of these things".⁽²⁶⁾) In addition to this he himself actually goes to Ozizala to meet him.⁽²⁷⁾

Here are the three above mentioned Epistles of Gregory which are of special importance for our present investigation.

Epistle XXII to LALLIANUS⁽²⁸⁾

As in the case of gold and precious stones we recognize them from their appearance, likewise we ought to discern those men who are good and those who are not, without needing any further test. For I would not need to write much about the most precious son Amphilocheus in order to

(24) M.P.G. 37:45B8.

(25) M.P.G. 37:57C11.

(26) M.P.G. 37:60B1/5.

(27) M.P.G. 37:125A1/6.

(28) M.P.G. 37:57A/B.

intercede for him before your magnanimity. I would have hoped that it would have been much easier for some incredible and paradoxical thing to happen than for him to have done anything for money or to have thought about any indiscretion; for he has been so much acknowledged by all for his goodness and his prudent thought which has exceeded his age in years. What is it that ought to happen? Nothing can escape from envy and so he too has been exposed to some sort of accusation, on account of his simplicity rather than of his evil behaviour. You must not, however, consider it proper to leave him to be indiscriminately dragged down by false accusations. No, I pray to your holy and great soul; but also you must honour your fatherland and support virtue and show respect for those who were glorified by you and through you, and do everything for him, adding your will to your strength, because I know that all are defeated by your virtue.

Epistle XXIII to CAESARIUS(29)

If what we ask of you is too great, do not be amazed, because I ask it from a great one and my request ought to be as great as the person to whom it is addressed. For similarly it is out of place to ask great things from a little one and little things from a great one. The former is out of season and the latter is futile. It is I myself who bring to you by my own hand our most precious son Amphilochius, a man who is so well known for his good nature, far above what is fitting for his age, that even I, a geron and priest and friend of yours, would like to be thought of as being like him. If, now, being captive to friendship, he did not

(29) M.P.G. 37:57C-60A.

discern the calumny, what is amazing about that? For he was not crafty, nor did he suspect craftiness, but thought instead that he needed correction in his words rather than his manner. So he agreed to cooperate. What is terrible about this for someone who is grateful? You should, therefore, no longer allow vice to take the place of virtue, nor to offend our old age. Respect my witness and put your philanthropy behind my blessings, to which God, before whom I stand, will perhaps supply a response.

Epistle XXIV to THEMISTIUS⁽³⁰⁾

What is exposed to danger is words; and it is your time, since you are the king of words. Besides, my Amphilochius is your friend because of his father. Indeed I will add that he is such that he puts to shame neither the generation of his forefathers nor my friendship, if I am not an unworthy judge of things. And above all, something which indeed befits a philosopher like you, is that he is troubled without having done any injustice. For others this is nothing, but for us it is the heaviest burden, if we appear to be putting it aside. As for me, then, I do what I can. I can intercede before those who can do good. In my position, nothing else is possible. As for you, you should confirm the word of your Plato who said that the cities will not cease to suffer evil before the power to act is allied to philosophy. You have the ability for both. Stretch your hand to the needy both with appropriate admonitions and practical help. There is no other opportunity for philosophising better than fighting now on the side of the just. So you will do good to us who praise you and, if you allow it to be said, to us your friends.

(30) M.P.G. 37: 60A11/C4

3. Flight to Ozizala

After this dishonest blow, which must have been for Amphilochius much more costly than the deaths of his mother and brother, Constantinople does not appear to have any further importance for him and so departure to the hermitage of Ozizala becomes his firm decision.

Tired of secular life and wanting to support his aged father who lived on his own, since Livia and Euphymius had died, and Theodosia was living in Constantinople, Amphilochius departs for Ozizala around 369-370.(31)

This act of Amphilochius took Gregory by surprise, as we gather from his Epistle LXIII, which he wrote later to his uncle Amphilochius, the father of St Amphilochius, on the occasion of the saint's departure from Ozizala and from his father in order to be ordained bishop of Iconium: "remember that I came to you on purpose, because you were disturbed".(32)

Gregory tried to persuade both Amphilochii when he visited them at Ozizala that the son Amphilochius should return to Constantinople. Both of them refused to agree for their own reasons. Thus, embittered and rather disappointed by their attitude Gregory wrote: "Indeed I was eager to communicate to you my opinion, while there was still time to consider such things, but you communicated on everything else except this opinion, either because you were not sure about it, or because you had decided on something else

(31) K. BONIS, *op. cit.* pp. 26, 35.

(32) M.P.G. 37:125A1/2.

which I did not know".⁽³³⁾ With this Epistle Gregory wanted to reduce the pain in the heart of his aged uncle, who was again to stay alone⁽³⁴⁾ at Ozizala ("and it was terrible for me not to be with you and appropriately serve you according to custom"⁽³⁵⁾), and also to point out the irrevocable "decision" of Amphilochius not to return to Constantinople in spite of his exceptionally great interest ("and I was eager to communicate to you my opinion"⁽³⁶⁾).

4. His residence at Ozizala and Basil's Epistle 150

The irrevocable nature of Amphilochius' "opinion" is manifested in Basil the Great's Epistle CL⁽³⁷⁾ which was written to him in the name of his friend Heracleides. The decision to depart from secular life and live in the remote hermitage of Ozizala was common to both Amphilochius and Heracleides: "I remember our old conversations with each other and I remember what I said and what you said. And now public life has no hold

⁽³³⁾ M.P.G. 37: 125A2/6.

⁽³⁴⁾ Cf. the earlier chapter when Amphilochius worked as an advocate in Constantinople.

⁽³⁵⁾ M.P.G. 37:124B4/6.

⁽³⁶⁾ M.P.G. 37:125A2/3.

⁽³⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32:601A-605C.

on me".(38)

The same event, i.e. Amphilochius' decision to avoid public affairs and to remain in a state of hesychasm, is also revealed, although somewhat indirectly, in Basil the Great's Epistle CLXI, which was written to Amphilochius as Bishop of Iconium. In this Epistle Basil the Great presents Amphilochius as avoiding entry into the priesthood: "Blessed be God ... who, though you were trying to flee, as you say, ... has caught you with the inescapable nets of his grace ...".(39) Amphilochius ran away from the world, but could not avoid "God's net." Thus, while being in the remote hermitage of Ozizala, he will be visited by "the angel of the Lord", (40) this letter of the Great Basil (Epistle CL), which would bring the message to the "man of God", (41) Amphilochius, that he ought to depart from Ozizala and his father, i.e. the most valuable possession he had, in order to go on a difficult journey towards a barren land, for such was "the middle region of Pisidia".(42)

The saint's life reminds one at this point of the story of Abraham in the book of Genesis, when the same voice under another form (discarnate then but incarnate now) called Abraham: "depart from your land

(38) M.P.G. 32:601A2/5.

(39) M.P.G. 32:629A2/7.

(40) Symeon Logothetes and Metaphrastes, *Life of St Amphilochius Bishop of Iconium*, M.P.G. 116:957A13.

(41) M.P.G. 116:956A11: ὁ ἱερός ἀνὴρ καὶ τῷ Θεῷ καθηγιασμένος.

(42) M.P.G. 32:629AB.

and from your relations and from the house of your father to a land which I will show to you".(43)

This entire Epistle of St Basil the Great (CL), who apparently plays the role of the "angel" in the subsequent life of St Amphilochius, deserves to be looked at very carefully. It informs us that it was by common decision ("... our old conversations with each other"(44)) that Heracleides and Amphilochius abandoned public life ("... and now public life has no hold on me"(45)) and went to the desert to follow the path "of the manner of life which is according to Christ".(46)

Heracleides, however, is not absolutely satisfied and feels that something is missing for him at Ozizala: "And I am sitting by myself, like those who are going to be abandoned in the ocean, considering the future".(47) Thus he abandons Amphilochius and Ozizala and goes off to find what he is in need of. Of course, what Heracleides wants and does not have is not the world and the things of the world, as he reassures his friend ("and I do not forget what I said and what you said"(48)), but that he should remain the same, in spite of his departure from the world: "For although I am the same in heart and have not yet put off the old man, nevertheless outwardly and by withdrawing myself far from the things of the

(43) Gen. 12:1

(44) M.P.G. 32:601A2.

(45) M.P.G. 32:601A4/5.

(46) M.P.G. 32:601A9/10.

(47) M.P.G. 32:601A10/12.

(48) M.P.G. 32:601A2/4.

world...".(49) In spite of his good disposition in abandoning worldly cares and his actual departure from the world, the problem did not find its solution.

In his attempt to understand why Heracleides does not proceed to spiritual combat, he discovers that he has no "guide" (χειρᾶγωγόν) to show him the way. "Those who sail, indeed, need winds to make their voyage easy, we, on the other hand, are in need of a guide to take us by the hand...".(50) They need him who "will conduct them safely through the bitter waves of this life".(51)

Heracleides goes on to explain to his friend why "an experienced teacher" (ἐμπειροσ διδάσκαλος) is necessary in the spiritual life.(52) They are both young and inexperienced in this life and, therefore, Heracleides can write, "I feel that I need first a curb for my young manhood and then pricks to drive me to the course of piety".(53) The "curb" is for guiding the "rebelliousness" of youth and the "pricks" for stimulating "the indolence of the soul".(54)

These, however, are not enough, for they are in need of "other medicines" as well,(55) so that they may become able to achieve purification

(49) M.P.G. 32:601A5/8.

(50) M.P.G. 32:601A12/14.

(51) M.P.G. 32:601A14/15.

(52) M.P.G. 32:601B13

(53) M.P.G. 32:601A15-B3.

(54) M.P.G. 32:601B4/5.

(55) M.P.G. 32:601B5/6.

i.e. "to be washed from the stain of bad custom".⁽⁵⁶⁾ Purification is necessary because: "You know how we, who have been long accustomed to the Forum, are lavish of words, and do not guard ourselves against the fantasies put into our mind by the evil one".⁽⁵⁷⁾ An additional reason which compels purification is that, "we are also servants of honour, and cannot easily give up thinking great things of ourselves".⁽⁵⁸⁾ All the above reasons necessitate the presence of the "experienced teacher".

These, however, are necessary for the beginning, the starting point of such a journey. What needs to follow is "that the soul's eye should be so purged that, after being freed from all the darkness of ignorance, as though from some blinding humour (blearedness), one can gaze intently on the beauty of the glory of God".⁽⁵⁹⁾ This task does not appear to Heracleides to be small, nor easy ("I consider it a task of no small importance, nor of benefit only for a little while"⁽⁶⁰⁾), but one that is imperative.

Due to his love and respect for the person of his friend Heracleides avoids playing teacher to him, but he also knows that Amphilocheus realizes this need: "all these your wisdom is aware of"⁽⁶¹⁾. He only wants to help him to turn his desire to act: "I know exactly that you would wish

⁽⁵⁶⁾ M.P.G. 32:601B6/7.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32:601B7/10.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32:601B10/12.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ M.P.G. 32:601B17/C2.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ M.P.G. 32:601C2/3.

⁽⁶¹⁾ M.P.G. 32:601C3/4.

that I might have someone to give me such help"(62). Thus he gives his help with such discrimination that he avoids creating any collision. He humbles himself in order to exalt his friend. He is ignorant as compared to his friend ("for now in my great ignorance, I can hardly even form a judgement as to what I lack"(63)).

Heracleides, then, went away because of the need to achieve "the aim of the godly life"(64) and not in order to "turn back".(65) He did not change his mind, nor "did he alter his opinion concerning his first impulse".(66) He did not faint ("neither is my soul down trodden"(67)). He realizes his friend's agony ("how you agonized over me"(68)) and gives a reason for it ("you acted well and as you ought"(69)).

To present the pressing need of "the Bishop's support"(70) the Epistle turns next to the "one way which leads to the Lord".(71) This is, in fact Amphilochius' burning concern and, consequently, the most appropriate one

(62) M.P.G. 32:601C4/5.

(63) M.P.G. 32:601C8/9.

(64) M.P.G. 32:601C11.

(65) M.P.G. 32:601C13.

(66) M.P.G. 32:601C9/10.

(67) M.P.G. 32:601C10/1.

(68) M.P.G. 32:601C12.

(69) M.P.G. 32:601C12/3.

(70) M.P.G. 32:605C4.

(71) M.P.G. 32:604A9/10.

for arousing his interest towards searching for a "guide".

Heracleides feels the need to soothe the wounded heart of his friend, because this is the second time that Amphilochius feels betrayed in life by the people he regards as friends. The first time was in Constantinople when "he was defeated by his friendship to a man",⁽⁷²⁾ and the second time comes now when Heracleides has left Ozizala "like a deserter".⁽⁷³⁾ Thus, he attempts to combine what is pleasing ("Since you have mentioned our contract, and have promised to prosecute, you have made me laugh in this my dejection, because you are still an advocate and do not give up your shrewdness"⁽⁷⁴⁾) with what is profitable ("For I think, unless indeed like an ignorant man I am totally missing the truth, that there is only one way leading to the Lord and that all who are journeying to him are travelling together and walking with one contract of life"⁽⁷⁵⁾).

If, however, the way which leads to God is one, Heracleides will reassure Amphilochius that both of them are on it and there is nothing that can separate them: "If this is so, how can I be separated from you and not, with you, serve God to whom we have both fled wherever I go?".⁽⁷⁶⁾ The only thing that can happen is "that our bodies are separated by places".⁽⁷⁷⁾

⁽⁷²⁾ M.P.G. 37:57C11.

⁽⁷³⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A2.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A5/8.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A8/12.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A12/15.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A15/16.

Yet this local separation of bodies is abolished by "God's eye which observes both of us together".⁽⁷⁸⁾ These words must have come as a real relief to a man who had raised the institution of friendship to such heights that he could sacrifice himself for it. Now he would be in a position to accept with greater ease and absolute confidence what Heracleides had to say to him.

At this point in his Epistle Heracleides gives the deliberate impression that he had gone to Caesarea for a specifically private reason, a personal matter: "I was lately at Caesarea in order to learn what was going on there. I was unwilling to remain in the city itself, and went to the neighbouring hospice, that I might get there the information I wanted".⁽⁷⁹⁾ Apart from his own reasons, however, he had to put certain questions of Amphilochius to the Bishop of Caesarea (".. the points which you urged upon me"⁽⁸⁰⁾).

Thus, when the Bishop paid his customary visit to that hospice,⁽⁸¹⁾ Heracleides found what he had been seeking and decided to stay at Caesarea and abandon Ozizala. He did not cease, however, to be truly interested in his friend, and so, having put to the Bishop the points which Amphilochius wanted him to raise, he set out to inform him accordingly: "It is not possible for me to remember all that he said in his reply; it went

⁽⁷⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A16-B1.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C2/5.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C7/8.

⁽⁸¹⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C5/6.

far beyond the limits of a letter".⁽⁸²⁾

The weakness of "memory" and the "limits of the epistle" are two additional reasons on account of which Amphilochius is obliged to visit the Bishop himself ("there is nothing that you would have valued more than a meeting with the bishop".⁽⁸³⁾ "In sum, however",⁽⁸⁴⁾ he gave an answer to the question of "holy poverty" (ἀκτῆμοσύνη):⁽⁸⁵⁾ namely, "that the rule ought to be that everyone should limit his possessions to one garment".⁽⁸⁶⁾

Indeed, the Bishop used proof texts from the Gospel in order to support his thesis⁽⁸⁷⁾ and at the same time "he proved the point from the Acts of the Apostles⁽⁸⁸⁾ as well as from the approved manner of almsgiving: "that no one ought even to permit himself the distribution of his own property, but should leave it in the hands of the person entrusted with the duty of managing the affairs of the poor".⁽⁸⁹⁾ In other words, it was necessary that one should not only undertake holy poverty in the right way, but also distribute properly whatever resulted from undertaking this poverty: "For he said that experience was needed in order to distinguish between

⁽⁸²⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C8/10.

⁽⁸³⁾ M.P.G. 32:605C3/4.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C10.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C10/1.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C11/3.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32:604C13/4.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32:605A12.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ M.P.G. 32:605A9/11.

cases of genuine need and of mere greedy begging".⁽⁹⁰⁾

Another question which Amphilochius wanted to raise with the Bishop was "about the manner of daily life which he and his friend had to adopt".⁽⁹¹⁾ The Bishop gave an answer to this too, although it was "a brief one" "in comparison with the magnitude of the matter".⁽⁹²⁾ The reason for his brevity was "that instruction in how to lead the Christian life depends less on words, than on daily example".⁽⁹³⁾ Since, however, Amphilochius was very interested in this, he had to overcome all obstacles which deprived him of such a knowledge and come to learn at close range through the "daily example" in order to understand exactly what a Christian's life ought to be.

What is it, however, that prevents Amphilochius from doing so? "Indeed, I know that, if you had not been detained by the duty of succouring your aged father, there is nothing that you would have more greatly valued than a meeting with the Bishop, and that you would not have advised me to leave him in order to be a wanderer in the deserts".⁽⁹⁴⁾ Amphilochius' difficulty, then, was a single one, "his duty of succouring his aged father". If he could overcome that, then, everything would change, and he would no longer complain to Heracleides about desertion, for he would choose nothing else than to be with the Bishop.

Amphilochius found himself, as the Lord's disciple before him, in

⁽⁹⁰⁾ M.P.G. 32:605A15/B2.

⁽⁹¹⁾ M.P.G. 32:605B7.

⁽⁹²⁾ M.P.G. 32:604A15/16.

