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POPE HONORIUS (625–638) – A PACIFIST OR A DOCTRINAL ARBITER?

Introduction

The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (610–641), like his predecessors, was forced to search for a compromise with non-Chalcedonians in order to maintain the loyalty of the pro-miaphysite provinces that were still under his influence, such as Egypt, Syria and Armenia. The acceptance of a common theological doctrine was planned as an expected result of the compromise¹. The imperial promotion of Monenergism as a doctrine which declares that Christ performed both human and divine deeds through one divine-human operation was hence initiated².

Probably the most notable union between Chalcedonians and Miaphysites was promulgated in Alexandria in 633. Cyrus, Patriarch of Alexandria, was the main protagonist of this event. The *Nine Chapters* maintained that the unity of Christ's person manifested itself in the unity of his activity: the one and the same Christ and Son operated divine and human acts by one divine-human (θεανδρικός) operation, according to St. Dionysius³. That was an official proclamation of Monenergism. Paradoxically, the most outspoken reaction to Monenergism came not from the Miaphysites but from the theologians of the Chalcedonian circle, represented by the monk Sophronius (c. 560–638)⁴. In 633, Sophronius travelled to Constantinople to protest in person before Patriarch Sergius

¹ A.N. STRATOS, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, vol. I, 602–634, trans. M. OGILVIE-GRANT, Amsterdam 1968, p. 299; W.E. KAEGI, *Heraclius: Emperor of Byzantium*, Cambridge 2003, p. 210.

² The miaenergist activity of Emperor Heraclius we presented in: O. KASHCHUK, *The Promotion of Miaenergism as a Challenge to Identity of non-Chalcedonian Christianity*, VP 69, 2018, p. 257–283.

³ *Satisfactio facta inter Cyrum et eos qui erant ex parte Theodosianorum*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. II.2, p. 598.19–22.

⁴ The anti-miaenergist reaction of Patriarch Sophronius was presented in: O. KASHCHUK, *Sophronius, a Monk of Palestine, and Miaenergism. The Tension between Exactness and Ambiguity*, VP 70, 2018, p. 259–280. Cf. W.H.C. FREND, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*, Cambridge 2008, p. 348.

(610–638)⁵. In this way, the union, concluded in Alexandria, initiated the controversy which involved the main hierarchs of the Church. The purpose of this article is to analyze the sources and present the position of Pope Honorius (625–638) at the early stage of the controversy over operation in Christ.

Disagreement between Patriarch Sophronius and Patriarch Sergius

Patriarch Sergius after Sophronius' protest decided that polemic, which, in his opinion, was a superfluous dispute over the phrases, should be put aside. In June of 633, Sergius issued the *Psephos*, according to which the terms "one operation" and "two operations" were not to be used⁶. Patriarch Sergius communicated his resolution to the figures most concerned with the polemic⁷, such as Cyrus⁸ and Sophronius⁹; Sophronius, it seems, had assured Sergius that he agreed to his decision¹⁰. Finally, the Patriarch reported his resolution in the letter addressed to Emperor Heraclius¹¹. The range of addressees in Sergius' letter means that the problem was important and had universal character.

Unexpectedly, Sophronius was elected Patriarch of Jerusalem at the end of 633 or at the beginning of 634¹². After Sophronius had become a patriarch he expressed his Christology in the *Synodical letter*¹³. On the basis of Christ's unity in diversity of natures, Sophronius developed his teaching concerning Christ's activity: each

⁵ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. II.2 (cetera: SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*), p. 540.4–8; HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. II.2 (cetera: HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*), p. 548.8–11.

⁶ Venane Grumel (1890–1967) states that this document was a synodal dogmatic decree. Cf. *Le Patriarcat Byzantin*, ser. I, *Les Regestes des Actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I, *Les Actes des Patriarches*, fasc. I, *Les Regestes de 381 à 715*, № 287, ed. V. GRUMEL, Paris 1972 (cetera: *Regestes*), p. 218. The text of the document is not preserved. It is probably hinted at in Sergius' *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 546.7–17. Cf. also SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.1–7, 544.16–22.

⁷ B. MARKESINIS, *Les débuts du monoenergisme. Rectifications concernant ce qui s'est passé entre Cyrus d'Alexandrie, Serge de Constantinople et S. Sophrone de Jérusalem*, AB 133, 2015, p. 12–13.

⁸ Cf. SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 540.22–542.1. Most of this letter to Cyrus is preserved in the *Epistola ad Honorium*. Cf. B. MARKESINIS, *Les débuts du monoenergisme...*, p. 12. Cf. SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.1–7.

⁹ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 544.16–18.

