

A DUBIOUS CHRISTOLOGICAL FORMULA: FROM LEONTIUS OF BYZANTIUM TO KARL BARTH

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THE DUAL FORMULA of *anhypostasis-enhypostasis* has become an increasing popular way of describing the relation of the human and divine natures of Jesus Christ. The formula aims to express the doctrine that the human nature of Jesus has no subsistence (*anhypostasis*) apart from the union with the Logos, but that it has its being only "in" the subsistence (*en-hypostasis*) of the incarnate Son of God. The use of this formula is especially prevalent among theologians influenced by Karl Barth who in adopting the terms appealed to "the older dogmatics—using the language of later Greek philosophy."¹ Unfortunately, Barth's appropriation of the terms and his dialectical reconstruction of the formula are problematic in several ways, especially since in fact this is in no way the "language of later Greek philosophy" but an invention of Protestant Scholasticism.

My article argues further that this innovative usage by those Scholastics was in serious conflict with the use of terms in patristic Christology, and that the uncritical acceptance of the formula by modern theologians has obfuscated the original meaning. My goal here is to trace the genesis and development of these terms from Leontius of Byzantium to Karl Barth in order to show the fateful moves that led to a radical misreading of Leontius. What is at stake christologically is nothing less than the clarity of believers' confession that Jesus Christ the Lord is fully divine and fully human in one person.

This modern interpretation of the Christology of Leontius is centered around that sixth-century monk's alleged redefinition of the term *enypostaton* (the adjectival form of *hypostasis*) to signify a nature that has its existence not in its own hypostasis, but in the hypostasis of another nature. Dominating scholarly opinion for over a century, this interpretation assumes that Leontius introduced a philosophical theory, with the aid of a new meaning for *enypostaton*, to help explain how two natures can exist in a single hypostasis. This reading has recently been convincingly challenged through the work of two Catholic scholars, Aloys Grillmeier, S.J., and Brian E. Daley, S.J.,² who trace

¹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols., trans. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936–69) IV/2.49.

² Aloys Grillmeier, S.J., "Die anthropologisch-christologische Sprache des Leontius von Byzanz und ihre Beziehung zu den Symmikta Zetemata des Neuplatonikers Porphyrius," in *Hermeneumata: Festschrift für Hadwig Hörner*, ed. Herbert Eisenberger (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1990) 61–72; and "The Understanding of the Christological

the theory to the influential treatment of Leontius by Friedrich Loofs in 1887.³

The roots of this misunderstanding about Leontius, however, appear to go back to certain Protestant Scholastics. By examining Leontius's original texts, which have never been translated fully into English, I hope to reveal additional fallacies in the enhypostasis theory. The negative impact of this interpretation of Leontius has perhaps been stronger in Protestant theology where it continues to exert a powerful influence. For example, Bruce McCormack has recently argued that when Karl Barth adopted the *anhypostasis-enhypostasis* formula in 1924, it "provided the material conditions needed to set free the elaboration of the *analogia fidei*"⁴ from which his whole methodology flowed. This suggests that the misreading of Leontius, exemplified by the work of Loofs, has deeply permeated Protestant theology and may be difficult to extricate.

This article develops through six stages. After first presenting background material about Leontius, I then examine his use of the terms *enypostatōn* and *anypostatōn* in Book 3 of *Contra Nestorianos et Euty-chianos*, written around 540. By identifying the precise function of these words in the context of the christological exigency to which he was responding, I show that he was not using them in a radically new way. Next I summarize and expand upon the analyses provided by Grillmeier and Daley who were among the first to critique the modern consensus, and show that the belief that Leontius intended *enypostatōn* to refer to a nature that has its hypostasis in that of another nature is false. My thesis is that a common-sense translation of *enypostatōn* as simply "subsistent" has the advantage of reflecting the normal usage of the term during the first eight centuries of Christian theology and illuminating Leontius's Christology that indisputably played an important role in the post-Chalcedonian development of christological doctrine. Then I trace the emergence of the terms *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia*, which do not appear at all in Leontius or the other early Fathers to the late 16th- and 17th-century Protestant Scholastics.