⁽⁹³⁾ M.P.G. 32:605B15/C1.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ M.P.G. 32:605C1/5.

confrontation with a great dilemma,⁽⁹⁵⁾ as when the latter asked to go and bury his father first and then to follow, proving himself at that difficult moment to be truly great. He preferred "to share his life with the Bishop", for he could not have this in any other way and it was to him so necessary: "For caves and rocks are always ready for us, but the help we get from our fellow man is not always at hand".⁽⁹⁶⁾ He chose to obey, rather than "to be a wanderer in the deserts".

After this great decision he begged his father to let him⁽⁹⁷⁾ go for a while, "in order to meet a man who, alike from his experience of others and from his own wisdom, knows much, and is able to impart it to all who approach him".⁽⁹⁸⁾

After his visit to the Bishop, Amphilochius fully understands Heracleides' words, which, as it were, were expressed prophetically: "for there is nothing that you would have more greatly valued than a meeting with the Bishop". It was actually this meeting that became the occasion for Amphilochius' abandonment of his first "decision" to remain in the "desert" and his overcoming the obstacle of his great duty of "succouring his aged father". What seemed a little earlier to have been quite impossible to accomplish was completely changed by this visit. His obedience to the Bishop produced far greater fruit than the entreaties of his cousin who visited him at Ozizala.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Matth. 8:20-23.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ M.P.G. 32:605C6/8.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32:605C9.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32:605C10/13.

It is not known how long on that occasion Amphilochius remained near Basil the Great before he became Bishop of Iconium. It is known, however, from Gregory Nazianzen's Epistle XXV to Amphilochius, that Basil the Great knew him from a previous occasion when he visited Gregory: "... we are hosts to the great Basil and you should not try him, as you, being hungry and difficult, tried him when he was filled and talked about philosophy".(99)

This is not, then, their first meeting, but it is at this meeting that Amphilochius changed his attitude and ceased to "waver". The result was that due to this change Basil the Great did not hesitate to choose him and send him to such a difficult mission "in the middle of Pisidia".(100) The question that naturally arises here is why the great Basil entrusted so much to this man?

5. Bishop of Iconium

Around the end of 373 the Metropolis of Iconium became widowed, because her Bishop Faustinus fell asleep, as the Great Basil writes to Eusebius of Samosata: "The city of Iconium ... she too calls us to visit her so that we can give her a Bishop, for Faustinus has completed his course".(101) What was needed was that the Great Basil together with the other bishops of that area would elect and ordain a "Bishop".

(99) M.P.G. 37:61A7/10.

(100) Basil the Great's Epistle CLXI to Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, M.P.G. 32:629A8.

(101) Epistle CXXXIX, M.P.G. 32:580C11-581A5.

At this moment, as we saw above, there is beside Basil the Great the important spiritual figure of Amphilochius, who for some time now had been trained in asceticism and obedience, first in the desert of Ozizala and subsequently beside him. This, then, is the man whom the Great Basil proposes and the synod of bishops elects through the grace of the Holy Spirit, ordains and installs as Bishop of Iconium: "Blessed be God who from generation to generation chooses them that please him, ... and uses them for the ministry of the saints. Though you were trying to flee from the calling you expected through me, he has netted you in the sure meshes of grace and has brought you into the midst of Pisidia..".(102)

It was at the end of 373 or at the beginning of 374 that Amphilochius was ordained Bishop of Iconium. A new period of his life had started.

The information concerning Amphilochius is very scanty. Hence we have constantly to turn to witnesses from the epistles of Gregory Nazianzen and Basil the Great and adopt them as correct since we cannot verify whether they are false. We shall stay, then, at this point, close to Basil the Great in order to draw information about the election, ordination and mission of Amphilochius as Bishop of Iconium.

But what is the Iconium of which Amphilochius is elected to be Bishop? "Iconium is a city of Pisidia which in older times was the first after the greatest, but now she too is presiding over a part which has

(102) Epist. CLXI, M.P.G. 32: 629A2/8.

been constituted from various parts, and has received the administration of its own eparchy".⁽¹⁰³⁾ Amphilochius, then, was elected Bishop of an old and great city of Pisidia which in his days was the Metropolitan seat of an ecclesiastical eparchy.

Another question to be raised here is, 'Why was Amphilochius chosen for Iconium?' First of all we must say that this certainly was not done to remove him from his father, who actually complained about it to Gregory, as appears in the reply which the latter sent to him ("Or is your son a cause of sorrow, because he is taken away on account of virtue and is honoured, and you find it terrible that he is not staying with you to look after you in your old age and to offer you the usual service?"⁽¹⁰⁴⁾), because he had been held responsible for this happening ("You open, however, another wound on an existing one and accuse me, as I imagine, thinking that I do not care for your son, and brother of mine, or even that I have betrayed him, which is much heavier to bear".⁽¹⁰⁵⁾) Again, it was not done to cause sorrow to Gregory, who, in his turn, for different reasons than those of his father, wanted Amphilochius to stay near him and, therefore, did not hesitate to express his complaint ("How is it that I do not understand the loss which all his friends and relatives suffered and myself above them all, for I had placed all the hopes of my life on him and regarded him as my only stronghold, my only sincere counsellor and my only companion in piety?"⁽¹⁰⁶⁾) Finally it was not done, that he might be

⁽¹⁰³⁾ M.P.G. 32:580C11/14.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Epist. LXIII, M.P.G. 37:124B3/6.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Epist. LXIII, M.P.G. 37:124B14/C2.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Epist. LXIII, M.P.G. 37:124C2/8.

separated from the Great Basil who had attempted, as is shown in his Epistle CLXI, to bring him close to him.

What, then, was the real reason for Amphilochius' election to that See? It is Basil the Great's Epistle CLXI to Amphilochius that provides the answer: "...that you may catch men for the Lord, and draw the devil's prey from the deep into the light, i.e. for God's will".⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ The fact is that Amphilochius was sent by the Church to a region full of special pastoral problems.

If that is the case, then how is it that the man who was sent into a region fraught with "heretical spirits"⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ could have been theologically incompetent, as most of the modern scholars who have dealt with the saint's theology suggest by qualifying him as "simple and naive"?⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ This is certainly not the case, for this view stands in direct contradiction on the one hand to that of the Great Basil and of the Hierarchs who elected him and entrusted him with such a mission similar to that in the "Church of Isauria"⁽¹¹⁰⁾ and, on the other hand, to that which arises from the witness of the Synods to Amphilochius' very important role. As examples of the latter we may mention the Synod of Iconium of 379, also known as Synod of Side,⁽¹¹¹⁾ at which he was the προεξάρχων,

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629A7/10.

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629C3.

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ George FLOROVSKY: *The Eastern Fathers of the fourth century*, Greek translation by Panag. K. Pallis, Thessalonica 1991, p. 359.

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Basil the Great, *Epist. CXC*, M.P.G. 32: 697A4.

⁽¹¹¹⁾ *Sacrosancta Concilia*, Studio Philip, Gabr. COSSARTII, Venetis mdccxxviii, clmn. 1076.

i.e. the "presiding Bishop" ("A Synod at Side was read ... and the presiding Bishop of the Synod was Amphilochius of Iconium"⁽¹¹²⁾), and the Second Ecumenical Synod summoned in Constantinople in 381, which did not hesitate to recognize him as a witness to the Orthodox faith along with bishop Optimus ("In Pisidia Optimus and in Lycaonia Amphilochius also took their cue in bravely defending the ancestral faith"⁽¹¹³⁾), with whom the rest of the bishops of Asia had to be "in communion" in order to be recognized as orthodox.⁽¹¹⁴⁾

Besides, modern critics of Amphilochius' theology fail to realize what theology is for the saint. Theology cannot be understood without reason (λόγος) and reason in this case is provided by God's Reason (Λόγος) who, being God, becomes man, so that as God-man (οἰκονομία) he might restore the lost reason in man ("And so now in the person of Adam I accept the decision of death, so that he may receive through me the grace of the resurrection"⁽¹¹⁵⁾). This is the context within which man may now dare to theologize. He theologizes where there is such a reason ("Since then, blaspheming against God, they calumniate the Reason of God and, rejecting the Spirit, they parade the letter mocking and deriding the Economy of Christ, and by skilful phraseology and artful words they cover up their poisonous bites, so that they may carry away the salvation of the purer Christians",⁽¹¹⁶⁾ he turns to the divine Reason (Logos): "come then

(112) Theodoret of Cyrus, *Hist. Eccl/ica*, Bk 4,27, M.P.G. 82:1192B2/4.

(113) Hermias Sozomenus, *Hist. Eccl/ica*, M.P.G. 67:143A11.

(114) Photius the Great, *Bibliotheca*, Cod. LII, M.P.G. 103:83B3/6.

(115) C.C.S.G. 3, p. 144, lines 150/2.

(116) C.C.S.G. 3, p. 140, lines 32/7.

and as persons inexperienced in reasonings (λόγοι) let us invoke God's Reason",⁽¹¹⁷⁾ for it is on account of Him that one has reason to theologize: "Tell us, O Master, the meaning of what was said ... so that the pure milk of the evangelical truth may flow out".⁽¹¹⁸⁾

If then, Amphilochius' theology is a work of reason provided by the Divine Reason (Logos), i.e. if it leads to salvation, and if, as we shall see later on in our examination of his texts, it has the presence of the Divine Logos in it (".. come and as persons inexperienced in reasonings (λόγοι) let us invoke God's Reason (Λόγος), so that he may become an interpreter of his own words and, thereby, expose their mindlessness and strengthen our mindfulness"⁽¹¹⁹⁾) the disparaging remarks about it are, in fact, directed against the Divine Logos himself!

After this parenthesis we may return to Epistle CLXI and to the point where Basil the Great draws, as it were, a portrait of Amphilochius: "but the land which has nursed you and brought you to such a height of virtue, possesses you no longer, and sees her neighbour beautified by her own adornment".⁽¹²⁰⁾ It looks as if the Great Basil wanted to prevent inexactitudes and, hence, his attempt to be exact himself. No one can easily bypass such vivid witnesses as the above or the following: "... and so our country is glad and rejoices at the dispensation of the Lord, and instead of thinking that she is one man the poorer, considers that through one man

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, p. 140, lines 37/8.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, p. 140, lines 41/9.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, p. 140, lines 37/40.

⁽¹²⁰⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629B2/4.

she can become possessed of whole Churches".⁽¹²¹⁾ For Basil then, everything is good and perfect at the very start and what now remains is: "Only may the Lord grant me both to see you in person, and, so long as I am parted from you, to hear of your progress in the Gospel, and of the good order of your Churches".⁽¹²²⁾

When and how could Amphilochius achieve "progress in the Gospel and good order in the Churches"? It is again Basil the Great that supplies the answer: "Be a man, then, and be strong, and walk before the people whom the Most High has entrusted to your hand. Like a skilful pilot, rise in mind above every wave lifted by heretical blasts; keep the boat from being whelmed by the salt and bitter billows of false doctrine; and wait for the calm to be made by the Lord so soon as there shall have been found a voice worthy of rousing Him to rebuke the winds and the sea".⁽¹²³⁾ This text is the "key" for understanding the theology of St Amphilochius. A close study of it is a definite way to get correctly to, and understand in orthodox fashion, what the saint has said and has written.

We said above that Amphilochius' mission at Iconium was not an easy task at all. The difficulty of this task was connected, of course, to its very nature, namely "...that it had to do with catching men for the Lord, and with drawing the devil's prey from the deep into the light, i.e. to do God's will". Such a difficult mission required as a precondition his "being a man, being strong and walking before the people". Without this precondition the

⁽¹²¹⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629B7/10.

⁽¹²²⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629B10/13.

⁽¹²³⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629B14/C9.

task could in no way be achieved.

It is necessary at this point to pay attention to the designation used for the "people". They are "the people whom the Most High has entrusted to your hand". Basil the Great does not refer to people in the abstract, but to specific people who have been entrusted by the Lord to Amphilochius as Bishop of Iconium. The responsibility is immense and therefore the attention should be great.

It is, then, with such a presupposition and "as a skilful pilot", that Amphilochius could "rise in mind above", and remain unhindered from, every wave lifted by heretical blasts" and at the same time "keep the boat from being whelmed by the salt and bitter billows of false doctrine". He had to do this until "there shall have been found a voice worthy of rousing Him to rebuke the winds and the sea".

This, then, is Amphilochius' mission at Iconium and the purpose of his presence there. But the weight of this mission is so huge that the Great Basil himself feels obliged to refer to it in his Epistle ("Do not wail for the weight which exceeds your strength"⁽¹²⁴⁾). Certainly, if this were a case of ignorance on the part of his spiritual son, he would have previously taken special care for his appropriate education. But here it is clear that there is a different lack of strength, which is compensated for not by our

(124) M.P.G. 32: 629D2/3.

own will, but by the Lord ("For if it is you yourself who is to bear this burden, then it would not be simply so heavy, but completely unbearable; if, however, the Lord is to bear it throughout along with you, then throw your care upon the Lord and he will do so".(125)).

There has been much discussion on the studies of St Amphilochius before he became a Bishop, designed to show that he had had no previous theological education: "Amphilochius began to study theology only after he became a Bishop. It is impossible that he paid much attention to the problems of theoretical theology, because he was not interested in philosophy and had not had any previous studies on it. This is clear from all his theological texts".(126)

If this is indeed the truth, the departure of Amphilochius from Constantinople is a matter of necessity, i.e. not due to his own free will, and his residence at Ozizala is only an act of insecurity. But then, why does Basil the Great write: "you should not associate with more knavish manners, but by the wisdom which was given to you by God you should translate to good use what was handed down as a bad deposit"?(127) If at that time Amphilochius had in his possession "the wisdom from God" so as to work out church matters "for good use", how could he have been theologically uninstructed? What reason dictates such a distinction? If "the wisdom from God" does not grant "theology", then where does theology come from?

(125) M.P.G. 32: 629D3-632A1.

(126) George Florovsky, *op. cit.* p. 359; K. Bonis, *op. cit.* pp. 19f, et. al.

(127) M.P.G. 32: 632A4/7.

If theology is not God's gift, then whose gift is it? The answer to these questions should be given by those who employ such a distinction.

For us, however, who do not make such a distinction, it seems clear that Amphilochius went to Iconium equipped with a theology that was supplied by God ("a wisdom from God"): "For it is Christ, indeed, who sent you, not to follow others, but to be the leader of those who are saved".⁽¹²⁸⁾ He has to carry this heavy burden which the Church has given him and "to give as a wise farmer and good servant the proportion of wheat which is needed by his fellow servants so that he may in the end receive the recompense of the faithful and prudent steward".⁽¹²⁹⁾

The witnesses of Basil the Great to the life of St Amphilochius do not stop at this point. They go on to cover the greatest span of his ecclesiastical ministry, because Amphilochius is to him, "a b e l o v e d s o n",⁽¹³⁰⁾ or "a g e n u i n e s o n",⁽¹³¹⁾ as he will write elsewhere. He is the man who remained not only in his own heart, but in the hearts of the men of his province: "For you you should know, my honourable and truly desirable one, that our people who have experience of many, do not hold out as success anything else apart from your presence, for such is indeed the injection

⁽¹²⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32: 632A7/8.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ M.P.G. 32: 632A13/B1.

⁽¹³⁰⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629D1.

⁽¹³¹⁾ M.P.G. 32: 653B16.

of love which you have left with them through that small concurrence".(132)

It is the stature of a holy father with whom the Great Basil wishes "... to be together and be mutually comforted through the communication of spiritual charisma". (133) It is the exceptional personality whose presence is an honour: "Hence we kindly ask you to come three days earlier, so that you may render g r e a t t h e f a m e of the home for poor people b y y o u r p r e s e n c e".(134)

These witnesses of Basil the Great are alone sufficient to disclose the real magnitude of Amphilochius' personality: "... whenever we received the letters of your labour-loving soul, we became more diligent and more prudent in ourselves through the very question which you raised".(135) or, "I admire you, for your written accuracy on Scripture, because of your claim and consideration that the word of the translation is forced in disclosing the original meaning, and does not transmit what is properly signified by the Hebrew statement".(136)

It was not much later after Amphilochius' election and dispatch to Iconium that Basil the Great laid on him another very important matter.

(132) M.P.G. 32: 653B9/14.

(133) M.P.G. 32: 653C3/5.

(134) M.P.G. 32: 653C6/8.

(135) M.P.G. 32: 664B9/11..

(136) M.P.G. 32: 681C6/10.

This is the problem in the "Church of the Isaurians"⁽¹³⁷⁾ of which Amphilochius "took care in a way which is worthy of his diligence and study".⁽¹³⁸⁾

6. Amphilochius' special mission as Bishop.

There are many occasions emerging out of the epistles of Basil the Great when he appears to lay on Amphilochius the responsibility for providing solutions to a variety of ecclesiastical problems. A case which particularly stands out is that mentioned in Epistle CCII, which refers to an invitation of Amphilochius, as the primus of the Lycaonian Church, to Basil the Great to participate and naturally to preside at their Synod. But as it appears from the same Epistle, Basil could not give an affirmative response because of poor health ("the relics of illness are such, that I can hardly bear the slightest movement"⁽¹³⁹⁾). He asks, of course, "to be excused"⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ by those who sent him the invitation and, if possible, "... to postpone the matter for a few days, so that by the grace of God he might be able to respond positively and to participate in the responsibilities", or otherwise, "if there is an urgency to deal with the matter at hand, to proceed with the case in hand relying on God's cooperation and to count him as present and as being in touch with all the good decisions that they were to make".⁽¹⁴¹⁾

⁽¹³⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32: 697A3.

⁽¹³⁸⁾ M.P.G. 32: 697A2/3.

⁽¹³⁹⁾ M.P.G. 32: 736C3/5.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ M.P.G. 32: 736C8.