¹⁰ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 544.19–22. For more information concerning the sources on the disputation between Sophronius and Sergius see *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit*, № 26a, ed. F. WINKELMANN, Frankfurt am Main 2001 [= BBS, 6] (cetera: *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit*), p. 65.

¹¹ ACO, ser. II, vol. II.2, p. 546.7–17. Cf. B. MARKESINIS, *Les débuts du monoenergisme...*, p. 13.

¹² C. Schönborn maintains that Sophronius became the Patriarch of Jerusalem at the beginning of 634. Cf. C. VON SCHÖNBORN, *Sophrone de Jérusalem. Vie monastique et confession dogmatique*, Paris 1972 [= TH, 20], p. 91.

¹³ *Synodicon Vetus*, № 131, ed. et trans. J. DUFFY, J. PARKER, Washington 1979 [= CFHB, 15], p. 110. Cf. C. VON SCHÖNBORN, *Sophrone de Jérusalem...*, p. 91.

nature possesses its operation as an essential and natural element¹⁴. Sophronius' standpoint evoked anxiety in the Constantinopolitan Church as the recent union concluded in Alexandria was at risk.

At the close of 633, or at the beginning of 634, Sergius wrote a letter to Pope Honorius to inform him of the situation at hand and to explain the doctrinal problems¹⁵. Sergius mentioned the Alexandrian union¹⁶. Sergius stated that until now, he had not received Sophronius' *Synodical letter*¹⁷. This might indicate that Patriarch Sergius presented non-convincing arguments to reach a solid agreement with Sophronius and was not certain concerning his position; Sergius, thus, decided to act ahead and without clear evidence. Therefore, it is necessary to present Sergius' arguments with more details since they might have influenced Honorius.

Patriarch Sergius mentioned that Sophronius, who recently became the Patriarch of Jerusalem, had opposed the statement on "one operation" of Christ and had also maintained the view of "two operations"¹⁸. Sophronius, as Sergius reports, insisted on removing the phrase "one operation" after the union concluded in Alexandria¹⁹. Sergius in his letter argued before Pope Honorius that this dispute was only over words, but the union itself was a very significant achievement. The Patriarch asserted that according to Cyrus, as the author of the pact of union, the Fathers for the sake of salvation would have been satisfied to hear of an agreement in analogous situation without undermining the accuracy of the dogma of the Church; moreover, some of the Fathers applied the phrase "one operation"²⁰. Sergius stated also that Sophronius had not managed to supply the testimonies of the Fathers on the existence of the two operations in Christ²¹.

Patriarch Sergius explained that, in order to avoid contention and the arising of a new heresy, he made efforts to silence the dispute over the words (λογομαχία). He wrote to Cyrus that after the Union the phrases either "two operations" or "one operation" should not be proposed²². The phrase "one operation" (μῆς ἐνεργείας φωνή), though was used by some of the Fathers, still is alien to many Christians and confuses their ears²³. Likewise, the mention of the two operations scandalizes many people on the grounds that such a phrase was not uttered by the Church

¹⁴ Cf. SOPHRONIUS HIEROSOLYMITANUS, *Epistola synodica ad Sergium Constantinopolitanum*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. II.2, p. 444.21–446.1: τῆς ἐκατέρας φύσεως ἐκατέραν ἴσμεν ἐνέργειαν, τὴν οὐσιώδη λέγω καὶ φυσικὴν καὶ κατάλληλον.

¹⁵ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 534.1–546.25. Cf. *Regestes*, № 291, p. 219–220.

¹⁶ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 536.15–538.7.

¹⁷ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 538.9–10.

¹⁸ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 538.8–14.

¹⁹ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 540.6–8.

²⁰ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 538.15–540.2.

²¹ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 540.14–19.

²² SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 540.19–542.3.

²³ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.7–9.

teachers²⁴. Sergius asserted that instead of those mentioned should be applied the well-trying phrases of the Fathers and the synodical definitions, which were not occasionally expressed by the Fathers, but exactly in this context, and which were unambiguous²⁵. The expression “two operations”, according to the Patriarch, was not uttered by the Fathers, therefore the teaching on two operations cannot be exposed as the dogma of the Church²⁶.

Patriarch Sergius maintained that instead of mention of one or two operations, it is necessary to confess, as the holy Synods teach, that one and the same Son operated both divine and human acts. The whole of Christ's activity is befitting both God and man and proceeds without division from one and the same incarnate Logos; the fullness of activity is to be referred to one and the same Logos²⁷. Sergius, thus, emphasized the oneness of subject in Christ and pointed that his understanding of Christ's activity was Logos-centric. In order to present his teaching as patristic, Sergius refers to the known passage of Pope Leo that *both natures operate what is proper to them in communion with each other*²⁸. He seems to stress Leo's phrase “in communion with each other” as indicating the unity in Christ.