Definitions of Both (Oriental Orthodox and Roman Catholic) Traditions in the Light of the Post-Chalcedonian Theology (Analysis of Terminologies in a Conceptual Framework)," in *Christ in East and West*, ed. Paul Fries and Tiran Nersoyan (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University, 1987) 65–82; Brian E. Daley, S.J., "A Richer Union: Leontius of Byzantium and the Relationship of Human and Divine in Christ," in *Studia Patristica* 24 (1993) 239–65. While I consistently transliterate the term as "*enypostatōn*," both Daley and Grillmeier use the traditional transliteration of *enhypostatōn* (with an "h"). In the adjectival form, the "n" (*nu*) is added to ease pronunciation, separating the epsilon from the upsilon. The "h" sound disappears with the addition of the *en* prefix; so, in my judgment, *enypostatōn* is more accurate.

³Friedrich Loofs, "Leontius von Byzanz und die gleichnamigen Schriftsteller der griechischen Kirche," in *Texte und Untersuchungen* 3, ed. Oskar von Gebhardt and Adolf von Harnack (Leipzig, 1887) 1–317.

⁴Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development 1909–1936* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) 19.

Finally, I assess Karl Barth's dialectical appropriation of the dual christological formula and explore briefly what implications this analysis has for contemporary christological understanding.

Before proceeding through these steps, the reader needs to keep in mind the distinction between the two positions: (1) that the human nature of Jesus does not subsist except in its union with the Logos in the one person of Christ, and (2) that *enhypostasis* and *anhypostasis* are good terms to describe this fact about the human nature of Jesus. Most of the players in this theological drama—certainly Leontius, most of the Protestant Scholastics, and Barth—do in fact affirm the first position. Although the formula under discussion has been wed to this doctrine for the last 400 years in much of Protestant theology, it is not necessary to assert the second position in order to affirm the first. Therefore, if one discovers that neither Leontius nor any other patristic writer taught the second view, this does not have to shake one's faith in the first. Rather, one simply needs to look for better ways of stating that view. At the very least, those who decide to continue using the formula should be aware of the pertinent grammatical problems and the philosophical issues that shaped the original formulation. The epistemic and methodological factors that led to the affirmation of the second position need to be appreciated so that any new constructive formulations will not repeat the errors of the past. The first step is to understand the context of the allegedly new definitions of the terms in question.

LEONTIUS OF BYZANTIUM

The fact that several persons with the name Leontius were producing theological treatises in the sixth century has often led to confusion.⁵ For our purposes, it is important to note that most scholars link our Leontius, i.e., the author of *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*, with the Leontius of Byzantium about whom Cyril of Skythopolis wrote in his *Vita Sabae*. This is relevant because the latter Leontius was a Palestinian monk who led an "Origenist" party that caused considerable political trouble, apparently even taking up garden tools as weapons. Virtually all scholars now agree that we are dealing here with one and the same Leontius. This is enigmatic, for in what sense may our Leontius, whose Christology seems to support Chalcedonian orthodoxy, be labelled an Origenist?

The first person to go against the received wisdom of affirming Leontius's orthodoxy was David Evans in 1970. For Evans, the "Origenism" of our Leontius was indeed doctrinal. In order to make his case,

⁵ In *Patrologia Graeca* (PG) 86, Migne mistakenly attributed *Adversus Nestorianos* to Leontius of Byzantium; we now know that it was written by Leontius of Jerusalem, a contemporary. For a summary of the issues in Leontian scholarship, see Brian Daley, S.J., "The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium," *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1976) 333-69.