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ M.P.G. 32: 736C9/13.

Basil the Great's above mentioned Epistle to Amphilochius is most probably a personal one and, as it were, complementary, to the one which Datema has edited with the title "Synodical Epistle of Amphilochius of Iconium". I say "as it were", because undoubtedly it could not be Amphilochius', since its author explicitly states that he can not be present at the Synod over which Amphilochius presided ("since, then, he was prevented by excessive bodily illness from coming, and it is your perfect love which could not overlook the letters of our littleness"⁽¹⁴²⁾). This absent author befits Basil the Great for whom the Epistle says: "and it was our wish to welcome the most wonderful and all-modest Bishop Basil at the synod as one who can share in our affairs or rather one who is an exarch for us".⁽¹⁴³⁾

We are led to this conclusion not in an arbitrary way, but on the basis of the following considerations: It is unknown whether Amphilochius invited Basil the Great to the synod of his eparchy on many occasions. What is known, however, is that he invited him at least once and that this is the occasion implied by the present Epistle. If we discard the obviously mistaken view that the "Synodical Epistle" was written by Amphilochius and assume for a moment that it was written by Basil the Great for a local synod, then the relation of the two Epistles becomes fully obvious.

The subject-matter of the "Synodical Epistle" is

⁽¹⁴²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 219:18/21.

⁽¹⁴³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 219:15/8.

"... the doctrine of the Holy Spirit"⁽¹⁴⁴⁾, which was a vital problem for the Church ("Satan who attempts to shake up the churches has inserted a hesitation in some concerning the Spirit"⁽¹⁴⁵⁾) at that time. Indeed, it was a problem which could not be dealt with by an Ecumenical Synod, since the political circumstances were not conducive to it ("as for the existing evils they were coopted by Constantius' ease and Valens' brutality"⁽¹⁴⁶⁾), or, as Basil the Great writes in another Epistle, "because the righteous Judge [the Lord] gave us, according to our works, an angel, Satan, severely buffeting us, forcefully avenging heresy and waging war against us to the extent that he does not hesitate to claim the blood of those who believe in God".⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ It is Basil the Great again, who writes in his Synodal Epistle: "Since the case of the Spirit was passed over in silence, they did not add anything further for those who read with prudence, and thus, the doctrine of the Spirit in that faith [of Nicaea] was sufficient".⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ The common subject matter of the two Epistles is the first element revealing the relation which exists between them.

A second element, which further supports this view is Basil the Great's statement to Amphilochius: "and there is another reason which makes communication with your modesty very valuable, and especially at this time,

(144) C.C.S.G. 3, 219:37.

(145) "-"- 3, 220:41/3.

(146) Theodoret of Cyrus, *Eccl. Hist.* b.V, ch.7, M.P.G. 82: 1208C9/11.

(147) M.P.G. 32: 928D1/929A2.

(148) C.C.S.G. 3, 219:24/7.

when the matter is such that brings us together"⁽¹⁴⁹⁾, which shows his great personal interest.

Yet another element indicative of the close relation between the two Epistles, is provided in the following words from the first Epistle: "do take action on what is at hand and count me as being present with you and as being your associate in whatever good you do"⁽¹⁵⁰⁾, especially when they are related to the following ones from the second Epistle: "and we have not allowed your holy church to be deprived of his voice; but, having a writing of his especially composed for this matter, we have him speaking to us through his letter".⁽¹⁵¹⁾ These words bring the two Epistles much closer since they bring out Amphilochius' position as president of the synod in relation to the proposal of Basil the Great.

This is a claim, then, which we need to take into serious consideration, both with regard to the paternity of this Epistle⁽¹⁵²⁾ and the

(149) M.P.G. 32: 736C2/4.

(150) M.P.G. 32: 736C13/15.

(151) C.C.S.G. 3, 219:21/5.

(152) Thus, the above mentioned Epistle should be attributed to Basil the Great, since it is derived from a collection of his Epistles, which is preserved in the *Codex Parisinus grecus* 1327, which was edited by Cotelier: *e Ms. Reg. 507 et exemplarii Harlaeano*. It appears that Amphilochius read this Epistle at the Synod adding the following:

place accorded to Amphilochius and his theology from now on in ecclesiastical affairs.

Thus, we arrive at that point in the life of Saint Amphilochius when ecclesiastical affairs demand his presence at the front line. This is no exaggeration. The composer of the saint's Old Life does not make it seem better that it really is when he writes: "Lord, King, give, then, the order that the Bishop of Iconium may come; for if he [does not come] we are all conquered".⁽¹⁵³⁾ The same applies to Symeon Metaphrastes who preserves the Old Life in a more literary linguistic idiom. The answer is obviously provided by the facts, since they are the measure and the judge.

The incapacity of the Great Basil due to his successive illnesses and his eventual departure from this life is the first and most basic reason that makes the presence of St Amphilochius in the great ecclesiastical battles such a pressing necessity.

The Great Basil, as he himself states in his Epistles, feels inadequate on account of the many and various problems of his health ("one sickness succeeds another sickness in us"⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ to deal with the "ecclesiastical affairs":⁽¹⁵⁵⁾

"And it was our wish ... but, having a writing of his especially composed for this matter, we have him speaking to us through his letter". The reading of this Epistle and the insertion in the Epistle of the words of St Amphilochius gave the stimulus for the creation of the impression that this was his own Epistle.

(153) M.P.G. 39: 20A3/5.

(154) M.P.G. 32: 733A1.

(155) M.P.G. 32: 733A2.

thus, he writes to Amphilochius: "... We kindly ask your Reverence first of all to pray for us, so that the Lord may grant to me deliverance from this burdensome body, and to his Churches, peace, and to you quietness and licence to take care of the affairs of Lycaonia apostolically, as you started doing with the affairs of this place, whether we are in the flesh, or whether we are already ordered to depart for the Lord, so that you yourself may suffice for our own places as if they were yours, for indeed they are such, and may strengthen the weak ones, raise up the sluggish ones and may reorder all by the grace of the Spirit, which is in you, in a way which is pleasing to the Lord".⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ When, therefore, the great head of the Church, Basil the Great, could not be present, it was necessary that the genuine successor of his theology should be found in his place.

At the time when Gregory Nazianzen, the champion of the Orthodox ("Gregory from Nazianzus was the leader of those who held the doctrine of a consubstantial Trinity"⁽¹⁵⁷⁾), was obliged to depart from Constantinople, where at that period "the churches were held by the followers of Arius' views under the leadership of Demophilus, and resign from its throne for the sake of the unity of the Church, because "he [Gregory] sensed that there were some who objected and especially those from Egypt",⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

Amphilochius

⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ M.P.G. 32: 733B7/C4.

⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Ἑρμείου Ζωζομενοῦ, "Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία", βιβλ. vii, M.P.G. 67: 1425A2/3.

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ M.P.G. 67: 1424C11/1425A1.

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ M.P.G. 67: 1432A10/11.

had to stand at the forefront, not, of course, because of his Metropolitan status, but because of his pioneering theology, which was so admired by St Jerome that he had no hesitation in including him among the foremost of the Cappadocians together with Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen.⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ This is the theology which Basil the Great accepted as a norm, honouring his own theology, for he wrote to Amphilochius: "And if you find one who could faithfully carry to us the book which we wrote, do resolve to send it back, so that, taking courage from your judgment, we may put it into the hands of others as well".⁽¹⁶¹⁾ It is also the theology on account of which Gregory would tell Amphilochius: "To me ... you became a good striking instrument, and made a harmonious lyre to indwell our souls, by means of what you wrote thousands of times, training our souls for perfect knowledge. Do not, O most God-fearing one, cease to pray and mediate for us, when by word you draw down the Word, when by a bloodless cut you cut the royal body and blood, using your voice like a sword".⁽¹⁶²⁾ This is indeed the theology which he recognized as the only one capable of solving the spiritual problems, for he ordered: "If, then, you would bear witness by yourself to these things by travelling further on, and would arbitrate between those who are in dispute with the rest of the Bishops, you would perform a spiritual task which is worthy of your perfection".⁽¹⁶³⁾

It was the Second Ecumenical Synod that actually

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ M.P.G. 39: 27/28 III.

⁽¹⁶¹⁾ M.P.G. 32: 929B1/4.

⁽¹⁶²⁾ M.P.G. 37: 286C7/291A2.

⁽¹⁶³⁾ M.P.G. 37: 301C1/4.

acknowledged this theology as essential, when it specified Amphilochius "as witness to the true faith".⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ Another source that confesses the importance of Amphilochius' Theology is Theodoret of Cyrus who writes in his Ecclesiastical History: "Besides, the all-famous Amphilochius, who was entrusted with the pastoral care of the metropolis of the Lycaonians, and was leader of that entire nation, on hearing that this outrage had fallen there, rose up again and delivered his flocks which had been affected by that ill-treatment".⁽¹⁶⁵⁾

St Photius also confirms as most important the theology of Amphilochius, when he supplies the information that Cyril of Alexandria had used this theology at the Third Ecumenical Synod in order to rebuff Nestorius: "Since this aforementioned man (Amphilochius) was notable for his orthodoxy (lit. piety), St Cyril produced witnesses from him against Nestorius during the Third Ecumenical Synod".⁽¹⁶⁶⁾

Again the Ecumenical Synod that was summoned for the second time at Nicaea acknowledged through Patriarch Tarasius that: "Our Father St Amphilochius is great".⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ There is no doubt that this qualification "great" refers to his theology and to him as a theologian.

For Amphilochius this theology was a matter of life and death, as appears characteristically from what he says to his deacon when they were about to be received by the emperor ("So my son, you should cry with a loud voice

⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ M.P.G. 67: 580A10.

⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ M.P.G. 82: 1144B11/5.

⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ Photius' *Bibliotheca*, M.P.G. 103: 1020A12/5.

⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ Veneto Labb, *Concilium Nicaenum* II, p. 1015, tom. viii.

when we make our entrance into the palace: let all stand up either for life or for death"⁽¹⁶⁸⁾). It was not simply a philosophy, an epistemology, a sort of theory: "I am not afraid of them on account of the volume of their words. I have no fear of the problems of artful deceit".⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ Thus, he appears to be challenging the emperor with this theology for the supposed calm in the Church: "It was then that the king made his son Arcadius to be Augustus ... And so the king sent again word to Bishop Nectarius, asking him about the kind of artificial device which would make Christianity look undivided and the Church united. Indeed he said that the issue which divided the churches ought to be examined and the disagreement thrown out so that unanimity among the churches might be worked out. Thus Nectarius, on hearing this, started to take appropriate care".⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ Amphilochius challenged the emperor for caring for his own interest and avoiding his duty, namely to proscribe heresy ("Besides, these [heretics] being a great multitude on account of the tendency of Constantius and Valens who did not understand, were disputing publicly about God and his substance (being) and even attempted to influence the king and persuaded their like-minded people in the royal courts";⁽¹⁷¹⁾ or as he put it implicitly but very clearly,

(168) Παλαίος Βίος, M.P.G. 39: 24A13/5.

(169) C.C.S.G. 3, 139:10/2.

(170) Socrates Scholasticus, Ἱστορία Ἐκκλησιαστική, βιβλ. v, κεφ. 1, M.P.G. 67: 584B12-C10.

(171) Hermias Sozomenus, Ἱστορία Ἐκκλησιαστική, βιβλ. vii, κεφ. στ', M.P.G. 67: 1428A4/8.

when he distinguished the heretics of Opus2 from the heretics of Opus1 who had on their side "the judiciary of cities which was able to deceive those divided about the faith".(172)

Amphilochius was accused for this theology by the heretics before the emperor as a madman and a fanatic: "... and it was those from the heresies, not us, who took the opportunity as they were talking and said to the king, who shall warn your dominion about this, showing that it is a false tale and senseless".(173)

We have obviously moved through all the above citations from the life of St Amphilochius to his theology, which, of course, is not alien to his life. His theology is the message of salvation, which the saint has appropriated in his own life, living it out and serving it as a Bishop. Thus he translates his life into word. It is the word of his existence as Bishop and word which is given by him as Bishop.

History hands over this saint to us as a constant fighter who is engaged in unceasing witnessing: "Optimus in Pisidia and Amphilochius in Lycaonia, were those who bravely fought for the ancestral faith and were able to repel the attacks of the adversaries".(174) Basil the Great writes in his Epistle to the local synod: "your fame,

(172) C.C.S.G. 3, 185:16/8.

(173) Symeon Metaphrastes, Βίος Ἀγίου Ἀμφιλοχίου, M.P.G. 116: 965D5/8.

(174) Theodoret of Cyrus, Ἱστορία Ἐκκλησιαστική, βιβλ. v, M.P.G. 82: 1192B2/5.

the integrity of your faith, your prolonged exposure to dangers and your patience in suffering for Christ have been declared to us".⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ The saint himself tells us in his Opus1: "Again as a lawful soldier I undertake the battle against the heretics".⁽¹⁷⁶⁾

This was a battle throughout all his life to "draw (according to Basil the Great) out of the depth and bring into the light those who were captured by the devil in the captivity of his will",⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ or, as he himself put it: "... that we may teach them (the heretics) that they greatly err ... Since then, they insult God by accusing the Logos of God and disobey the Spirit by parading the letter, ridiculing and disparaging Christ's economy and by the power of phraseology and eloquence of words cover up their poisonous bites, they defraud the more advanced ones of their salvation".⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ This is why he laboured throughout his entire life and gave up himself and everything ("Thine own from thine own we offer to Thee"⁽¹⁷⁹⁾) and became a true sacrifice: "... as for us we have decided so many times to die for Christ's sake as there are days in our life in the flesh, so that we may parade the truth triumphantly with a bare head".⁽¹⁸⁰⁾

Thus we meet the saint at various synods: a) of Iconium

⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 219:2/4.

⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 139:4/5

⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629A9/11.

⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 140:26/37.

⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ From the Divine Liturgy.

⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 139:14/5.

or Side against the Messalians and Euchites: "It was during this year that the heresy of the Messalians, i.e. Euchites, and Enthusiasts, arose... [who] were bravely opposed by Amphilochius of Iconium and Letoius of Melitine, and later on by Flavianus of Antioch";⁽¹⁸¹⁾ b) of Constantinople against the "Eunomians, i.e. the Anomoians, the Arians, i.e. the Eudoxians, the Semiarians, i.e. the Pneumatomachians, the Sabellians, the Marcellians, the Photinians and the Apollinarists";⁽¹⁸²⁾ or, "they have written, against the mania of Arius, Aetius and Eunomius, and also against Sabellius and Photinus, Marcellus, Paul of Samosata and Macedonius; and have also apparently denounced the innovation of Apollinaris";⁽¹⁸³⁾ c) again of Constantinople on the matter of making peace in the Church of Arabia⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ and finally, d) in the interventions of the emperor: "the divine Amphilochius arrived then before the king ... entreating for the expulsion of the societies of the Arians from the cities".⁽¹⁸⁵⁾

Amphilochius' participation in the synod of Constantinople of 394 is the last historical witness to his life. The end which came afterwards is supplied

(181) Theophanes, *Chronographia*, M.P.G. 108: 189A9/B3.

(182) *Sacrosancta Concilia*, Studio Philip, Gabr. Cossartii, Venetis, MDCCXXVIII, col. 1126A3/8.

(183) Theodoret of Cyrus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, M.P.G. 82: 1217D4/7.

(184) *Sacrosancta Concilia*, *op. cit.* col. 1378A.

(185) Theodoret of Cyrus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, M.P.G. 82: 1229A14/B2.

by the Synaxarium: "This evermemorable man rested in peace, having served the flock of Christ as pastor for many years, having composed orthodox orations and having arrived at a great old age".(186)

This study is differentiated from previous ones with regard to the historicity of the Old Life of the saint, which is accepted not on the basis of the historical truth of the letter (temporal exactitude), but on the truth of the spirit of the life (real events - life-experience) manifested through the accredited sources which have already been mentioned. It is precisely this truth that the dismissal hymn of the feast of the saint recapitulates in a most eloquent way: "Divine thunder; trumpet of the Spirit; planter of believers; hammer of heresies; O Amphilochius Hierarch, servant of the Trinity, the greatest; drawing always near with angels, never cease to intercede for us all".(187)

Such a truth prompts us to accept the historicity of the old life and not to reject it. If correctly understood, this truth explains the reason of the theology of the saint, which could not be anything else but a theology of reason (logos, purpose), since it is the theology of the Divine Reason (Logos) par excellence, the theology of "the incarnate economy of the Lord", or of "the economy of Christ", as we said in the beginning and as we shall see further on.

(186) M.P.G. 39: 33B2/5.

(187) M.P.G. 39: 33C3/7.

Part II

THE THEOLOGY OF ST AMPHILOCHIUS

2.1. Introduction

In this study the term theology of St Amphilochius refers to his teaching concerning the mystery "of the economy of Christ"⁽¹⁾ or "of the incarnate economy of the Lord"⁽²⁾, i.e. to the mystery *par excellence* ("for all the mysteries of the Christians hung upon this"⁽³⁾) of God's love towards man ("it was through his great love towards us that he laid down his own blood as a price for us"⁽⁴⁾), and to the war which is raised against this love by the devil ("again the envious devil does not cease to deceive those unstable by his own evil and his ancient art"⁽⁵⁾) and his organs, which "by ridiculing and deriding the economy of Christ ... steal away the salvation of those who have achieved greater integrity"⁽⁶⁾, as this salvation has been preserved in an exemplary way in his two works which have been already mentioned.

The meaning of the mystery of the economy is dominant in these two works: "I was born for an economy, I died for the salvation of the human

(1) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 35.