Patriarch Sergius proceeded from the question of operation to the question of volition. For Sergius, talking of two operations leads to the conclusion that there are two wills (δύο [...] θελήματα) in mutual conflict, so that while God the Logos wills (θέλω) to perform salutary passion, his human nature opposes and resists His will²⁹. It is impossible that in the one and the same subject and at the same time the two contrary wills subsist³⁰. In this way, Sergius clearly conjoins the operation to the will. Such a tactic laid the logical basis for Monothelitism: if the two operations imply that the two wills are contrary to each other, then there must be only one will in Christ. The conviction concerning the single will in Christ is associated with the idea that Christ's humanity was absolutely controlled by the Logos³¹.

²⁴ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.11–16.

²⁵ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 544.9–13.

²⁶ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 544.12–16.

²⁷ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.4–7; Cf. SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 546.13–15. Cf. also SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola II ad Cyrum*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. I (cetera: SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola II ad Cyrum*), p. 136.36–38.

²⁸ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola II ad Cyrum*, p. 136.38–138.12; SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 546.15–17. Cf. LEO MAGNUS, *Epistolae*, 28.4, [in:] PL, vol. LIV, col. 767A–B: *Agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communione, quod proprium est; Verbo scilicet operante quod Verbi est, et carne exequente quod carnis est*.

²⁹ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.11–16.

³⁰ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.16–17. Cf. SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.5–7, 542.12–13.

³¹ SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.18–21. Cf. C. HOVORUN, *Will, Action and Freedom. Christological Controversies in the Seventh Century*, Leiden–Boston 2008 [= MMe, 77], p. 149.

The human nature of Christ was wholly moved by God (θεοκίνητος)³². Christ's humanity, thus, was only a passive element³³. In this way, Sergius refutes the internal impulse of human nature in Christ since it would lead to the opposition in Christ. Accordingly, the Patriarch could not admit that Christ had a mere human will which belonged to his human nature.

The analysis of texts of Sophronius and Sergius demonstrated that they, *de facto*, expressed the same belief in one activity of Christ: human activity of Christ, defined by Sophronius as human operation was regarded by Sergius as natural human motions³⁴. The difference between the teaching of both Patriarchs, thus, seemed to consist in the sphere of terminology³⁵. For Sophronius, the exactness in terminology appears to reflect the principle of loyalty to Chalcedon. For Sergius, ambiguity in terminology matched to the ecclesial and imperial politics³⁶. The tension between Sergius' ambiguity and Sophronius' exactness in terminology turned out to be a significant crisis³⁷.

The standpoint of Sophronius was later decisively supported by Maximus the Confessor. In *Ambigua to Thomas*, written in 634 or 635³⁸, Maximus insisted that Christ's hypostasis is composed of natures which have essential operations³⁹. The flesh operated according to nature and it was not without natural operation⁴⁰. For the first time Maximus made a clear statement on human operation in Christ: Christ made manifest the human operation⁴¹. Maximus thus sided with Patriarch Sophronius. He built further argumentations in order to ground the idea of natural operations⁴².

³² SERGIUS CONSTANTINOPOLITANUS, *Epistola ad Honorium*, p. 542.21–544.3.

³³ P. PARENTE, *Usò e significato del termine θεοκίνητος nella controversia monotelitica*, REB 11, 1953, p. 243.

³⁴ The comparison of the Christology of the both Patriarchs was presented in: O. KASHCHUK, *Sophronius...*, p. 259–280.

³⁵ R. PRICE, *Monothelism: A Heresy or a Form of Words?*, [in:] SP, vol. XLVIII, p. 223; P. BOOTH, *Crisis of Empire. Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 2014 [= TCH, 52], p. 218.

³⁶ O. KASHCHUK, *Sophronius...*, p. 259–280.

³⁷ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, *An Early Syriac Life of Maximus the Confessor*, № 7–16, ed. et trans. S. BROCK, AB 91, 1973 (cetera: GEORGE OF RESH'AINA), p. 315–317.

³⁸ M. JANKOWIAK, P. BOOTH, *A New Date-List of the Works of Maximus the Confessor*, [in:] *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor*, ed. P. ALLEN, B. NEIL, Oxford 2015, p. 45.

³⁹ MAXIMUS CONFESSOR, *Ambigua ad Thomam una cum Epistula secunda ad eundem*, 4, ed. B. JANSSENS, Turnhout–Leuven 2002 [= CC.SG, 48] (cetera: MAXIMUS CONFESSOR), p. 16.75–81.

⁴⁰ MAXIMUS CONFESSOR, 2, p. 9.32–37.

⁴¹ MAXIMUS CONFESSOR, 5, p. 26.150–152. Cf. also MAXIMUS CONFESSOR, 5, p. 25.128–133 and 4, p. 16.75–81.