however, Evans had to admit that Leontius never actually says anything christologically Origenistic, but that it is "hidden" behind the arguments. In fact, Evans posits that Leontius consciously went to considerable effort to hide it so as to avoid persecution. He concludes "that the Jesus Christ of Leontius is the *nous* Jesus Christ [a created pre-existent being] of the Origenist Evagrius of Pontus."⁶ Because of Evans's exhaustive analysis and creativity, this reading held sway for a few years. But after the appearance of two articles in the mid-1970s, one finds no one defending Evans's thesis. The first article was by John J. Lynch, who argued that Leontius was in fact a Cyrillian when it came to Christology,⁷ an analysis based on explicit textual evidence. The second critique was provided by Brian Daley, who showed that the Origenism of monks in the sixth century was more an attitude about theology's openness to metaphysical speculation than a doctrinal system. Daley points out several areas where Leontius's Christology is clearly anti-Origenistic.⁸ Leontius did engage the tradition in a critical way. For example, although he follows Cyril most of the time in his attack on Nestorius, there are some important differences of emphasis, as noted by John of Damascus two centuries later.⁹ Nevertheless, Leontius clearly desired to follow the teaching of the Fathers, as one can see from his florilegium. Let us assume, then, that Leontius was not a heretic, but meant to remain in the orthodox tradition. Was his use of *enpostaton* radically new or was it a restatement of Chalcedon?

Leontius's goal in Book 3 of *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*¹⁰ was to fight the Monophysites, who were gaining strength in the sixth century without falling into the opposite extreme of the Nestorians. He explicitly states his purpose in the prologue: "[Since] the definition of [the terms] hypostasis and ousia . . . remains confused and vague among those now counted wise, I have undertaken to elucidate and clarify [them]."¹¹ This is the christological exigency that Leontius is addressing. A brief summary will suffice to give a sense of the argument. The book is comprised of a brief prologue, seven chapters, and an epilogue that introduces a long florilegium. Each of the seven chapters

⁶ David Evans, *Leontius of Byzantium: An Origenist Christology* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1970) 143.

⁷ John J. Lynch, "Leontius of Byzantium: A Cyrillian Christology," *Theological Studies* 36 (1975) 455-71.

⁸ Daley, "The Origenism of Leontius" 355-60.

⁹ John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa* 3, chap. 3-9 (PG 94, 987B-1017B); translated as "Exposition of the Christian Faith," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1899) 9.47 ff.

¹⁰ The title *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* is a misnomer; the three books that comprise the document were actually written years apart and deal with different issues. Only Book 1 extensively treats Nestorianism and Eutyhchianism. My concern is only with Book 3; generic references to the title in this article refer to Book 3.

¹¹ PG 86, 1273A; translation by Evans, *Leontius of Byzantium* 15.

begins with a *dubitatio* or objection set forth by Leontius's adversaries to which he then responds.¹²

THE TEACHING OF *CONTRA NESTORIANOS ET EUTYCHIANOS*

Chapter 1 stands by itself as the first step in the argument and it is here that Leontius uses the term *enypostaton*. He first asserts that both the Nestorians and the Monophysites represented metonymically by Eutyches share in a common fallacy. Both express the following objection: "If you posit two natures of the one Christ, but if there is no nature without hypostasis, then there will be [in him] two hypostases, too." The task is to understand how Leontius responded to this objection, and how one should respond.

However, the section in Chapter 1 that cites the term *enypostaton* cannot be understood fully apart from the general flow of his broader argument. The next five chapters are conceptually unified by Leontius's argument that the paradigmatic analogy for understanding the two natures of Christ is the union of soul and body, introduced in the last sentence of Chapter 1. His own view of this union of body and soul is rooted in an anthropology which first divides the soul into *ousia logikē* and *poiotēs asōmatos*, and then divides the latter "immaterial quality" into three faculties: appetitive, spirited and cognitive. These five chapters are Leontius' responses to further *dubitatio*nes: Chapters 2-4 are against the Nestorians (who reject this analogy), Chapters 5-6 are against the Monophysites (who misrepresent it to buttress their heretical teachings).