(2) "- 186: 60/1

(3) "- 188: 134.

(4) "- 188: 122/3

(5) "- 186: 66/8.

(6) "- 140: 34/7.

beings, or rather for this I died, because I was born,⁽⁷⁾ or, "it is for this reason that the Lord took up the incarnate economy for the race of human beings".⁽⁸⁾

The economy is the beginning and the end of the teaching of this saint: "let us teach them that they greatly err when they attribute fear and faint-heartedness to the Only-begotten"⁽⁹⁾; or: "We showed through the concrete cases we presented who the leader of the heresies is, and it would suffice to persuade thereby those deceived as to whose disciples they are, whose work they promote, and why they fight against Christ"⁽¹⁰⁾.

This is the deposit which he received ("the apostles and the martyrs suffered so many things for the sake of the blood of Christ and ended their life in this confession"⁽¹¹⁾) and this is what he needs to keep by making any kind of sacrifice ("but we choose to die for Christ as many times as the days of our life so that with naked head we may triumph for the truth"⁽¹²⁾). This is the purpose of his life and mission, as it is confessed in his old Life: "... seeing three robbers, I do not cease from crying; I mean Eunomius, Arius and Macedonius, whom may the Lord cut off from his people, for they blasphemed against his Godhead"⁽¹³⁾.

(7) G.C.S.G. 3, 146: 200/2.

(8) -"- 186: 60/2.

(9) -"- 140: 26/7.

(10) -"- 195: 396/9.

(11) -"- 188: 128/30.

(12) -"- 139: 13/5.

(13) M.P.G. 39: 25B3/6.

"The economy of Christ" is the mystery of God which the heretics blaspheme. They do this in two ways, directly: "they wove a dogma of blasphemy in order to deny your Godhead"⁽¹⁴⁾; and indirectly: "He, then, who denies the blood of Christ has blasphemed against his presence and has cancelled the price which was paid for him"⁽¹⁵⁾.

The Saint, "as a lawful soldier", does not tolerate blasphemy of the economy ("Since, therefore, they accuse God's Logos in order to blaspheme against God and parade the letter in order to cancel the spirit"⁽¹⁶⁾), because it is the cause of death ("not fixing our attention to the letter lest we die"⁽¹⁷⁾); or: "For they should be under strain and in tears having been deprived of so many and so great goods and even of life itself"⁽¹⁸⁾ and for this reason he "fights" the heretics ("he advances against them"⁽¹⁹⁾).

The saint proceeds against the heretics with great courage, "as if he already possesses the vote of victory"⁽²⁰⁾; with a certainty which is granted to him by his trusting of Christ ("for Christ encourages me through the prophet, saying..⁽²¹⁾). Christ is, through his resurrection ("I am the life and the resurrection"⁽²²⁾), his great power, so that he may not have any

(14) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 51.

(15) -"- 188: 125/7.

(16) -"- 140: 32/4.

(17) -"- 140: 43.

(18) -"- 189: 159/61

(19) -"- 139: 16.

(20) -"- 139: 16.

(21) -"- 139: 16/7

(22) -"- 142: 91/2 John 11:25.

"fear where there is no fear"⁽²³⁾. He is his great weapon for achieving his aim, which is none other than "to trample with the shoes of the Gospel of peace the multiform head of the heretics"⁽²⁴⁾ and, thus, teach heretics that "they greatly err when they attribute fear and faint-heartedness to the Only-begotten"⁽²⁵⁾, or "that they should not think that they have anything in common with Christians when they deny this",⁽²⁶⁾ since it was "on account of his great love for us he laid down his own blood as a price for us"⁽²⁷⁾.

The saint advances against the heretics because his aim is their salvation. He attempts to expose them out of good disposition, so that, if they wish, they may cease to be "foolish"; in other words that the heretics of the first Work may acknowledge Christ as Godman ("God as guaranteeing the miracles and man as bearing witness to the passions"⁽²⁸⁾) and those of the second Work that their salvation can be achieved only within the "true Paradise", the "Church" ("only stay inside the Paradise"⁽²⁹⁾), since this is the gift of "his incarnate economy" ("he showed you everywhere the power of the mystery of the Christians, which is that not avoiding sin,

(23) C.C.S.G. 3, 139: 12.

(24) "-. 140: 24/5.

(25) "-. 140: 26/7.

(26) "-. 188: 133.

(27) "-. 188: 122/3.

(28) "-. 150: 318,9.

(29) "-. 188: 111.

nor the devil himself, entering into the entrance of the saints, which he inaugurated for us as a recent and living path, means being recognized by the King as not bearing the seal"(30).

So both, the purpose of the saint's "battle" and the means he uses for achieving it are good. On the one hand they "support the mind" of the faithful and , on the other hand, "they reprimand the mindlessness" of the unbelievers. They strengthen him ("having placed my trust on the prayer of the martyr"(31)) and, at the same time, disarm his enemies ("... I disarm the enemies of the truth"(32)).

Having as his "Taxiarch" (going ahead of him) and collaborator (praying with him) a saint, Stephen the Protomartyr, the saint dares to press ahead. He goes on and he prays. And he has with him all the faithful, the entire Church, praying with him ("we shall call upon God's Logos"(33)) and thus he is confident of meeting with success as he attempts "to confront the volume of their words"(34) and "disarm them" so that they will be unable to effect the "truth" which saves.

The presence of the saint in the battle is a necessary task, since "those who think and speak without correct judgment ... do not understand how to pray to the Father of Christ"(35) they are dangerous

(30) C.C.S.G. 3, 188: 144/8.

(31) -"- 139: 9.

(32) -"- 139: 8.

(33) -"- 140: 38.

(34) -"- 139: 10/1.

(35) -"- 140: 27/30.

for "his economy", because "by the skill of phrase and the eloquence of words they cover up their poisonous bites"⁽³⁶⁾ and, thereby, "steal away the salvation of those who are more advanced in integrity"⁽³⁷⁾.

The voice of the saint is necessary in such a difficult hour for the Church, the hour of heresy, as the biographer of his Old Life adeptly bears witness,⁽³⁸⁾ seeing this voice as the instrument of the Divine Logos: "come and let us invoke the Divine Logos as persons inexperienced in words, so that He may become the interpreter of his own words, rebuking their mindlessness and strengthening our mindfulness".⁽³⁹⁾

The role of the presence of the Logos of God as man is two-fold ("instructor of fools and teacher of babes"⁽⁴⁰⁾), because the attitude of human beings towards him is two-fold. He is a "Teacher" to those who look to him as the Life and ask of him to give them "the pure milk of the evangelical teaching"⁽⁴¹⁾ and, an "Instructor" to those who reject this offer of his and remain without him in their confrontation with death: "Tell us the meaning of what has been said, Master, expound the leafage of the letter and show the fruit of the Spirit, so that we may not die by paying attention to the letter, but running to the Spirit we may enjoy

(36) C.C.S.G.3, 140: 35/6.

(37) -"- 140: 36/7.

(38) M.P.G. 39: 20A3/5.

(39) C.C.S.G.3, 140: 37/40.

(40) -"- 140: 46/7.

(41) -"- 140: 48/9.

life".(42)

The Lord who loves mankind becomes "Instructor" to those who reject him by accepting only that which they see (humanity) while rejecting what they cannot see (Godhead) – "For I know the economy which I dispense but you cannot hear"(43) – and forget, of course, that "the notification of secret things surpasses mortal hearing".(44) This problem they have, however, i.e. how "I became flesh without falling away from being God"(45) only faith in the logic of his presence can solve ("I was born for an economy, I died for the salvation of human beings"(46)).

Thus the saint, on the one hand in order to strengthen the believers in the mystery of the God-man-hood of Christ – in the "Economy" – which is during this period being opposed and, on the other hand, in order to help those who fight it to understand it, he dispenses the "mystery" like a minister and "by word he pulls towards him the Word"(47) according to Gregory the Theologian. The "pulling of the Word towards him", i.e. God's drawing near to man and the fruits of this event, is the theology of the saint in his first Work, which is delivered by the present Word, as "interpreter of his own words".(48)

(42) C.C.S.G.3, 140: 41/4.

(43) "- 145: 189/90.

(44) "- 145: 190.

(45) "- 146: 199.

(46) "- 146: 200/1.

(47) M.P.G. 37: 280C14.

(48) C.C.S.G.3. 140: 38/9.

His second Work presupposes, as natural, the saint's teaching concerning the mystery of the Incarnation of Christ (Theology of the first Word): "Because then, the human race was subjected to a decision of death because of Adam who was created from the virginal earth, and I was the one who brought out the decision of death, and it was impossible that man should be delivered from the punishment, unless I myself revoked my own decision, for this reason I undergo death having taken human form from a virginal womb after the likeness of Adam, so that as God I might dissolve the decision and as man I might undergo death for human beings".⁽⁴⁹⁾ Elsewhere he repeats it as follows: "For the human race was taught to worship God alone, but the devil created many pseudonymous gods ... and therefore the Lord took up the incarnate economy for the sake of the race of human beings, so that he might abolish the polytheist deceit and bring back them back to the worship of the true God through the bath of regeneration, and gather into the Church the whole of humanity which had been dispersed"⁽⁵⁰⁾, since without Christ nothing could take place from what did take place, that is, no human beings could acquire the true life who would not believe in his good death and would not participate in it through their baptism ("for this reason I undergo death, because I considered more preferable the good death than the evil life, so that those who participated in good death might be granted true life through baptism".⁽⁵¹⁾)

(49) C.C.S.G.3, 144: 137/45.

(50) -"- 186: 54/64.

(51) -"- 144: 160/3.

Thus, presupposing the teaching of the faith in the God-man-hood of Christ and the sealing of this faith through baptism, we come to the second Work of the saint. In this Work he encounters those who, in the beginning accepted "the mystery of the economy of Christ" and through baptism became members of the body of Christ, "his Church", ("and called it his body"⁽⁵²⁾) and each received within it the fruit of the Holy Spirit (For each one grows and bears fruit according to his faith and diligence; as long as he remains in the paradise of Christ"⁽⁵³⁾), but afterwards came indirectly to reject it.

This indirect rejection is the problem of the heretics. The loss of the "grace and the gift" which they received through baptism ("the substance which they lost"⁽⁵⁴⁾) on account of their departure from the Church and her sacraments and their substitution of these with the fight of false continence and renunciation ("but the promise of continence or renunciation of word is nothing wonderful nor a cause of toil"⁽⁵⁵⁾), deprives them of their salvation. Their battle outside the "Paradise" of God results in their becoming "more wretched than any deceived human being"⁽⁵⁶⁾ and their rejection of the offering of their God makes them "have nothing in

(52) C.C.S.G. 3: 186, 65.

(53) C.C.S.G. 3: 187, 110-188, 111.

(54) C.C.S.G. 3: 191, 248/9.

(55) C.C.S.G. 3: 197, 455/7.

(56) C.C.S.G. 3: 189, 155/6.

common with a Christian, as they deny this, for all the mysteries (sacraments) of the Christians hung upon this; whether you speak of church, or scriptures, or catechisms, or baptism, or altar, or this very body, which is dead without the blood and which no one offers dead upon the altar".(57)

As an approved "minister of the mysteries of God"(58) and participant of the life-giving gifts of the Spirit, the saint lays down before his spiritual children his rich experience in spiritual battles, and reprimands the heretics ("let us teach the children of the Church and reprimand those who always oppose God and lay down alternative rules to his"(59)), so that the former may avoid the devil's "deceits" ("For when continence and renunciation is taught who would be so easily deceived by such a craft?"(60)) and may, without running the risk of "apostasy", remain in the Church and enjoy the "paradise with the many kinds of fruit", (61) while the latter may, through repentance, regain their lost "substance" ("Except that God is a lover of human beings, and does not bear any ill-will or malice; but if you turn back, he is ready on account of his own goodness to welcome you as him"(62)).

(57) C.C.S.G.3, 188: 133/8.

(58) M.P.G. 37: 280C11-281A2.

(59) C.C.S.G.3: 210: 963/4.

(60) -"- 187: 97/98.

(61) -"- 187:108.

(62) -"- 192: 271/3.

2.2. The two Works

The two Works of the saint which are under examination in this study could have been two parts (A and B respectively) of "one" treatise against "all the heresies", that is, against every form of denial of religion: "For as Christ is the leader of the catholic church and delivered himself for her, so that he might sanctify her and himself present the church to himself without spot or wrinkle or any of the like, likewise the devil, being ready to deceive and to scatter, became leader of all the heresies".⁽⁶³⁾ In other words they could have been parts of "one" treatise, or "one" teaching discourse of St Amphilochius on man's belief or unbelief in God ("Indeed we ought, in regard to this, to have adduced more witnesses from the Scriptures, but we considered it redundant, since the two persons of the believer and the unbeliever are obvious"⁽⁶⁴⁾), who in New Testament times, "took up the incarnate economy for the race of human beings, in order to abolish the polytheistic deceit and lead them back to the worship of the true God through the bath of regeneration".⁽⁶⁵⁾

Thus, the two Works are parts not only of "one" treatise on belief and unbelief, but also of the problems which the latter causes: "But again the envious devil does not cease to deceive those who are unstable by his own evil and ancient artistry, for as previously he renamed idols as gods... so

(63) C.C.S.G.3, 186: 49/54.

(64) "-." 194: 349/351.

(65) "-." 186: 60/66.

now he has named many churches, or rather, to say what is true, he raised those who put their trust on him by the renunciation of Christ as i d o l s o f c h u r c h e s ... in order to drag them away from the true Church".(66)

The first part in this whole teaching, Opus1 of this study, has been preserved intact and supplies those elements which do not appear in the second part, Opus2, because of the condition in which it was found which would otherwise create irreplaceable gaps in its entire picture and, more generally, in the theology of the saint.

We described as a "blessing" the preservation of these two works, because their destruction would have indeed been a substantial loss. This sense of "blessing" -- beyond their invaluable contents -- is further accentuated by the fact that Work A has been preserved only in two codices (A Atheniensis gr. 2319 and M Monacensis gr. 534), while Work B, exists only in one codex (Scorialensis gr. 137). In spite, however, of the hopelessly small number of codices and the bad condition of the only surviving codex, the teaching and theology of the saint have been preserved -- albeit in a representative manner.

(66) C.C.S.G.3, 186-7: 66/74.

2.3. Opus2 as continuation of Opus1

Opus1 and Opus2, as we have already said, constitute not only a unity, but also a continuation, as we shall see below. In other words, Opus2 is that which logically follows Opus1. This continuation could possibly never have existed on the same paper, yet it is certain that it existed in reality (subsequent appearance of these heresies) and, also, in the life of the saint who wrote: ""they enter lavishly into other people's labours, which they wipe out".(67) We are led to this view from the witnesses which are contained in Opus2 and reveal this relation. What are they?

a) The distinction which the saint makes between the "leaders" of the heretics of this Work and those "leaders of the other heresies", (68) which shows that he has already spoken about the latter.

b) The epigrammatic formulation in Opus2 of the entire teaching of the heretics of Opus1 "who try through philosophy and empty deceit to deceive some. For indeed through their acquired ability they attempt to draw the scriptures towards their own wills and thenceforth deceive the more simple-minded ones", (69) which naturally leads to the following statements of Opus1: "For I do not faint before them on account of the volume of words ... Since then they deride God's Word in order to blaspheme against God and praise the letter in order to abolish the Spirit,

(67) C.C.S.G.3, 185: 22/3.

(68) -"- 185: 4.

(69) -"- 185: 4/7.

ridiculing and deriding the economy of Christ, and cover the deadly bites of their statements by their acquired ability of phrase and eloquence, robbing the salvation of the purer ones",⁽⁷⁰⁾ and shows that this is a case of heretics already known.

c) The phrase "as soon as they see the vine-dresser being occupied in another place", which denotes the great and trying period of the struggles of the Church against "powerful enemies"⁽⁷¹⁾ which preceded the struggles against "the small foxes"⁽⁷²⁾ and for which the saint says in another place: "... because the leaders of the Churches of Christ were driven away by those who persecuted at that time the Church of God".⁽⁷³⁾

d) The phrase "for no man who is strong and steadfast in the faith and established on the rock, namely, Christ, is deceived by them, except he who is standing on the side and is carried away by every wind, who is scattered away from the Church",⁽⁷⁴⁾ reveals to us that, since the trials of the previous times have passed, which required great power for the confession of the faith ("they bravely and eagerly suffered all things on account of the love for the Saviour and happily died the temporary death exchanging it for eternal life",⁽⁷⁵⁾ the heretics of Opus2 are from those who entered

(70) C.C.S.G.3, 139:10 - 140:37.

(71) "-. 185:14.

(72) "-. 185:10.

(73) "-. 196: 421/2.

(74) "-. 185: 25/28.

(75) "-. 187: 90/93.

into the Church without much understanding of this event and without being tried, i.e. without having been established upon the "rock", who entered with great ease but are now scattered away from it.

e) The fact that if we observe chronologically the affairs relating to the life of the Church, we easily realize that the rejection from within came afterwards, since faith and baptism had preceded.

As it appears to be certain, therefore, from the Work itself, that these heretics are later in time than those who were refuted in Opus1, it should be inferred as a matter of consequence that this work is chronologically a follow up of the Opus1. The above witnesses show clearly that Opus2, appears to be a continuation of Opus1 in the saint's "one" treatise "against all heresies".