⁴² О. КАЩУК, *Монотелітство у Візантії VII століття. Доктрина, політика та ідеологія влади*, Львів 2019, p. 101–116. For the information concerning the role of Maximus the Confessor in the promotion of the duality of wills and operations in Christ cf. H. OHME, *Wer hat den Dyothelitismus erfunden? Zur Frage der Authentizität der Apologia Honorii Papst Iohannes' IV. (640–642)*,

The reaction of Pope Honorius

Honorius, responding to Sergius in 634/635, asserts that he came to know about the confrontation and debate over new phrases from his letter⁴³. The Pope praises Sergius' refutation of the new phrases, which may generate temptation for the simple people⁴⁴. The Pope himself keeps the same tactics as Sergius to avoid using the new phrases. He asserts that he does not accept either one operation or two, but maintains that Christ operated in many modes⁴⁵. The new terms, according to him, introduce temptations to the Churches. "Two operations" seem to accord with Nestorius, and "one operation", with Eutyches⁴⁶. At last, Honorius comes to a conclusion that the question of operation is a matter of grammarians⁴⁷. That is a useless and superfluous debate which should be avoided⁴⁸.

Instead, Pope Honorius emphasizes the orthodox teaching on the union of the two natures and *communicatio idiomatum* in Christ⁴⁹. He maintains that one Christ in both natures operated divine and human works⁵⁰. Honorius, thus, strictly united the operation of Christ to His hypostasis. Christ is a single operator of both divine and human nature. Jesus Christ operated divine things through the mediation of His humanity, naturally united to the God-Logos. The same Christ operated also human things in an ineffable way⁵¹.

From the statement on operation Honorius proceeded to the statement on volition. He professed one will of the Lord Jesus Christ⁵². The Pope grounded it on the assertion that Divinity assumed human nature as created by God, not as vitiated after the fall⁵³. He stressed that Christ assumed nature without sin⁵⁴. For Honorius, sin is always bound to human will, therefore he could not accept its presence in Christ. The presence of human will implies opposition to the divine will. Thus, there was not another will in Christ, different from the will of Savior and contrary to

BZ 110.1, 2017, p. 89–139. On the duality of wills and operations see also H.A. WOLFSON, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers. Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, Cambridge–London 1970, p. 463–493.

⁴³ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 548.4–8.

⁴⁴ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 548.11–15.

⁴⁵ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 554.18–19: "multiformiter... operatum"; πολυτρόπως [...] ἐνεργοῦντα.

⁴⁶ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 556.6–11.

⁴⁷ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 554.11–17.

⁴⁸ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 556.15–21.

⁴⁹ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 548.18–550.16.

⁵⁰ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 554.12, 556.14–15.

⁵¹ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 548.17–19: [...] τὸν κύριον [...] ἐνεργοῦντα τὰ θεῖα μεσιτευούσης τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος τῆς ἐνωθείσης αὐτῷ τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ καθ' ὑπόστασιν καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐνεργοῦντα τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀφράστως.

⁵² HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 550.16–19: [...] ὅθεν καὶ ἐν θέλημα ὁμολογοῦμεν τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [...].

⁵³ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 550.16–19.

⁵⁴ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 552.10–12.

it, because He was born above the law of the human condition⁵⁵, that is of the fallen human condition. For Honorius, as for Sergius, a different will is a contrary will⁵⁶.

In this way, on the basis of moral unity between Christ's will and the Father's will Honorius draws a conclusion that Christ did not have a human will. The moral unity of wills resulted in their ontological unity. Accordingly, the principle of activity was Christ's divinity. Honorius, thus, in 634/635 wrote a letter which contained a thesis that became the core of the doctrine of Monothelitism, namely a confession of one will in Christ⁵⁷. Accordingly, Honorius was the first Pope to endow "one will" with the authority of the Holy See⁵⁸. Honorius' teaching in this aspect was not consistent: Christ assumed human nature without human will. However, we should acknowledge that Honorius used the expression "one will" only as an argument to give his support to Sergius who sought the Pope's approval of his tactic concerning polemic and not as a formulation or an explanation of a new doctrine. The Pope did not try to explain this inconsistency. In this sphere, Honorius seems to retranslate the teaching of Sergius. Nevertheless, the Monothelitism was born as an offspring of the dispute over Monenergism.

Honorius wrote also a second letter to Sergius⁵⁹, probably in 635⁶⁰, in which he explained that he objected to using the phrase "one" or "two operations" because it is very irrelevant to speak of one or two operations of Christ⁶¹. The Pope stated that he had written to Sophronius and Cyrus and asked them not to discuss the novelty over "one" or "two operations"⁶² but to confess that one Christ operated both human and divine deeds in both natures⁶³.