2.4. On the "headlessness" and "taillessness" of Opus2

Since Opus2 was published by the late Professors G. Ficker (*Amphilochiana*) and K. Bonis (*Amphilochius of Iconium on False Asceticism*) much comment has been made on the allegedly great loss of the head and tail of this Work. The ever-memorable Professor Bonis writes characteristically: "As we lamented the loss of the beginning of the manuscript, equally lamentable is considered to be the falling off of its ending".(76)

We believe – for two reasons – that the loss is not of this nature or magnitude. To begin with this is not the case of one single Work – one single Discourse – which is "headless and tailless", but of two Discourses of the saint, from which the first one survives "headless"and the second, "tailless". Yet, as we said above and will see further on, this gap is filled as regards the "head"/beginning by the introductory paragraphs of Opus1 and as regards the "tail"/ending by the first Discourse of Opus2. But let us turn to the facts.

What, then, is the problem and what is it that is missing from the "head"? If we place the two Works side by side, we observe that what seems to be missing from Opus2 could be the details which refer to the "soldier" of Opus1 and which have been possibly left out for two main reasons: a)

(76) K. Bonis *Amphilochius of Iconium On False Asceticism* Περὶ Ψευδοῦς Ἀσκήσεως) Athens 1979, pp. 79ff.

because they had been already given in Opus1 – first part of the "one" Work as we believe –, and b) since this Work is theoretically addressed to Christians, it is known to them that every Christian is a soldier of Christ and that such a soldier *par excellence* is the Bishop. Thus what is to be said about the "soldier" is not placed first as in the previous Work, where it is to be supplied as unknown data, but exists within it in another form: "the Apostles and Martyrs suffered so many things ... and in this confession they reached perfect ending",⁽⁷⁷⁾ so as to recall the debt and to refute the inconsistency.

The data, then, which are seemingly missing from Opus2 are those which refer to the saint "as lawful soldier",⁽⁷⁸⁾ the work which he has to accomplish ("I accept the fight towards the heretics"⁽⁷⁹⁾), the manner whereby he is to achieve it ("through the cooperation of the martyr"⁽⁸⁰⁾), the weapons which he will use in the fight ("trusting in the prayer of the martyr"⁽⁸¹⁾ and "the sandals of the gospel of peace"⁽⁸²⁾) and, finally, the purpose of this "fight" ("that we may bring the truth to triumph with a bare head"⁽⁸³⁾ and "teach them that they are in great error"⁽⁸⁴⁾). These

(77) C.C.S.G.3, 188:128/30

(78) -"- 139:4.

(79) -"- 139:4/5.

(80) -"- 139:7.

(81) -"- 139:9.

(82) -"- 139:20/21.

(83) -"- 139:15.

(84) -"- 140:26.

data are left out for the above mentioned reasons.

Following on, after the identity of the "lawful soldier", it is the identity of the "enemies" that naturally, and comparatively with Opus1, comes to the fore. These people pretend to be "mindful of heavenly things" (a view which actually prevails among the many others who are ignorant of their real "mind"), but the "lawful soldier" uncovers them and presents them not only as people who are "mindful of nothing heavenly" but also as "having no human mind at all".⁽⁸⁵⁾ From this point on Opus2 is extant and transmits St Amphilochius' invaluable teaching concerning the "small foxes"⁽⁸⁶⁾ which, as we saw, "extinguish the little vineyards",⁽⁸⁷⁾ such as the Province of Iconium.

The problem of the loss of the "tail/end" of Opus2 is relative to the problem of the loss of the "head/beginning". The lost tail, of course, has to do with the second discourse of the saint "On devilish writings", or "That these heresies are to be traced to that of Simon Magus", which was found in his Discourse "On small foxes", and thus constitute with it a unity, which we here call Opus2, since this is how it exists today in the editions of the works of the saint.

Here too, no essential problem is created, because the Work has survived by divine economy to that point where the saint, having given all

(85) C.C.S.G.3, 185: 1/2.

(86) -"- 185: 10.

(87) -"- 185: 25.

the demonstrations from the Scriptures("you have the Old Testament ... you have been persuaded by the Gospels ...⁽⁸⁸⁾), now calls the "apostate", the "transgressor", out of the hard criticism which he has made against him, to return, as he had actually done in the previous discourse: "for no one would force you if you return to the Church to eat and drink the fleshly food, nor to get married or be given away to marriage, but if you wish you may eat neither bread nor anything that enlarges the body. Only of the body and blood of Christ you should not deprive yourself and also you should not detest the creatures of God".⁽⁸⁹⁾

It is shown, therefore, that after the careful completion of the end of the text from within itself, or from the discourse⁽⁹⁰⁾ which preceded and which has the same subject-matter, no problem is created by the lack of a tail/end to this Work.

(88) C.C.S.G.3, 214: 1091/4.

(89) -"- 193: 319/24.

(90) See above for the two discourses of the saint in Opus2.

2.5. Stephen and Simon

There are two persons who occupy a crucial position in the saint's theology and express in themselves two completely different manners of life. These are Stephen "the general of true piety"⁽⁹¹⁾ and "Simon, the exarch of these heresies".⁽⁹²⁾

The "believer and the unbeliever"⁽⁹³⁾ are the two persons for whom the saint speaks who with their attitude of trust and mistrust towards the mystery of God's love for mankind -- the "economy" -- become the representative types of all human beings: "For you will find in the first the measure of piety reached by the holy prophets, apostles and martyrs, as well as many of the children of the Church of Christ, and in the second person you will find many others mentioned in the Scriptures and named by various names".⁽⁹⁴⁾

Stephen the protomartyr, who, being full of the Holy Spirit ... saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God",⁽⁹⁵⁾ is put forth in Opus1 by the saint as the prototype for his calling human beings to faith. By his faith in Christ and by his martyrdom for him he becomes the head person, the "general of true piety", whom every "lawful soldier"

(91) C.C.S.G.3, 139: 5/6.

(92) "- 194: 357/8.

(93) "- 194: 351.

(94) _"- 194: 351/7.

(95) Acts 7:55.

is called to follow, without fainting before the tricks ("For I learned not to be afraid of fear where there is no fear"⁽⁹⁶⁾). The archdeacon becomes the source of courage for the believers ("having put his trust on the prayer of the martyr") and at the same time, the judge for the unbelievers ("so that we may teach them that they greatly err through what you use to move fearlessly against them").

The other prototype which the saint puts forth is not for imitation, but for aversion. This is Simon of Opus: "he who previously denounced the devil and his angels and all his works ... who welcomed baptism through Philip the apostle, but who is praised only so far, and recognized beyond that as wretched".⁽⁹⁷⁾ The distrust and lack of repentance of this man ("which made him sick with lust for power"⁽⁹⁸⁾), are what make him "lamentable" ("more wretched and worthy of many laments are those who have fallen into the deceit of these heresies"⁽⁹⁹⁾), because "having failed to reach his target ... he never ceases from fighting the apostles unto death ... and from cooperating with the devil and fighting Christ".⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

Stephen the protomartyr and Simon Magus, then, are respectively "measures ... of true piety ... and impiety"⁽¹⁰¹⁾ in the theological teaching of saint Amphilochius, or images which symbolize belief and unbelief. The

(96) C.C.S.G. 3, 139: 12.

(97) "-." 195: 381/4.

(98) "-." 195: 376/7.

(99) "-." 198: 156/7.

(100) "-." 195: 384/96.

(101) "-." 194: 351/7.

faith is faith which man must confess in order to "... enjoy life through baptism",⁽¹⁰²⁾ the faith which the good soldier has to keep though every sacrifice in order to "... be recognized by the king as bearing the seal"⁽¹⁰³⁾ of the "gift" and not remain without apology because he will have to raise the weight of unbelief (".. the apostles and the martyrs suffered so many things for the sake of the blood of Christ and reached perfect ending while in this confession, of what punishment should these be worthy those who denied the price which was paid for them , who have no wounds, no sword, exposed to no danger?"⁽¹⁰⁴⁾)

(102) C.C.S.G.3, 144: 162/3.

(103) -" 189: 147/8.

(104) -"- 188: 128/32.

2.6. The meaning of "blood" in the theology of the saint

An important problem arises as to the meaning which the saint attaches to the "blood" every time he uses this term. The right understanding of the meaning of this term is an indispensable presupposition for a genuine approach to his whole theology. Otherwise, the real magnitude which is contained therein is restricted to a tiny space and time, with the result that the diachronic value of the text is minimized and those who could benefit from its teaching (exactly on account of its diachronic character) are deprived of such a benefit.

The term "blood" is central to the theology of the saint: "He then, who rejects his blood has blasphemed against his presence and has rejected the price which was laid down for him".⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ The "blood" is the central axis around which the entire teaching of Opus2 evolves ("for they should not think that they have anything that belongs to a Christian when they deny this [blood]"⁽¹⁰⁶⁾). The same, indeed, can be said about the entire theology of the saint, for in speaking about the offering of this blood he says: "I was born for an economy, I died for the salvation of human beings; or rather I died on this account, because I was born".⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

The saint uses the term "blood" in order to denote first of all the event of the sacrifice of the crucifixion which as "grace" liberates humanity

(105) C.C.S.G. 3, 188: 125/7.

(106) "-." 188: 133.

(107) "-." 146: 200/2.

from original sin by the means of baptism. "Because it was by a judgement that the race of human beings was subjected to death on account of Adam who had been created from a virgin earth ... for this reason it was from a virginal womb that according to the likeness of Adam and having taken the form of the servant I suffer death, so that as God I might dissolve the judgement and as man I might consent to accepting death for the sake of human beings ... Thus, it is in the person of Adam that I now accept the verdict of death, so that he might receive through me the grace of the resurrection ... and [human beings] might be granted this through baptism";⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ The same must be said about the mystery (sacrament) of the divine Eucharist as a means of sanctification ("gift") which is given by the Church, along with the other mysteries (sacraments): "it is only the saints that you denounced, for this is the only thing that you were taught by your own continence and renunciation, namely, to ignore your priest and him who always feeds you through the mystical and sacred food".⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

Thus, it is obvious that the saint uses this term differently in order to denote either the "grace" which is given to man by the sacrifice of the crucifixion and can be enjoyed by baptism, or the "gift" which is granted by the Church and whose partakers human beings can be through the mysteries.

Following this necessary clarification it is natural that the discourse should be given to Him who gives his blood. Thus, we are led to *Opus 1* which can be regarded as the saint's "Christology". This term is conventional, and yet very apt, since it is he who, fighting the heretics who implicitly

(108) C.C.S.G. 3, 144: 137/63.

(109) -"- 3, 190: 202/4.

denied the Godhead of Christ ("they weaved a dogma of blasphemy in order to abolish your Godhead"⁽¹¹⁰⁾), develops his teaching about Christ's humanity ("for I am God and man"⁽¹¹¹⁾), which is discourse about the person of Christ, i.e. "Christology".

(110) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 51.

(111) -"- 3, 150: 317/8.

2.7. The teaching of Opus1: Christology

In Opus1 the saint engages in a fight ("I take up the fight against the heretics"⁽¹¹²⁾) against the people who disbelieve in the Godmanhood of Christ. Theirs is a direct rejection of this truth: "they wove a dogma of blasphemy in order to abolish your Godhead".⁽¹¹³⁾ Thus the saint is confronted with the problems of "the drama of hypocrisy"⁽¹¹⁴⁾ and of the "cover up of blasphemy",⁽¹¹⁵⁾ which are created by unbelief under the "pretext of impiety"⁽¹¹⁶⁾ and the blasphemy of self-willed decision".⁽¹¹⁷⁾

The saint fights this kind of unbelief, because such a rejection constitutes an obstacle to baptism, i.e. to "communion with the good death" of Christ, which is based on the necessary presupposition of the faith in the redemptive work of the Godman ("and as God I shall dissolve the verdict and as man I shall accept the death for the sake of humanity".⁽¹¹⁸⁾ In other words, this unbelief may really exist before the baptism of human beings.

Talking, of course about the unbelief of human beings in the Godmanhood of Christ before their baptism may cause some sort of sensation, inasmuch as these people may be already baptised persons. In reality, however, this is the case,

(112) C.C.S.G. 3, 139: 4/5.

(113) -"- 3, 140: 51.

(114) -"- 3, 140: 53.

(115) -"- 3, 140: 55.

(116) -"- 3, 140: 53.

(117) -"- 3, 140: 53/5.

(118) -"- 3, 144: 143/5.

because without acceptance of this faith one is only formally but not really baptised.

It happens, then, that some of those who deny Christ in Opus1 are actually formally baptised, but their baptism is put to question since what characterises it as sacrament ("faith in the Godman") and what constitutes its gift are denied. Thus, if one has not previously accepted the meaning of the sacrament of the Godman, there is no point in proceeding to baptism and becoming a member of the Church and of the body of Christ. This person is deprived of the benefit which is given by the true "communion in the good death" of Christ, since there is no communion with him, inasmuch as he does not want "to accept the grace of the resurrection"⁽¹¹⁹⁾ which the new Adam offers him.

As we mentioned with reference to the saint's Life, heresy is not simply one of the many problems which he had to face, but the essential problem ("You say Lord, but you do not mean Lord"⁽¹²⁰⁾). It is a matter of life and death, since faith begets life, whereas lack of faith - heresy - begets death ("Tell us what the sense is of what was said, o master ... so that we may not die by paying attention to the letter, but receive life by running to the spirit"⁽¹²¹⁾).

The saint wants to offer an antidote to the "poisonous bites"

(119) C.C.S.G. 3, 144: 151/2.

(120) -"- 3, 86: 54/55.

(121) -"- 3, 140: 41/44.

of the heretics which are "hidden under the suitability of the phrase" and their eloquence, because this is required of him by his sense of duty. Actually it is his response to the command which said: "And like a wise helmsman who steers to the right course, who by his free choice stands above all the surge which stirred up by the heretical winds (lit. spirits), keep the vessel which you have to tow unaffected by the salty and bitter waves of false doctrine (cacodoxy)".⁽¹²²⁾ Amphilochius's task was precisely to keep the vessel of the church unaffected by the salty and bitter waves of heresy.

In his attempt to provide an answer to the problems of "the artful deceit"⁽¹²³⁾ he has as his support "the prayer of [Stephen] the martyr" and as his weapon, "the sandals of the gospel of peace". Thus, by these means he does what Basil the Great had specified: he acts as "a voice which is worthy of making [the Lord] rise and rebuke the waves and the sea".⁽¹²⁴⁾ This voice is none other than Amphilochius' teaching which directly addresses the problem of heresy.

In this work, which we characterized as the "Christology" of the saint, Amphilochius expounds his knowledge as a believer and bishop of the Church in such a way that it constitutes a direct revelation of Christ: "the knowledge of realities which are ineffable transcends mortal hearing ... and thus I interpret it not as it is by nature, but as you may be able to learn".⁽¹²⁵⁾ He becomes a disciple

⁽¹²²⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629C4/7.

⁽¹²³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 139: 11/2.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ M.P.G. 32: 629C7/9.

⁽¹²⁵⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 145: 190/2.

and as an authentic disciple he knows that there is only one teacher ("come and let us invoke the Word of God as persons who are inexperienced in words"(126)) and thus, the only thing he does is to call upon the Word (Logos) of God so he himself may make known to human beings his own words ("so that he himself may become interpreter of his own words"(127)). As a true minister of the mystery and honest mediator of his people the saint makes an invocation to the Word in order "to reprimand the ignorance of the foolish and to strengthen the mind of the faithful".(128) The presence of the Word and the interpretation of the mystery of his "sympathising" towards human beings is the saint's Christology.

When we speak here about the "presence of the Word", or when we say further above that "he raised the Lord", we mean the "wise" tactics of the saint to pray ("Let us invoke the Word of God") and to cite as many scriptural witnesses as possible ("the sandals of the gospel of peace"), by way of interpreting scripture by scripture. It is failure to understand this method of consistent reference to the words of holy scripture that has led some to conclusions about the saint's weakness in theology.

The work of the saint, however, can be characterized as a gospel: "Uncover the breast of grace and give to us babes the nipple of the Spirit, [so that] the pure milk of evangelical teaching might be shed into us".(129)

(126) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 37.

(127) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 38/9..

(128) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 39/40.

(129) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 47/9.

But the Canon of the New Testament had already been closed and the battle now was how to secure the trustworthiness of what had been written and what the Church recognized as the only authentic record. This is why St Amphilochius by and large repeats the teaching of the books of holy Scripture and includes these in his Iambic Verses to Seleucus as the only canonical ones".⁽¹³⁰⁾

This work, then, is not a new gospel, since this would be irrelevant; it is, however a complete "Christology", the best source of Christology. According to the historical witness of St Photius⁽¹³¹⁾ St Cyril of Alexandria made use of it in his response to Nestorius. Yet we have to acknowledge, as we said further above, that the term "Christology" does not appear in this work. It is its content which is so named by us because it deals with the teaching of the Church as teaching of the Word himself about the mystery of Christ the Godman.

Turning to this content of Opus1 we may say that it constitutes an answer to the problem human beings have with the "economy of Christ", or the "economy of God". It is an answer to this problem which is given to those who are well disposed towards it and as such it resembles the maternal milk which is given for sustenance. But it also resembles a paedagogue who reprimands in order to teach, since his motivation is love rather than vengeance ("tell us o master the meaning

⁽¹³⁰⁾ M.P.G. 37: 1577-1600.

⁽¹³¹⁾ M.P.G. 103: 1020A12/5.

of what has been said ... Teach us as a babe and instruct as a paedagogue those who are foolish ... Uncover the breast of grace and give us babes the nipple of the Spirit, [so that] the pure milk of evangelical teaching might be shed into us. Expose the foolishness of the heretics. For if they were not foolish they would not have woven a dogma of blasphemy for abolishing your Godhead""(132).