Honorius keeps explaining that it is necessary to speak that both natures in Christ operated in communion with each other and they were executors⁶⁴. Instead of one operation it is necessary to speak of one operator in both natures⁶⁵. Instead of two operations it is necessary to speak that the two natures operated according to their properties in one person of Christ⁶⁶. Honorius, thus, appears to regard the operations as executors moved by Christ as agent, that is, the Pope

⁵⁵ HONORIUS, *Epistola ad Sergium*, p. 552.13–14.

⁵⁶ F.-M. LÉTHEL, *Théologie de l'agonie du Christ. La liberté humaine du Fils de Dieu et son importance sotériologique mises en lumière par saint Maxime le Confesseur*, Paris 1979 [= TH, 52], p. 46–47.

⁵⁷ P. ALLEN, *Life and Times of Maximus the Confessor*, [in:] *The Oxford Handbook...*, p. 5.

⁵⁸ M. JANKOWIAK, *The Invention of Dyothelitism*, [in:] SP, vol. LXIII, p. 338.

⁵⁹ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. II.2 (cetera: HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*), p. 620.20–626.9.

⁶⁰ Cf. CPG, 9377.

⁶¹ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 622.1–10.

⁶² HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 624.9–14.

⁶³ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 624.15–16.

⁶⁴ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 622.16–20: μετὰ τῆς θατέρου κοινωνίας ἐνεργοῦσας.

⁶⁵ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 624.4–5: τὸν ἕνα ἐνεργοῦντα Χριστὸν τὸν κύριον ἐν ἐκατέραις ταῖς φύσεσιν.

⁶⁶ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 624.6–9.

considers Logos as the subject of activity. In this way, in his second letter Honorius seems to retreat from his former position concerning a statement on one will, perhaps as a result of receiving Sophronius' *Synodical letter*⁶⁷.

From the *Libellus* of bishop Stephen of Dora we know that Stephen was sent by Sophronius to Rome to convince Pope Honorius of the danger of the new doctrine through letter and personally⁶⁸. The second letter of Honorius to Sergius mentions that the Pope instructed those whom Sophronius sent to him, lest he continue to proclaim the expression of two operations in the future. They firmly promised that the Patriarch would do this if Cyrus would stop proclaiming one operation⁶⁹. Although, as the letter of Honorius demonstrated, this mission failed to convince the Pope to decisively support Sophronius' position. Nevertheless, the mission has achieved some success, because Honorius in his second letter demonstrated a standpoint far closer to that of the dyoenergists in terms of Christological reflections⁷⁰.

Honorius, thus, occupied the position as that of a mediator between Sergius and Sophronius. Nevertheless, Honorius did not try to scrutinize the question on the basis of the Fathers. Latin Christology knew a notion of Christ's human operation and will. For example, Ambrose (337–397) claimed that there is another will of God and another will of humanity in Christ⁷¹; to the human nature of Christ befits human will⁷². According to Augustine (354–430), Christ as a genuine human being also had human motions of the soul⁷³; the humanity of Christ was endowed with a will. Augustine comments that Christ's Prayer in Gethsemane is a proof of His human will⁷⁴. Although the contexts of the fourth-century and

⁶⁷ *Maximus the Confessor and his Companions. Documents from Exile*, ed. et trans. P. ALLEN, B. NEIL, Oxford 2002, p. 13.

⁶⁸ ACO, ser. II, vol. I, 40.13–17. On the whole mission see the *Libellus* of bishop Stephen in ACO, ser. II, vol. I, p. 40.11–42.20.

⁶⁹ HONORIUS, *Epistola II ad Sergium*, p. 624.16–20.

⁷⁰ P. BOOTH, *Crisis of Empire...*, p. 238–239.

⁷¹ AMBROSIIUS MEDIOLANENSIS, *De fide*, II, 7, 52, [in:] PL, vol. XVI (cetera: AMBROSIIUS MEDIOLANENSIS), col. 570B: *Una ergo voluntas, ubi una operatio; in Deo enim voluntatis series operationis effectus est. Sed alia voluntas hominis, alia Dei*. Cf. also AMBROSIIUS MEDIOLANENSIS, II, 7, 53, [in:] PL, vol. XVI, col. 570C: *Suscepit ergo voluntatem meam, suscepit tristitiam meam. [...] Mea est voluntas quam suam dixit; quia ut homo suscepit tristitiam meam, ut homo locutus est; et ideo ait: Non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu vis* (Mt 26, 39).

⁷² AMBROSIIUS MEDIOLANENSIS, II, 5, 45, [in:] PL, vol. XVI, col. 568C–569A: *Eousque autem hominem, quem veritate corporis demonstrabat, aequabat affectu, ut diceret: 'Sed tamen non sicut ego uolo, sed sicut tu uis'* (Mt 26, 39).

⁷³ AUGUSTINUS, *De civitate Dei*. (Libri XIV–XXII), XIV, 9, 21, rec. E. HOFFMANN, Pragae–Vindobonae–Lipsiae 1900 [= CSEL, 40.2] (cetera: AUGUSTINUS, *De civitate Dei*), p. 21.12–14: *Neque enim, in quo verum erat hominis corpus et verus hominis animus, falsus erat humanus adfectus*. Cf. also AUGUSTINUS, *De civitate Dei*, XIV, 9, 21, p. 21.5–22.

⁷⁴ AUGUSTINUS, *Epistulae* (124–184A), 130, 14, 26, rec. A. GOLDBACHER, Vindobonae–Lipsiae 1904 [= CSEL, 44], p. 71.4–9: *nam et huius modi exemplum praebeuit nobis ille mediator, qui cum dixisset:*

the seventh-century inquiry into the question of the operation and will were different, nevertheless the testimonies of the above-mentioned Latin Fathers had value as an argument during the Monothelite controversy⁷⁵.

Accordingly, Pope Honorius preferred pacifism to a deep doctrinal analysis of the matter. He neglected to examine the doctrinal question of Christ's activity. He was inclined to treat a dispute rather as the matter of words. Honorius manifested himself as a searcher for peace in the Church but not as a doctrinal authority. Therefore, there were left unresolved doctrinal matters.

The *Ekthesis* as a result of Honorius' pacifism

After the exchange of the ideas between three Patriarchs – Sergius, Sophronius and Honorius – and their declaration not to continue the confrontation, the polemic was not silenced. The unresolved matters burst out into the next stage of controversy. Bishop George of Resh'aina, a disciple of Sophronius, certifies that the Church has been disturbed by conflicts, since Maximus the Confessor decisively resisted Monenergism⁷⁶. As we are informed by the *Syriac life* of Maximus the Confessor, Sophronius, influenced by Maximus, had a conflict with Arcadius, bishop of Cyprus (d. 643). The Patriarch sent a letter to Arcadius in which he proposed to convene a synod and to win to this cause Cyrus of Alexandria, Sergius of Constantinople and Honorius of Rome⁷⁷.

Arcadius, having received the letter, immediately informed the above-mentioned Patriarchs. The synod in Cyprus was convened in the first half of 636 and consisted of forty-six delegates⁷⁸. The synod was held, most probably, after exchanging the letters between Sergius and Honorius in 634 and before the promulgation of *Ekthesis*⁷⁹. It is described in detail, since the author, George of Resh'aina, was its participant. Patriarch Cyrus and his five bishops, the Roman deacon Gaius, the Constantinopolitan archdeacon Peter, Sophronius himself and eight bishops from Palestine, including George of Resh'aina, the author of the *Syriac life*, and two of his pupils were present⁸⁰.

Pater, si fieri potest transeat a me calix iste, humanam in se voluntatem ex hominis susceptione transformans continuo subiecit: Verum non quod ego volo, sed quod tu vis, pater. Unde merito per unius oboedientiam iusti constituuntur multi.

⁷⁵ J. BÖRJESSON, *Augustine on the Will*, [in:] *The Oxford Handbook...*, p. 217–219.

⁷⁶ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 8–9, p. 315–316. Cf. M. JANKOWIAK, *Żywoty Maksymusa Wyznawcy*, [in:] *Chrześcijaństwo u schyłku starożytności. Studia Źródłoznawcze*, vol. V, ed. T. DERDA, E. WIP-SZYCKA, Kraków 2004, p. 181–182.

⁷⁷ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 7–8, p. 315–316. Cf. *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit*, № 29–32, p. 67–70.

⁷⁸ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 10–13, p. 316. Cf. *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit*, № 33, p. 70–71.

⁷⁹ M. JANKOWIAK, *The Invention of Dyothelitism...*, p. 182, also n. 135.

⁸⁰ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 11, p. 316.

The doctrine of two operations, as it is testified by George, became the sticking point at the synod. The participants were divided in respect to this doctrine. Ultimately, the doctrine was condemned. The decision was to be sent to Emperor Heraclius for approval⁸¹. Sophronius was not satisfied with the decision to inform the Emperor and had a conflict with Arcadius, who accused Sophronius of holding the false doctrine. But Cyrus silenced the conflict and the letter was sent⁸².

After Emperor Heraclius had received the letter containing the doctrine of Sophronius and Maximus, the Emperor issued an edict, in which he rejected the doctrine⁸³. The adherents of "one operation" thus found indirect support of their idea in the imperial politics⁸⁴. Heraclius promulgated an edict directly concerning the question of the faith. The edict was sent to the four patriarchal Sees and all the bishops. It was obligatory throughout the Empire⁸⁵. M. Jankowiak argues that the document issued by Heraclius was *Ekthesis*⁸⁶: it was published shortly after the synod at Cyprus, thus in 636⁸⁷.