Being a man of faith, the saint finds it difficult, in contrast to the heretics, to understand how he who came willingly to suffer, or who showed throughout all his life with acts and words that he was Lord of death, could actually fear death. For the man of faith there must be something else behind this seeming contradiction. This is indeed what he seeks to learn from him who did so, since he alone should know the answer.

Thus, to the brief question, "why did you suffer O Master?",(133) which contains the entire mystery of God's love for mankind and the entire "economy" undertaken for the sake of humanity, it is the Logos who supplies an equally brief and straight-forward answer: "For the salvation of human beings, he says".(134) Yet this brief and comprehensive answer becomes the starting point for the utterance from the mouth of the Godman of the how ("and speak about the manner"(135)) and the why ("because") whatever happened came to be so.

(132) C.C.S.G. 3, 140: 41/45.

(133) C.C.S.G. 3, 143: 136.

(134) C.C.S.G. 3, 143: 136-144/7.

(135) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:137.

The dramatic condition of man after his fall ("for it was through Adam, who had been created from a virgin soil, that the race of human beings were subjected to the verdict of death") is the reason which pertains to "God's economy". At this difficult condition of the human race ("so that their life is worse than death"⁽¹³⁷⁾) no one else could offer help ("it was impossible that humanity could be exempted from the penalty"⁽¹³⁸⁾) except the One "who had brought forth the verdict of death"⁽¹³⁹⁾, who could "revoke his own verdict".⁽¹⁴⁰⁾

Man's drama is the cause of God's philanthropic intervention.: "it is on this account that he underwent death having taken the form of man from a virginal womb according to the likeness of Adam".⁽¹⁴¹⁾ Christ dissolves the verdict through his divine nature ("as God") and "accepts death on behalf of mankind"⁽¹⁴²⁾ through his economy ("as man").

God acts for mankind out of love, not only with regard to his purpose, but also with regard to the manner: "I do this, therefore, so that I might free man not through a u t h o r i t y but s y m p a t h y".⁽¹⁴³⁾ This manner is none other than the practical proof of his great love and honour

(136) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:137/9.

(137) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:159/60.

(138) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:140.

(139) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:139/40.

(140) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:141.

(141) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:141.3.

(142) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:143/5.

(143) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:145/6.

towards man: "For if it was God who made the achievement when man sinned, then there is nothing great about the achievement. But now this is why I became man and fulfilled the law for the sake of the one who broke it, so that through the relation to the achiever the race of human beings might be able to be boast".(144)

All these things had to happen, so that Adam and the whole of the human race might not only be boastful, but also participate in the resurrection: "Hence, even now I accept in the person of Adam the decision concerning death, so that he may receive through me the grace of the resurrection".(145)

The whole event is very great indeed, and this is why the Logos recapitulates and explains it as follows: "When Adam failed he introduced death with it, when I won I reintroduced the resurrection". Indeed, it was because death reigned from Adam to Moses, and it reigned from the fact that it had the body under control as cooperator of sin, that I assumed this body, which is thought to be an instrument of sin, so that by abolishing sin I might prove man to be free from sin ... and on this account I suffer death having preferred the good death over the evil life, so that those who have communicated in the good death they might receive as recompense the true life; and actually receive this through baptism. For whoever are baptised, they are baptized into my death, so that just as I was raised from the death, likewise these too may walk in newness of life".(146)

(144) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:146/50.

(145) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:150/2.

(146) C.C.S.G. 3, 144:152/63.

It is difficult for a metaphysical event to be accommodated to the physical mind of man, especially when the latter is corrupt: "And no one who doubts should say that darkness does not work out life, nor blackness constitutes whiteness, for how did death gave birth to life? That the event is beyond nature, it obvious".⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ This difficulty, however, is due to the difference which exists between the laws and the Lawsetter, the Lawgiver: "But from me you must not ask for the order of nature. For I am the Master of nature, who, at some point allowed nature to be carried out according to nature, and at some other point I bridled it above nature"⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ as well as in the difference between natural and supernatural phenomena. "For whenever I want to dispense something exceptional, then nature itself refuses its own order and effects the very things which my own command might order".⁽¹⁴⁹⁾

He gives examples which fully demonstrate the above difference and help in overcoming the difficulty. And since what is of primary interest to him is man and not nature ("and in order that I might not occupy your soul with the visible arrangement of the world, I shall lead you to this very economy in order to persuade you that you must not seek to find the way in the paradoxical and miraculous workings of nature"⁽¹⁵⁰⁾), he quickly passes over what concerns nature and its laws in order to come to the main theme, the economy of man. What is this economy?

"For I shall recall to memory, the Logos shall say, that God put on

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 166/8.

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 16/71.

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 171/3.

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 178/9.

the human body".⁽¹⁵¹⁾ This is the first event above the possibilities of nature ("This, then, is the first supernatural" happening⁽¹⁵²⁾), the first great leap of the love of God towards mankind. How is it possible, however, for the limited human body to contain "the uncontainable, the immeasurable, the omnipresent, who circumscribes the entire ecumene, who counts the heavens with a hand span and the earth with a handful and the sea with the hollow of the hand",⁽¹⁵³⁾ says the Logos; and he asks the unbeliever to respond to the question about how all these things came to pass, to answer the how of the first great "supernatural" event (an event, that is, which lies outside the capabilities of nature).

This event is all too obvious, as of course is man's inability to answer the how and the why of it. This should not, however, result in our rejecting the event: "for it is obvious that it took place, since the whole fullness of the Godhead came to dwell in the flesh bodily".⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ The how and the why of this event should become a learning opportunity to whoever so wishes, since it involves Him who knows: "As for the how, he says, it is I who know".⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ If then man is truly interested in the how and why, he can be informed about it from him who brings it about: "For I know what I do, but you are not able to hear; since the information concerning

(151) C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 182.

(152) C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 182/3.

(153) C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 184/6.

(154) C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 187/8.

(155) C.C.S.G. 3, 145, 189/90.

ineffable matters so transcends mortal hearing, that if I wish at some point of time to explain something of it out of my abundant mercy, I do not explain it as it is but as far as you can understand".(156) So God's economy is a condescension to man.

For this point on the Logos begins to explain the how and the why in this process of his condescension: "I was born for an economy, I died for the salvation of human beings; or rather for this I died because I was born".(157) And he concludes: "No one then, should condemn me for faint-heartedness arising from ignorance, nor should he lay on the Godhead unworthy utterances. Shepherd am I on account of the Godhead";(158) or: "Cease then, o heretic, condemning me for faint-heartedness and ignorance";(159) or: "But whereas you can be forgiven for imputing faint-heartedness to me on account of the flesh [I wear], you stand condemned without forgiveness when you attribute powerlessness to the Father implying that God's power is weaker than death".(160)

So the Logos replies both lovingly and with rebuke to the why of his economy and the why of his passion. He does not leave room for doubt to those who are well disposed to him. He shows the wounds of his passion, so that the magnitude of his love may be brought out: "I exhibited faint-heartedness to teach the devil a lesson and free man".(161)

(156) C.C.S.G. 3, 145:189/92.

(157) C.C.S.G. 3, 146:200/2.

(158) C.C.S.G. 3, 149:301/3.

(159) C.C.S.G. 3, 150:313/4.

(160) C.C.S.G. 3, 150, 313-151, 348.

(161) C.C.S.G. 3, 152, 355/6.

Christ, then, is "God as guarantor of the miracles and man as witness of the sufferings"(162) "The assumption of the flesh is not a matter of imagination", (163) "and further it is not permitted to attribute the passions of the flesh to the impassible Logos". (164) Christ is a Godman, Lord of life and death. Thus he is in the Church, thus he is for the Church.

At this point, where the teaching of Opus1 ends and that of Opus2 begins, a word or two should be said about the use of the terms "Christ" and "Christ the Lord". When the saint uses the term "Christ" without any other qualifier, he refers to Christ as "a point of controversy", who "lies for the falling and rising of many". (165) He uses this sense of it in Opus1, because in it he deals with the dispute of the heretics about his Godmanhood, namely, the dispute about the "mystery" of his person. In Opus2 however, the saint uses the terms "Christ the Lord", or simply "Lord", or "the Lord who loves mankind", because in this work he addresses the heretics who accept, as we already said, his Godmanhood at the start and so can become, through baptism, members of the Church, but who in their life and with their life reject its saving role as a divine offering – an "economy", which results in the loss of the "grace" of

(162) C.C.S.G. 3, 150, 318/9.

(163) C.C.S.G. 3, 150, 313/4.

(164) C.C.S.G. 3, 150, 317.

(165) Luke 2:34/5.

God and in their being deprived of his "gifts".

In this work the saint not only hints at, but actually goes on to speak about the mystery "of the Lord's incarnate economy", namely, the mystery which God revealed and human beings came to know and believe as the cause of their salvation. He not only speaks about the event and the "grace" which was given to man through it, but also about the "gift" which follows this "grace" and which gives man the possibility through its possession of going on to deification. He speaks of this, of course, because of the rejection of this possibility and thus his discourse is initially a modest rebuke: "it is only the saints, then, that you denounced, only this you were taught ... namely, that you should not recognize your priest who always feeds you with the mystical and holy food, achieving nothing great",⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ but he continues more fiercely at the point where the heretics instead of showing understanding and repentance become more impudent: "So, let the heretics stop correcting God. For to say, "this he did well, this he was wrong to do", is not the action of a man of sound mind, but of one who is deranged and strives against God".⁽¹⁶⁷⁾

Conventionally we characterize this work as "Ecclesiology", a discourse concerning the mystery of the "church" ("which he called his body") and the mysteries (sacraments) which the Holy Spirit grants to her ("Who does not know the Samaritans among us? the rebels against Jerusalem, i.e. against the Church of Christ, who legislated that no longer should sacrifice and first

⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 202/5.

⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 213, 1064/7.

fruits be offered to God in Jerusalem, nor should the Scriptures nor the teachings which are given by the Holy Spirit to the shepherds in the churches, namely, Pneumatology, be listened to".⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ But let us come to Opus2.

⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 201, 613/8.

2.8 The teaching of Opus2: Ecclesiology - Pneumatology

As we said above, here the saint confronts the heresy as an implicit rejection of God by human beings ("through their so-called churches"(169)) and the problems which this rejection causes for mankind: "What then is the treasure which you lost? it is obvious and indeed crystal clear; the grace and the gift which you received through baptism. For just as when you were baptised you put on Christ, likewise when you departed from the Church you put off Christ".(170)

The rejection of God mentioned in this work is not as explicit, or as obvious as in Opus1 ("they wove a dogma of blasphemy to cancel out your Godhead"(171)), but implicit, obscure ("they have this alone, the guile of these wild beasts (the foxes)",(172) because the heretics of this work do not have "prudence, strength, boldness of dogma, civilised behaviour".(173)

The saint begins this work with a rebuke of the hypocrisy which exists in the supposed holy life of the heretics and rejects that which the many accept so easily, namely that the heretics "think heavenly thoughts"; and speaks with much

(169) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 73- 187,74.

(170) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 248/52.

(171) C.C.S.G. 3, 140, 51.

(172) C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 18.

(173) C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 15/7.

stress: "they do not even have a human mentality".⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Continuing he charges "the guile and cowardly manner"⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ of the conduct of these heretics ("they neither dare to approach the light nor converse with a prudent man, or visit a Christian city"⁽¹⁷⁶⁾) which makes them more dangerous and their works extremely destructive because "When they enter a vineyard, that is, among the people, they do not enter boldly, but unnoticed like thieves ...[falling] mercilessly on other people's labours, which they obliterate".⁽¹⁷⁷⁾

For the reasons which we mentioned in the chapter on the lack of head and tail, there is nothing here of the things which relate to the "lawful soldier". Thus the saint passes immediately to the "small foxes". Here too he gives -- as in the previous work -- the characteristic features of the heretics whom he has to oppose. Their hypocritical presence, their cowardly and guileful conduct are the features with which he informs us about their identity and he concludes thus: "hence they are obviously called small foxes".⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ The defence of the "small vineyards" from attack by the "small foxes" is the saint's main task in this work.

His first concern is to give us an account of the way in which Church people came to fight against her, since these are people who entered the Church, i.e. became her members, members

⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 1/2.

⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 40.

⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 2/3.

⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 18/23.

⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 10.

of the body of Christ and later on cut themselves off from her: "For no man among them, strong and firm in faith and established on the rock, that is, Christ, can be found, but each is like a straw man who is blown about by every wind and is threshed out of the Church".⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ With this realization the saint turns to seek for the one who becomes the "ring leader", the guide of these people in their work which is opposite to the one which Christ asks for.

Thus, the saint asks "who the teacher of these heresies is",⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ in order to give the general response to them: "The teacher of all these heresies is the devil";⁽¹⁸¹⁾ and goes on to explain: "For as Christ is the teacher of the catholic Church and gave himself up for her, so that he might sanctify her and present the Church to himself by himself as having no stain or wrinkle or any such thing, likewise the devil, being ready to deceive and to scatter, has become the teacher of all the heresies".⁽¹⁸²⁾

At this point we ought to note the distinction which the saint makes between two great categories of heresies and of their adherents -- the heretics. These are, as we have already said, the heretics and the heresies which explicitly reject the Godhead, as he presents them in his Opus1, and concerning whom the saint says in the follow up of his Opus2: "just as those who blaspheme against the Son of God also commit an offence

(179) C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 25/8.

(180) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 48.

(181) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 49.

(182) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 49/54.

against his Father and against the Holy Spirit, so these too who disbelieve in the Holy Spirit also disbelieve in the all-holy Father and in his all-holy Son, Jesus Christ".(183) And there are also those who by rejecting the mysteries (sacraments), and especially the mystery (sacrament) of the "Church", implicitly reject God (the heretics of Opus2) and concerning whom the saint says again: "The same also is to be found in the case of the trinity of the mysteries. If one rejects one of them, he also rejects the trinity of them; thus, if you reject the mysteries of Christ and become cut off from the Church, you justly ought to be called a transgressor".(184) The distinction of "these heresies" from those others, appears not only at this point of the Opus but elsewhere too: "those who were led into these heresies", (185) "those who are leaders of the other heresies", (186) "these small foxes, namely, these heresies".(187)

The devil, then, is "the teacher of all these heresies";(188) he is the second cause of man's rejection of and departure from God: "For only the human race was taught to worship God, but the devil made up many false gods; and why do I say many - he deified the whole of creation, so that he might

(183) C.C.S.G. 3, 201, 638-202, 642.

(184) C.C.S.G. 3, 202, 642/45.

(185) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 156/7.

(186) C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 3/4.

(187) C.C.S.G. 3, 185, 14/5.

(188) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 49.

lead the wretched man away from God".(189)

Here the saint briefly repeats what he said at greater length in the first work regarding that which the love of God achieved in order to "abolish the polytheist deceit and to bring back the race of human beings to the worship of the true God".(190) He recalls the presuppositions for man's return to the paradise lost: "that he may gather into the Church, through a bath of regeneration, scattered humanity — calling it his body".(191) Thus he comes to the problem which is his particular concern.

"The Lord took on his incarnate economy for the sake of the human race"; so far so good. There is, however, a "but", which does not permit it to operate for the benefit of humanity, as God wanted, because: "again the envious devil does not cease to deceive the wavering by his own evil devices and his ancient arts".(192) The "evil of the devil and the futility of the deceived"(193) again create a problem. In spite of the "incarnate economy of the Lord", human beings still cut themselves off from God: "for just as previously he led astray human beings by renaming idols as gods, likewise now, he speaks of many churches, or rather (if we are to say the truth) raises

(189) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 54/8.

(190) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 61/3.

(191) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 63/5.

(192) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 66/8.

(193) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 41/2.

idols of churches by the renunciation of Christ among those who believe him, so that as at that time he led astray from God through the so-called gods, so now he may cut off from the true Church through their so-called churches".(194)

The new, but also old, art of the devil in promising much to human beings ("promising to make them gods, that is, immortals") is the instrument whereby the "deceitful" achieves his plans. Thus, what he did not manage to achieve after Christ's coming into the world through idolatry and persecutions against the Christians, (because "they bravely and readily bore all for the love towards the Saviour and sweetly died the temporary death exchanging it with eternal life"(195)), he now manages through "another kind of deceit".(196)

The new method of the devil is "a good profession and a humble appearance and a pious religion".(197) This is now the manner by means of which he easily misleads man: "for when continence and renunciation is preached, who would not be easily deceived by this trickery".(198) He had no other option but to win those who had come to know the love of God, "his economy": "He knew that it would be too grave for a Christian to hear; rebel against God, deny the Saviour, escape from the Church,

(194) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 68-187, 74.

(195) C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 90/3.

(196) C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 96.

(197) C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 96/7.

(198) C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 93/4.

abandon the blood of Christ through which you were bought. Had he said these, who would have listened to him"?⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ Thus, "by the ancient method, again promising great things, he throws man out of the true Paradise of the Church of Christ".⁽²⁰⁰⁾

As in Opus1, so here, the saint's intention is double. He wants to strengthen those who remain in the Church and live with the mysteries (sacraments), so that they can continue to believe that "the Lord Jesus Christ ... out of his great love for us laid down as a price for us his own blood";⁽²⁰¹⁾ and then he goes on with a severe but fully loving rebuke (due to the pain the saint feels for the loss of souls, since this is what remaining in heresy means to him) to help those who were led astray to understand what they did and come to realize that: "He who rejects the blood of Christ blasphemes against his presence and discards the price which was paid for him. And that those who denied the blood of Christ and secretly escaped from the Church could offer nothing in their defence".⁽²⁰²⁾ This is a harsh statement which will become even harsher when the saint explains his position: "For they should not think that they possess anything Christian those who deny this, for all the mysteries of the Christians are based on this one; for if you speak about church, or scriptures, or catechisms, or baptism, or altar, or of this very body, they are nothing without the blood; for a body without blood is dead and nobody

⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 98/101.