The traditional dating of the promulgation of *Ekthesis* on 638 might attempt to dissociate it from both Sophronius and the synod at Cyprus in order to bleach the memory of George's of Resh'aina teacher, Sophronius: his anti-monenergist activity was explained by the pernicious influence of Maximus the Confessor⁸⁸. Therefore, the edict might have been dated to the year 638 in order to ascribe the main role in anti-monenergist movement to Maximus⁸⁹.

The presence of the representatives of the Patriarchs and the intervention of the Emperor testifies that confrontation over activity in Christ was ardent on the both sides of the controversy. The attendance of Gaius, Roman deacon, as the representative of Pope Honorius, means that the Pope gave his assent to the synod and to its resolution. There is even suggestion that maybe Honorius prompted the official recognition of the doctrine in the *Ekthesis* and maybe his deacon consented to Monenergism⁹⁰.

⁸¹ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 12–14, p. 317.

⁸² GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 14, p. 316–317. Later Arcadius changed his mind. Cf. ACO, ser. II, vol. I, p. 62.29–34. Cf. C. HOVRUN, *Will, Action and Freedom...*, p. 62.

⁸³ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 15, p. 317. Cf. *Der monenergetisch-monotheletische Streit*, № 34–34a, p. 71–72.

⁸⁴ For the information concerning the pro-monoenergist significance of the *Ekthesis* cf. O. КАЩУК, *Монотелітство у Візантії VII століття...*, p. 116–144.

⁸⁵ GEORGE OF RESH'AINA, № 15–16, p. 317.

⁸⁶ M. JANKOWIAK, *Essai d'histoire politique du monothélisme à partir de la correspondance entre les empereurs byzantins, les patriarches de Constantinople et les papes de Rome* [PhD Thesis, University of Warsaw 2009], p. 155–160. Cf. P. BOOTH, *Crisis of Empire...*, p. 239–240. The traditional date – *Regestes*, № 292–293, p. 220–221.

⁸⁷ M. JANKOWIAK, *Żywoty Maksymusa Wyznawcy...*, p. 173, 180.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 180–181. Cf. P. BOOTH, *Crisis of Empire...*, p. 241.

⁸⁹ M. JANKOWIAK, *Żywoty Maksymusa Wyznawcy...*, p. 180–181.

⁹⁰ P. BOOTH, *Crisis of Empire...*, p. 240.

In its main outlines, the *Ekthesis* repeats the Christological ideas and terminology of Sergius of Constantinople since it was probably written by him⁹¹. The document proclaimed one subject of operation: it is necessary to maintain that one and the same Christ operated both divine and human acts. Each operation which befitted both God and man proceeded from one and the same incarnate Word of God without division and confusion, and referred to one and the same subject⁹². Accordingly, to one and the same incarnate God the Logos whole divine and human operation is attributed⁹³. Thus, the document emphasized that the principle of activity was always God the Logos. The phrase “one operation” was not uttered explicitly. According to the *Ekthesis*, acceptance of human operation in Christ meant to divide Christ into two subjects, one of which effected miracles, the other – passions⁹⁴.

The *Ekthesis* officially banned the usage of phrases “one or two operations” in Christ. The phrase “one operation”⁹⁵, though applied by some of the Fathers, was deemed not acceptable for anyone who thinks that it leads to the destruction of the belief in two natures united in one hypostasis of Christ. Likewise, the phrase “two operations” was reckoned as a statement which leads many to temptation, since it was used by none of the Fathers. Moreover, the phrase “two operations” implied two wills in Christ contrary to each other. Accordingly, two wills introduce two subjects. In this way, to confess two wills of Christ is impious and alien to Christian dogma⁹⁶. Thus, in the *Ekthesis* the debate proceeded from the terminology associated with operation in Christ to that of the will.

From the proclamation of one subject of activity and from the ban imposed on discussion over operations the *Ekthesis* proceeded to the proclamation of one will in Christ (ἐν θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The flesh of Christ animated by reasonable soul never separately and of its own impulse performed the natural reflex in opposition to the will of the Word of God hypostatically united

⁹¹ ACO, ser. II, vol. I, 16.21–33. Cf. *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. XI, ed. J.D. MANSI, Florentiae 1765, 606B–C. Cf. also G. DAGRON, *Kościół bizantyński i chrześcijaństwo bizantyńskie między najazdami a ikonoklazmem (VII wiek – początek VIII wieku)*, [in:] *Historia chrześcijaństwa. Religia – kultura – polityka*, vol. IV, *Biskupi, mnisi i cesarze 610–1054*, ed. J.M. MAYER, C.I.L. PIETRI, A. VAUCHEZ, M. VENARD, Polish ed. J. KŁOCZOWSKI, Warszawa 1999, p. 43; A.N. STRATOS, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, vol. I..., p. 301; IDEM, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century*, vol. II, 634–641, trans. H.T. HIONIDES, Amsterdam 1972, p. 142. According to Lethel, the *Ekthesis* is a repetition of the *Psephos*. See F.-M. LÉTHEL, *Théologie de l'agonie du Christ...*, p. 48.