⁽²⁰⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 102/4.

⁽²⁰¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 188, 120/3.

⁽²⁰²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 188, 125/8.

offers anything dead on an altar".(203)

Continuing with examples from Scripture the saint speaks about the essential loss which is incurred from the point of view of the scope of salvation by the denial of the "blood": "He demonstrated to you everywhere the power of the mystery of the Christians, that one cannot avoid sin, nor the devil himself, nor enter into the holy of holies ... and be recognized by the king without bearing the seal".(204) Furthermore he introduces an example from the military life, since each Christian is a soldier of Christ: "For soldiers who fight in battles and agonize over salvation keep the banner ... lest they loose it and are no longer able to see the face of the king".(205) In concluding he lets them consider "what could they do who lost not a lifeless sign, but were deprived of this very blood".(206)

The words of the saint appear to be very severe, but he explains the why: "if one examines the case carefully, he will find that those who have been led astray by such heresies are more wretched than any other human being and worthy of great lamentations. For the evil one managed to overcome them to the extent that he darkened their foolish heart, so that they may not understand what they have suffered".(207) Such is the condition of these people, whom the saint loves, that he cannot

(203) C.C.S.G. 3, 188, 133/8.

(204) C.C.S.G. 3, 188, 144-189,148.

(205) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 148/52.

(206) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 155/54.

(207) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 155/9.

afford to speak "in good manners"! These are people who moved away from the Church and who will have to give an account for this. This is why the saint does what had to be done by them: "For they ought to feel anguish and shed tears for the fact that they were deprived of so many and great benefits and of life itself".⁽²⁰⁸⁾ The harm is so great and of such a kind that "they have suffered the reverse"; they call themselves just and greater than all other human beings; and why do I say of other human beings and not also that they consider themselves holier than this very blood of Christ".⁽²⁰⁹⁾ There are no other options left to the saint than to act severely, since his purpose is "to preserve the church from the bitter and salty waves of false doctrine".⁽²¹⁰⁾

Up to this point the saint refers to heresy as a problem. From now on he proceeds to examine the problems which this heresy creates, in order to help the "believers" to avoid being deceived and the "unbelievers" to see how and where they fell and realize that they can find their way back through repentance. Thus, analysing the problem, he says: "For as soon as the devil takes hold of one of them and drags him out of the Church, one can see that from that moment on this person speaks unsparingly with such heightened injustice, that he no longer recognizes the priest who baptized him, nor his spiritual mother, the church, who gave birth to him and reared him, nor the altar from which he was fed and watered ever since he was a child, not the holy gifts of the offering".⁽²¹¹⁾ Getting away

⁽²⁰⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 159/61.

⁽²⁰⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 161/3.

⁽²¹⁰⁾ Cf. footnote 124 of Part I.

⁽²¹¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 163/70.

from the Church is the beginning of the fall of human beings. Agreeing and cooperating with the devil brought about the tragic result: "the rejection of and blasphemy against the mysteries (sacraments) is considered by them to be a great progress and a great achievement",⁽²¹²⁾ because it is not them who still speak but rather "the devil who is in them".⁽²¹³⁾

Since the heretics denied from the start the mystery *par excellence*, the "Church", they went on, as was consequential, to deny her mysteries and to ask like "small foxes": "What then is the Church? and what is baptism? and is this the blood of Christ? God forbid that this may enter into my mouth".⁽²¹⁴⁾ At this point the saint has preserved the blasphemous words of the heretics and provides us with the possibility to understand that these heretics, with whom he has to deal in his present work, are not people who fell into heresy because they were prompted to it by their ascetical tendencies, but people who denied the sanctifying power of the mystery of the "Church", using as an excuse of their blasphemy "contenance and renunciation", just as the preceding ones denied the redemption which the Lord offered personally through his incarnation.

But how did this happen to people who initially believed in Christ? What is the reason for their falling away? "O wretched one", the saint will say in addressing this heretic, "If

⁽²¹²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 170/1.

⁽²¹³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 172.

⁽²¹⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 173/5.

you kept your heart in full alertness, if you prayed persistently to your last breath, that which preserves you would have remained in you. Had you not allowed an entry of the devil into your heart, you would not have been captured by the net of his will".(215) The word of the saint is crystal clear and he presents the problem with great lucidity. That which preserved him did not remain within the heretic, because his heart forgot what to ask for and from whom; the heretic ceased to pray; he relied on himself alone. This "he was caught in the net of the devil's will, that is in the rejection of God. As a result of this the heretic came to regard "the blood of Christ as impure and his own self as pure".(216) It is natural then that the saint should be so taken by surprise by the irrational course of events as to express his astonishment.: "This is the point to which continence and renunciation brought you, and it taught you nothing else than to denounce what are holy...(217)

But the saint rebukes the transgressor in order to help him; so he reminds him of the first renunciation he had made before his baptism and which he has rejected: "I thought that you had been credited with another renunciation, concerning which the Lord said: If one does not renounce all that belongs to him, he is not my disciple".(218) This is the real "renunciation", which the Lord demanded as the necessary presupposition for those who would join him. He did not say:

(215) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 175/8.

(216) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 180/1.

(217) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 178/80.

(218) C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 181/3.



"If one does not renounce my Church or my mysteries, he is not my disciple".⁽²¹⁹⁾ It is a mistaken "renunciation", then, that the heretic has made, since Christ taught his would-be believers otherwise by means of "his incarnate economy", namely, "renunciation of idols"⁽²²⁰⁾ before baptism and "scorn for possessions and every other pride of fleshly pleasure".⁽²²¹⁾

To become more persuasive to the heretic, the saint attempts to expose the problem of his life without Christ: "Let us see, then, what you mean by your renunciation of possessions. Who, indeed, has been so enslaved to the passion of love for money as the heretics"?⁽²²²⁾ and the saint's remarks: "For no one ever heard of a heretic who sold all his possessions and gave all to the poor and thus became doer of that commandment (i.e. of the true renunciation)";⁽²²³⁾ so that he can turn to the heretic and say: "You have renounced only what are holy, and you have been taught by your continence (encratism) and renunciation (apotaxis) only this, that you should not recognize your priest who has ever fed you with the mystical and holy food, so as to make no progress at all".⁽²²⁴⁾ So the first transgression, or first breaking of vows is the excitement of "the passion of love of money". Their life, then, is no paradox: "For if you call this behaviour a progress,

⁽²¹⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 185/6.

⁽²²⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 191.

⁽²²¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 191/2.

⁽²²²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 193/4.

⁽²²³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 200/2.

⁽²²⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 189, 202/5.

this is exactly where the mentally deranged arrive at ... when they come to be under the grip of passion".(225)

Conquered by "the passion of mania, those apostates from the Church blaspheme against all, as they renounce the father who gave birth to them through calling him a fornicator and consider their mother to be a harlot",(226) failing to keep the Lord's commandment, "that he speaks evil about his father or his mother should be destroyed by death"(227) and which our Lord Jesus Christ sealed ... with his own word".(228)

Having reached this realisation, the saint goes on to see: "whether they honour their spiritual parents".(229) And at the start he specifies them by the answer he supplies to the question: "Who, then, is the spiritual father? Surely, after God, this is the priest who baptized you;(230) and he adds, "and surely your mother is the Church, who fed you and brought you up".(231) Having thus specified and explained the identity of these "spiritual parents", the saint enquires as to whether a heretic honours them; he actually raises the question, "whether he acknowledges them, whether he is aware of the benefit that he enjoys from them, or that it was through them that he avoided the tyranny of the devil and through them that he came to be called a Christian? and not just a Christian, but one who put on

(225) C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 20/7.

(226) C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 212/5.

(227) C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 215/6.

(228) C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 218/26.

(229) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 229.

(230) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 229/31.

(231) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 235/6.

Christ".(232) The acknowledgement or not of spiritual parents is actually revealed in the way heretics respond to their duties which are derived from their relation to the church and the priest: "What then can you say to this? Do you acknowledge them or not"?(233) If not, "what will you do? If you dishonoured those who gave birth to you according to the flesh, and rejected those who gave you birth from above through a bath of regeneration, what kind of life is the one you have"?(234)

The failure of the heretics to acknowledge their "carnal parents" is the essential antinomy that exists in their life among many others and is indicative of their deceitfulness. Placed alongside with their rejection of their "spiritual parents" this antinomy becomes the explanation of their rejection of the Church and her mysteries. The heretics are baptized, because they initially accept the necessity of the "grace" of the sacrifice of the cross which absolves them from the original sin which their parents transmitted to them (as "fornicators"). But then, they no longer accept the necessity of the divine "gift" for sanctification-deification and, as a result, strive to achieve this by means of their own sanctifying devices (by self-deification), "continence" and "renunciation". Thus, they appear to be ungrateful ("they do not remember the benefices"(235)), and "to speak inarticulately and inconsistently".(236)

In this way the saint leaves no room for an apology to the heretic as

(232) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 236/9.

(233) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 241/2.

(234) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 242/4.

(235) C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 208.

(236) C.C.S.G. 3, 190, 211.

regards the basic double question concerning his existence ("what kind of life is the one you have") and thus he brings out the cul-de-sac to which he led himself through his rejection: "you have indeed immigrated to a far country and have spent the amount of the paternal inheritance which was allotted to you and so you eat carob pods and tend the pigs of the first citizen of the state".⁽²³⁷⁾ He compares the life of the "apostate" with the life of the "prodigal" and explaining to the former, out of love, all that took place after the return of the latter, shows the magnitude of his loss and the need for his return: "What then is the treasure which you lost? it is obvious and clearly evident, namely, the faith and the treasure which

received through baptism. For just as when you were baptised into Christ you put on Christ, so when you left the Church you put off Christ ... Imitate this one, o brother; rise up from the earthly considerations ... come back to your senses".⁽²³⁸⁾

Particularly impressive at this point of the present Work is the connection made between the food of the "prodigal" and the spiritual food of the heretics ("I do not have a bread which could strengthen the heart of man, but only the food of the pigs, the carob pods"⁽²³⁹⁾) which the saint calls "devilish writings"⁽²⁴⁰⁾ and which he promises to "expose in another work"⁽²⁴¹⁾. This connection brings to mind the statement about "that which

⁽²³⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 244/7.

⁽²³⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 248/56.

⁽²³⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 258/60.

⁽²⁴⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 260.

⁽²⁴¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 260/1.

they wish to achieve in order to deceive"⁽²⁴²⁾ which the saint made in the beginning of his Work concerning the teaching of the "leaders of these heresies". Indeed the promise of the saint "to expose [the devilish writings of the heretics] in another work leads to believe that this discourse about the "small foxes" comes to its conclusion at this point: "You should only keep free from depriving yourself from the blood of Christ and from detesting the creatures of God";⁽²⁴³⁾ and that the rest of the text, which bears the title "That these heresies are traced to Simon Magus",⁽²⁴⁴⁾ is the lost Work of the saint "Concerning devilish writings".⁽²⁴⁵⁾

Before, however, finishing this discourse the saint will repeat to the heretic: "Consider whence you fell from, how you were deceived by the allurements of the snake which made you great promises in order to deprive you of the present goods",⁽²⁴⁶⁾ and will recapitulate his thought: "In the beginning, the Logos taught, that he deceived the first human being, namely the woman, by saying: You shall be like gods"⁽²⁴⁷⁾ in order to conclude: "and now he has removed you from the paternal house by the same guile through the name of continence and renunciation".⁽²⁴⁸⁾ Thus he shows to the heretic for one more time the grave position he is in, because he listened to the "advice of the serpent",⁽²⁴⁹⁾ instead of keeping the

⁽²⁴²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 185/15.

⁽²⁴³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 322/4.

⁽²⁴⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 325.

⁽²⁴⁵⁾ Cf. K. Bonis, *op. cit.* p. 78.

⁽²⁴⁶⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 262/4.

⁽²⁴⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 264/6.

⁽²⁴⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 266/8.

⁽²⁴⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 271.

"dominical commandment".(250)

But again, he did not finish anything, since, as the saint will further say as he goes on in his discourse: "God is a lover of mankind and does not know of any evil recompense; he only looks to your return".(251) The way of coming back is still open with one presupposition: "The heretic is able, like the younger son of the gospel parable who denied his father, to take the same way and return home; where he can find God the lover of mankind "ready to welcome him as the other one did".(252) Thus he will be able to enjoy the overflow of his father's goods, that was lost to him: "He knows that he have become mortal over such a time because you did not taste bread; and so he will embrace you and kiss you on your neck, which was hardened by the devil, and feed you again through the fatted calf, the sacraments of Christ".(253)

Yet, the heretic still does not listen to what the saints says to him. He does not seem to be persuaded by the love of the father and the brethren ("Indeed you will find all of us rejoicing with the Father and being delighted at your salvation".(254) He prefers to agree with the "foolish women who have been deceived by him"(255) and to put forth pretentious excuses to cover up sins".(256) Such is his condition that he is afraid to return

(250) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 269.

(251) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 271/2.

(252) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 272/3.

(253) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 274/7.

(254) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 278/81.

(255) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 283/4.

(256) C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 284.

to the Church, because: "I shall be reprimanded by the foolish women who live with me as my host".

This is the final result. The devil has led the heretic to such a difficult position that: "not only has he supplanted the man, but also prevents him after his fall from returning to God and being saved";⁽²⁵⁷⁾ he has confused him so much that the saint tries again at this point to draw closer to him and clarify for him his condition: "What is the abolition? and what is the transgression? Tell me. Certainly abolition is, when someone abandons the faith and its mysteries which have been handed down in the Church of God and passes into a state of unbelief".⁽²⁵⁸⁾ So he offers him a hand to raise him up: "These things you too should have said in the beginning when you were in the house of the father, when the devil and his collaborators persuaded you to drive yourself away from the paternal wealth of the true life".⁽²⁵⁹⁾

Only when the heretic comes to understand what a "transgressor" is, or when one becomes an "abolitionist", that he shall say: "It is lawful to me as a Christian who remains in the Church and keeps the sacraments to renounce evil, to renounce the whole world, that is worldly cares; and if need be, to be continent with respect to food and every carnal pleasure; and to put it succinctly, if I need to keep myself in virginity and purity, it is lawful for me a Christian who keeps his faith to build myself up with all these things".⁽²⁶⁰⁾ Only then would he be able to come out of the.

⁽²⁵⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 288/90.

⁽²⁵⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 290/3.

⁽²⁵⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 192, 293/6.

⁽²⁶⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 305/12.

cul-de-sac into which the devil dragged him.

Thus the saint will address the last call in his work to the heretic for his return to the Church, assuring him that he has nothing to loose if he returns: "For no one on your return to the Church will force you to eat and drink the carnal food, neither to marry or be married";⁽²⁶¹⁾ on the contrary he will be able to live as ascetically as he wishes, inasmuch as he holds that "he should eat no bread and nothing of those things which defile the body",⁽²⁶²⁾ provided that he does not "deprive himself of the body and blood of Christ and does not abhor the creatures of God".⁽²⁶³⁾ Thus, the saint demonstrates what he said in the beginning of his discourse about the Paradise of God's love: "For the Church of Christ is indeed a Paradise" ... because there are [in it] many kinds of trees; and there is no uniform paradise, as the transgressors claim. So each one grows and bears fruit according to his faith and diligence, provided that he remains in the Paradise of Christ".⁽²⁶⁴⁾

At this point the saint concludes his discourse on the "small foxes", i.e. on those heretics whose life appears to be holy, but is actually such "that it is shameful to say".⁽²⁶⁵⁾ It is effectively the end of Opus2 which,

⁽²⁶¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 319/21.

⁽²⁶²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 321/2.

⁽²⁶³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 323/4.

⁽²⁶⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 187, 110/1.

⁽²⁶⁵⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 47.

formally, does not appear to come to a conclusion here, since it has been at this point incorporated into the saint's discourse "On devilish writings", or "On the fact that these heresies can be traced back to Simon Magus". This fact has escaped the notice of the editors of the works of the saint who have presented it as a unity and as one work. But how can this conclusion be justified?

It is crystal clear, if one carefully follows the drift of the saint's discourse, that his words, "provided that he does not deprive himself of the body and blood of Christ and does not abhor the creatures of God" is the last sentence he addresses to the heretic.

As we saw earlier on, the saint made many recommendations to his addressee; from now on he will add nothing else. If the heretic fails to hear these, he is effectively dead, as the saint said to him: "you have been mortified since you have not tasted bread for such a long time". Why then should he continue to speak to a dead person? He has nothing more to add. The next step is now to be taken by the heretic, who, provided that he takes a step of turning back, has the possibility to hear from the father: "This son of mine was dead and became alive again, he was lost and is found". (266)

It is, then, because the purpose of this oration of the saint has been completed (there is no further point to be addressed) that he concludes his work here.

This is equally clear from the opening paragraph of the new discourse where the saint speaks about "the workers of iniquity and the children of

the devil who are named by many and various names",⁽²⁶⁷⁾ and makes a special reference to Simon Magus, whom he regards as the "exarch of these heresies"⁽²⁶⁸⁾ and whom he will describe "as a person who accepted in his heart every evil device of the devil".⁽²⁶⁹⁾

To prove the responsibility of these people for all that happens in their life, the saint uses the teaching of holy Scripture "on spiritual fathers and saints".⁽²⁷⁰⁾ Beginning with the statement, "The spiritual person judges all this things but he is not judged by anyone",⁽²⁷¹⁾ he develops his teaching on man's free will: "Each human being has the power to exclude himself from evil and to be associated with the good".⁽²⁷²⁾ Man is free, and he is able as much as he wills: "and he receives such power and grace from the good as he wills".⁽²⁷³⁾ Not only does he become "spiritual" and "holy", but can proceed "even beyond this measure";⁽²⁷⁴⁾ he can become one with God: "such a person is mixed with the godhead; has become one with God and cannot be separated from him any more".⁽²⁷⁵⁾

⁽²⁶⁷⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 355/7.