⁹² HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, *Ekthesis*, [in:] ACO, ser. II, vol. I (cetera: HERACLIUS IMPERATOR), p. 160.8–11.

⁹³ HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, p. 158.39–160.1: ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ τὰ τε θαύματα καὶ τὰ πάθη κηρύττομεν, καὶ πᾶσαν θείαν καὶ ἀνθρωπίνην ἐνέργειαν ἐνὶ καὶ τῷ αὐτῷ σεσαρκωμένῳ θεῷ λόγῳ. HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, p. 158.19–30.

⁹⁴ HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, p. 158.22–28.

⁹⁵ HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, p. 160.10–11.

⁹⁶ HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, p. 160.10–19.

to it, but whenever and however and to whatever extent God the Word himself willed it⁹⁷. The proclamation of the single will was not the aim itself of the edict. It served as an argument to put aside the “two-operation” formula and to support the ban on discussion over operations. The logic of the imperial *Ekthesis* was the same as the logic of Patriarch Sergius and Pope Honorius.

Conclusion

The pacifism of Pope Honorius legalized the Emperor's intervention in the sphere of doctrine. Honorius became the implicit initiator of the *Ekthesis*, therefore the document expressed also the standpoint of the Pope. There are four main points which may be concluded from the *Ekthesis*. The first point is that the document indirectly confirmed the doctrine of Monenergism and rejected “two operations” in Christ: the *Ekthesis*' terminology was analogous to that of Sergius, unlike that of Sophronius. The second point is that the document, *de facto*, acknowledged the insufficiency of the monenergist arguments and that the arguments of its opponents were strong enough to continue the dispute. It also means that theological position of Pope Honorius was not diligently elaborated, probably because of the trust given to Christological statements of Patriarch Sergius. Therefore, he attempted to put aside the dispute. The third point is that the doctrine of the *Ekthesis*, like that of Sergius and Honorius, was inconsistent: it clearly deprived Christ's human nature of its mere will, though the document claimed that Christ's humanity retains its properties. The *Ekthesis* became a monothelite statement of faith. In this document the continuation of Honorius' statement on one will is evident. The fourth point is that the document testified that the ultimate decision in the sphere of doctrine belonged to the Emperor: the edict was issued and signed by Heraclius with the tacit consent of Pope Honorius and other Patriarchs. The document expressed the coincidence of both imperial and ecclesial politics. The doctrinal reflection of Pope Leo seems to be not strictly accepted in respect of terminology, although Chalcedonian Christology, formed under influence of Pope Leo, in Cyrillian interpretation was accepted. The Latin Christology was not taken into consideration either. In this way, Pope Honorius did not manage to manifest himself as a doctrinal arbiter who tried to dissolve theological problems on the basis of the Scripture and Fathers, but as a pacifist who first of all sought the peace for the Church. The *Ekthesis* did not silence the controversy, because it left the Christological matters over operations unresolved.

⁹⁷ HERACLIUS IMPERATOR, p. 160.25–29. Cf. G. DAGRON, *Kościół bizantyński...*, p. 43.

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Abstract. The purpose of this article is to analyze the standpoint of Pope Honorius (625–638) at the early stage of the controversy over operation in Christ. Patriarch Sophronius (633/634–638) expressed his protest against the statement on one operation in Christ after it had been officially expressed in the Alexandrian *Pact* of unity in 633. The *Pact* was supported by both Sergius of Constantinople (610–638) and Emperor Heraclius (610–641). Patriarch Sergius developed his tactics in order to defend the stance of both the Church of Constantinople and the Emperor. As a result, a significant tension between both Patriarchs arose. After the confrontation between Sophronius of Jerusalem and Sergius of Constantinople, Pope Honorius (625–638) was concerned with the matter of operation in Christ. He maintained the standpoint of Sergius and became one of the implicit initiators of the *Ekthesis* issued by Emperor Heraclius.

Keywords: Pope Honorius, Sophronius of Jerusalem, Sergius of Constantinople, Monenergism, Monothelism, operation, will, Church, *Ekthesis*, doctrine, Christology

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