⁽²⁶⁸⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 357/8.

⁽²⁶⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 358/9.

⁽²⁷⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 330.

⁽²⁷¹⁾ 1 Cor. 2:15.

⁽²⁷²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 326/7.

⁽²⁷³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 327/8.

⁽²⁷⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 336.

⁽²⁷⁵⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 40.

But it is equally possible to man ("by the same token both the unbeliever and the carnal person"⁽²⁷⁶⁾), naturally in accordance with his faith ("for whatever the vessel might be such also would be the grace to the one who asks for it"⁽²⁷⁷⁾), to descend very low as well: "to his own measure",⁽²⁷⁸⁾ or to such a low state that the saint may say: "as for those who have fallen into extreme evil, he calls them carnal, as no longer having even a slight first-fruit of the Holy Spirit in them".⁽²⁷⁹⁾

This discourse of the saint appears to be closely connected with the previous one as regards content. It is more than certain that these two discourses have a common subject-matter, which is nothing else than "those who have fallen into these heresies", as he himself typically expresses it. His words: "the more he (the unbeliever) lends himself to fleshly pleasures and to unbelief, the more he finds iniquity to be multiplied inside him,⁽²⁸⁰⁾ are identical with those of his former discourse which he used in order to bring out the quality of the heretics: "indeed one can see in their gatherings a preponderance of foolish women being deceived, who run after strangers and live with them without any concern; and what follows all this is shameful to say".⁽²⁸¹⁾ This fact has contributed, perhaps, to the failure to detect here

(276) C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 340/4.

(277) C.C.S.G. 3, 193, 328/9.

(278) C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 341.

(279) C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 345/7.

(280) C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 341/4.

(281) C.C.S.G. 3, 186, 44/7.

the existence of a new discourse.

Why do we identify this discourse with the other discourse which the saint promised a little earlier ("we shall show in another discourse") and with which he would demonstrate that the doctrines of the heretics of Opus2 are such that "they cannot strengthen the human heart".(282) but resemble "the food for pigs, the carob pods"?(283)

If one pays careful attention, one can easily realize the intention - promise of the saint to prove in an explanatory discourse through specific data why he regards as "devilish writings" the doctrines of the heretics. The analytical and apodeictic manner of this discourse are the first elements that argue for the above view.

Another element, more substantial, is "Simon, the exarch of these [heretics]". The saint uses Simon representatively, as one who preceded these people in the journey of departure from God and, consequently, as the main instrument of the devil or as the devil himself: "we shall show [him] to have received in his heart every evil device of the devil";(284) and so he shows him to be the leader of this doctrine. In other words, he shows that Simon (after the mystery of Christ's economy") is the first teacher of apostasy and demonstrates that the devil is the professor of such a doctrine;

(282) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 258/9.

(283) C.C.S.G. 3, 191, 259/60.

(284) C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 358/9.

and thus he explains why the work of these heretics is the work of the devil and points to his discourse on "devilish writings".

The teaching of the heretics, which, in this work, is not "the boldness of the blasphemous dogma which turns against the Godhead", nor is it "the volume of words", but the "cunning of the young foxes", is an additional element. As we see in the continuation of the discourse, the saint is not confronted with a specific teaching, but with an antinomy in the life of the heretics. He charges, as he himself says, the heretics that they are guilty of what they accuse others ("we shall convict them from their own charges").

This discourse of the saint is divided into two parts: In the first part he shows how Simon, "the exarch of these [heresies] from being "praiseworthy" became "pitiful",⁽²⁸⁵⁾ from being a "disciple" became an "adversary".⁽²⁸⁶⁾ In the second part, he proves, by exposing the life of the heretics ("but in order that we may convert them, we need to persuade them that up to this time they follow his teaching; and the proof of this has been taken from them"⁽²⁸⁷⁾), that all the things "they promise" are false ("you are ready to make great promises and through them to deceive those who are nor firmly established"⁽²⁸⁸⁾), since their whole life is an arrogant accusation of God.

(285) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 384.

(286) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 388.

(287) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 399/402.

(288) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 468/9.

As we have already said, in the first part of this discourse the saint shows why Simon failed, or did not "meet the target".⁽²⁸⁹⁾ The main cause of his "missing the target" is, according to the saint, the fact that Simon "holds views contrary to those which God's philanthropy was pursuing in order to win him".⁽²⁹⁰⁾ He did not want this and so "he was sick with ambition for leadership".⁽²⁹¹⁾ This is the reason on account of which "he who previously renounced the devil and his angels",⁽²⁹²⁾ is now in a state that "he no longer knows the one who begat him".⁽²⁹³⁾ His sick mind will direct him for ever: "for having missed the target and such a grace and having been proved to have been unworthy of ordination he began to fight the apostles ... he did not cease to fight to death ... he did not hesitate to travel from Samaria to Rome and there to cooperate with the devil and to fight Christ".⁽²⁹⁴⁾

The saint exposes the reason for Simon's failure, because he believes that only this could persuade the heretics to realise: "whose disciples they are, for whom they are zealous, whose work they pursue, on whose account they fight Christ".⁽²⁹⁵⁾ Because, however, they are not persuaded by this, he tries another way; he proceeds to charge them "with their own charges".

(289) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 384/5.

(290) C.C.S.G. 3, 194, 367/9.

(291) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 376/7.

(292) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 381/2.

(293) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 387.

(294) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 384/96.

(295) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 397/9.

Thus, in the second part of his discourse his first concern is to prove their succession: "For just as the catholic and apostolic Church preserves the genealogy of Christ, likewise the heresies keep the succession of Simon. Indeed it is written in a book which is preserved by them and which they call Peter's Acts, that a certain Gemelos became a genuine disciple of Simon and that he he remained faithful to him to the last shame and death. It is this man's name that to this day is placed upon the heresy of the pseudo-renunciators (pseudo-apotactitae), for they are called Gemelites".(296)

The first "charge" against the heretics is that they are successors of Simon, and that the book which they keep this succession constitutes a double charge against them, since in the first instance it credits them with such a succession and in the second instance it is pseudepigraphic ("what they call Peter's Acts"(297)) The saint does not accept this book as genuine and for this reason he does not make use of it, but simply refers to it inasmuch as it serves as a "charge" for these people ("from their own charges we shall charge them").

What, then, do these heretics inherit from Gemelos? They inherit "the heresy", since they accept him: "who was a heresiarch having succeeded Simon in the heresy, neither having received a baptism from anyone, nor being called a Christian at all, except that he was a disciple a Simon and benefited only from the latter's teaching. This is, then, the beginning of the heresy".(298) This is the succession of the heretics, and their inheritance.

(296) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 403/10.

(297) C.C.S.G. 3, 195, 406.

(298) C.C.S.G. 3, 196, 417/21.

What, however, can the heretics do with this succession and inheritance? To this the saint will answer that it is no longer their concern, but of "their professor, the devil", who, "once he placed them under his hand and made them obedient to him in all respects", split them up into two".⁽²⁹⁹⁾ Thus, successive divisions started, an endless "pseudo-renunciation" for the heretics: "for once he established his rule over them, he used them like a game".⁽³⁰⁰⁾ The false pretences succeed one another, just as the schisms do: "and the devil will not be satisfied only with the deceit he imposed upon them".⁽³⁰¹⁾ He will even continue without pretences ("now there is no pretence at all"⁽³⁰²⁾). This is the end that the devil has in store for those who renounce Christ and all his mysteries: "they think they are separated from enemies", so as "to abhor each other and be separated from each other, renouncing each other by what they call renunciation" (apotaxis).⁽³⁰³⁾

As genuine inheritors of Simon these pseudo-renunciators imitate their teacher in their times of difficulty. Thus, when, by virtue of their separation from Christ and the successive renunciations which they operate among them, find themselves without a name ("what new name will they invent again having been thrown out of such a renunciation"?⁽³⁰⁴⁾), they follow Simon's policy (who, "having apostasized from the apostles, called

⁽²⁹⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 196, 425/6.

⁽³⁰⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 196, 431/2.

⁽³⁰¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 196, 434/5.

⁽³⁰²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 196, 439.

⁽³⁰³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 196, 446/8.

⁽³⁰⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 450/1.

himself God's power"(305) and "call themselves Encratites because they take a similar line with them".(306)

After the charge concerning the "succession", the saint moves to the charge concerning the inheritance, which, as the story goes, is not any other than "names" by means of which the heretics make great promises: "indeed to promise a continence or a renunciation of word is no wonder, since it does not incur any labour".(307) Thus, he will ask of them the "fruit" of the promises ("but what is asked of them is not only word, but also work"(308)), otherwise "no prudent person will believe the promises, unless he sees in you the fruits of the earth".(309)

The first promise of the heretics is charity: "I love God, and I also love my neighbour, I am an encratite".(310) Nevertheless, the saint is not satisfied with names alone. He will measure the love of the heretics with the measure of the gospel teaching: "the neighbour is every man", (311) so that he may inquire about the love which Christ asks for from every man. And so he will remark: "But if anyone inquires accurately, he will find that they are more impious than the Pharisee in spite of their so-called encratitism", (312) because "the devil has puffed them up so much, that

(305) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 470/1.

(306) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 452/3.

(307) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 455/6.

(308) C.C.S.G. 3, 198, 457.

(309) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 466/7.

(310) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 476/7.

(311) C.C.S.G. 3, 197, 483.

(312) C.C.S.G. 3, 198, 504/6.

they oppose the Church of Christ".(313) Then he will add that the heretics not only do they not love human beings, but "their impiety has reached the judge himself", (314) because "they call a sinner the dominical creation", (315) the "Church".

The saint does not want to leave any grounds for doubt concerning his words to the heretics about their love for "the neighbour", and so, before moving to their love for God, he investigates the love which could have existed between them and those who "had been their fellow-captives", (316) since they regard "them as their neighbour". (317) But here too, he will discover that there is no trace of love, which he considers as inevitable, because "the devil does not maintain any conscience, nor does he spare his own disciples, but ... in many ways and unsparingly divides them, so that they may never recover their sobriety and return to the flock of Christ". (318)

He then turns to an examination of their love towards God. The empty names "encratites" and "apotactites" which the heretics use and by means of which they lead others astray, seem to be here again a cover up of their

(313) C.C.S.G. 3, 198, 508/10.

(314) C.C.S.G. 3, 198, 522/3.

(315) C.C.S.G. 3, 198, 524/5.

(316) C.C.S.G. 3, 199, 548.

(317) C.C.S.G. 3, 199, 548/9.

(318) C.C.S.G. 3, 199, 551/8.

distorted life. Comparing the inconsistency of their life to the inconsistency of the life of "Jeroboam son of Navat the ignoble who did not fear God",⁽³¹⁹⁾ and who led the people to apostasy from God and gave himself the name Samaritan, i.e. "keeper of the law",⁽³²⁰⁾ he will ask conventionally: "Did he really take the name Samaritan out of consistency or did he lie?"⁽³²¹⁾ in order to conclude again: "for just as he, after all the impiety, called himself keeper of the law, so these too, after rejecting the faith which they received in the Church, called themselves Encratites and Apotactitae".⁽³²²⁾ The "modest names"⁽³²³⁾ which they apply to themselves, do not match the reality, because "they have transgressed the contracts with God".⁽³²⁴⁾

This transgression took place because the heretics were conquered by "vain-glory", "arrogance" and "pride"⁽³²⁵⁾ and lost the essence. They no longer understand the meaning of "the blood of Christ", and so they reject the mysteries and especially the mystery of the divine Eucharist. This is indeed why they "do not seek the communion of the saints". The rejection even of one mystery is equal with the rejection of all ("if one dismisses

⁽³¹⁹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 200, 568/9.

⁽³²⁰⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 200, 586/7.

⁽³²¹⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 200, 587/8.

⁽³²²⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 201, 620/1.

⁽³²³⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 201, 619/20.

⁽³²⁴⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 201, 624/5.

⁽³²⁵⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 200, 582/3.

one of them, he dismisses the Trinity⁽³²⁶⁾ and also equal with the rejection of God, as the saint says by way of conclusion to his reference to the rejection "of the transgressors at times of persecution" who "in coming to their senses grieved greatly so that if God is ever reconciled to them they might become worthy again to enter the company of the saints".⁽³²⁷⁾

Thus, having lost the essence, i.e. Christ, the heretics remain preoccupied only with the forms which militate against the "essence" and which are indicative of their distortion. Such a form in the life of the heretics, which is exposed by the saint, is: "the preoccupation with vessels".⁽³²⁸⁾ They avoid and "abhor" the vessels as impure, but they seek after the "sweetness" and the "fatness" they contain ("they eat these with great pleasure"⁽³²⁹⁾).

But the heretics are also convicted for something else: The "abstention" and abhorrence of meats and the rest of things which God created for food for the believers and those who come to know the truth",⁽³³⁰⁾ is equal with "blasphemy against the Creator".⁽³³¹⁾ For one more time the heretics are caught by the saint "blaspheming against the Creator". Whereas the

(326) C.C.S.G. 3, 202, 643.

(327) C.C.S.G. 3, 202, 649/51.

(328) C.C.S.G. 3, 202, 666.

(329) C.C.S.G. 3, 203, 709/10.

(330) C.C.S.G. 3, 203, 711/3.

(331) C.C.S.G. 3, 203, 713-204.582/3.

teaching of the Old and the New Testament are in agreement, these [heretics] disagree among themselves. They have reached "despair"(332) and are unable to "eat any meat as lettuce", (333) and abstain from meat sacrificed to idols, poultry blood and fornication".(334) They will continue their blasphemy against God through his creatures, as the saint observes: "you condemn those men who partake of meats, and so you blaspheme against God";(335) and so he will ask most vigorously: "why are you so mindless and daring"?(336)

At this point the saint speaks about the fasting of the Church which he regards as virtue ("each one of the pious abstains from the desirable things which are allowed ... but he does it for the sake of the crowns"(337)) and distinguishes it from the blasphemous "abstention" of the heretics. He speaks about the fast which the Lord himself observed during his "incarnate economy" in order "to teach about fasting"(338) and not "to abstain from impure things".(339)

In this discourse the saint fully discloses the erring heresy and demonstrates that, according to the teaching of holy Scripture, it is a blasphemy against God, since it amounts to denying him. Thus, in coming

(332) C.C.S.G. 3, 205, 773.

(333) C.C.S.G. 3, 205, 779.

(334) C.C.S.G. 3, 205, 777.

(335) C.C.S.G. 3, 205, 786/7.

(336) C.C.S.G. 3, 205, 785.

(337) C.C.S.G. 3, 207, 842/4.

(338) C.C.S.G. 3, 208, 888/9.

(339) C.C.S.G. 3, 208, 889.

close to his conclusion, he says: Who, then, shall dare to fight God and to stand against the truth"?(340) and adds: "but these do dare to say so, for they always stand in opposition to Christ".(341)

The aim of the saint from the very beginning of his discourse has been not only the refutation of the heretics, but also the strengthening of the faithful; thus he goes on to add a small section which is designed to persuade every believer "that our Lord Jesus Christ ate meat right up to his passion and there is no indication throughout his entire incarnate economy that he either detested or prohibited eating these things".(342)

In this way the saint lets the rejection of God by the heretics and their blasphemy appear more clearly, since they reject him with their attitude. And he will repeat, "Who, then, can dare fight against God" and "who can come down to such an unbelief"?(343) Since the teaching of the Church is the teaching of holy Scripture, "the heretics should cease putting God right", (344) because "to say 'this he did well, in that he made a mistake', does not fit a mindful man, but a man who is deranged in his mind and a God-fighter".(345)

And so this discourse comes to an end and with it the so-called Opus2, since the rejection has been exposed and the outcome to which it leads: "for it is not possible for those who say such things to live in the

(340) C.C.S.G. 3, 209, 900/1.

(341) C.C.S.G. 3, 209, 916/7.

(342) C.C.S.G. 3, 209, 965 - 210, 967.

(343) C.C.S.G. 3, 213, 1059/60.

(344) C.C.S.G. 3, 213, 1064/5.

(345) C.C.S.G. 3, 213, 1065/7.

flesh".⁽³⁴⁶⁾ It has also been shown, by means of "the charges of charges", that this is the second discourse of the Opus, namely the saint's discourse "on devilish writings" which was announced by the saint's phrase "we shall show".

The manuscript did not preserve at the end of the second discourse the saint's last sentence after the demonstrations by which he would have ended his discourse. We believe that we would not violate the picture if we were to borrow this sentence from the first discourse: "except that you do not deprive yourself of the body and blood of Christ and do not abhor the creatures of God".

⁽³⁴⁶⁾ C.C.S.G. 3, 213, 1076/7.

Epilogue

By way of conclusion, it can be said at the end of this study that St Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, was not only a great and holy father of the second half of the 4th century AD, but also a first-rate theologian. As we saw, the appreciation of his theological teaching by his equally great contemporaries and the fathers and teachers of the Church who followed after him is both great and deep. So is its diachronic character which is due to its manner.

One could describe this saint's theology as a theology of manners, bearing in mind: the manner in which he theologizes, the manner in which God acted and acts ("grace", "gift") for man's restoration and sanctification and, finally, the manner in which man freely responds to the divine love in order to live.

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