Chapter 7 stands alone as a summary and conclusion. Although Leontius formally maintains the style of *dubitatio*, in reality he has left it; here his enemies simply ask him to summarize the issues and his position. This he does by discussing the *tropos tēs henoseos*. He attacks both the Nestorian *kat' axian* and the Monophysite misunderstanding of *kat' ousian*. Leontius summarizes his analysis of being which he has developed to make comprehensible the type of union he wants to predicate of the two natures of Christ. For Leontius, all beings are defined by simultaneous modes of union and distinction. So he says there are things united by species but distinguished by hypostases (class I) and things distinguished by species but united by hypostases (class II). As Evans puts it, these can be thought of respectively as beings in their mode of nature and in their mode of union.¹³ Beings of class I may be further divided in two ways: they either possess their union and distinction as simple or as composite. Second, beings of class I are in a union *kat' ousian*, so that one may distinguish between those that do

¹² I am indebted to the analysis of Evans in the following summary.

¹³ Evans, *Leontius of Byzantium* especially 33 ff. Evans introduced the terms "class I" and "class II" for easy reference.

not preserve the integrity of the definition of their being (in the union) and those that do. For Leontius, both the "Word" and the "flesh" are beings that fall into this latter subdivision in their union *kat' ousian*. Other examples of the union of such beings include fire and wood in one torch, and body and soul in one person.

Our main concern is how (or whether) Leontius meant the term *enypostatōn* to serve as a solution to the *dubitatio* of the first chapter. Let us reconstruct it in the form of a syllogism. For Leontius's adversaries, the conjunction of A and B entails C.

- A. Jesus Christ has two natures (*duo physeis epi tou henos Christou*)
- B. There is no nature without hypostasis (*ouk esti physis anypostatos*)
- C. Jesus Christ has two hypostases (*duo ara an eien kai hai hypostaseis*)

The Monophysites avoided C by rejecting premise A, and argued instead for one nature (at least "after the union," following Eutyches). The Nestorians boldly chose C, or at least put a division between hypostases. Leontius, on the other hand, rejected the validity of the syllogism by attacking the elliptical premise of his enemies that would be required for the entailment relation to hold, namely that two natures cannot be united in one hypostasis. This was the whole point of his extensive analysis of being, which he summarized in Chapter 7. The traditional reading of Leontius has been that the way he critiqued this elliptical premise was to give the term "enhyposostasized" a new specific and nontraditional metaphysical meaning, which enabled him to avoid the heresy of C. This modern interpretation is now commonly attributed most to the influence of Friedrich Loofs.

THE MODERN INTERPRETATION OF LEONTIUS

Loofs suggested that Leontius invented the idea of something having its hypostasis not in itself, but in the hypostasis of another nature, and that this conception played a special role in the development of doctrine. This reading certainly has a *prima facie* tenability to it and has been accepted almost unanimously. Apart from the recent writings of Grillmeier and Daley, one finds in the textbook analyses of Leontius unanimity in ascribing to him a new use of the term *enypostatōn*. I cite two examples. R. V. Sellers explains that Leontius responded to the enemies of orthodoxy by bringing "forward his theory of *enhyposostasias*."¹⁴ Hans Stickelberger asserts that in describing the union of the natures in the hypostasis of the Christ Logos, Leontius "called this relation the enhyposistas of the human nature."¹⁵ As I hope to prove, Leontius did no such thing. There are compelling reasons for rejecting the consensus view.

According to Loofs, Leontius's original contribution was the theory of

¹⁴ Robert Victor Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon* (London: SPCK, 1961) 304.

¹⁵ Hans Stickelberger, "Substanz und Akzidens bei Leontius von Byzanz," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 36 (1980) 153-61, at 159; my translation.

the *enhypostasia* of the human nature of Christ. He argues that, for Leontius, "The human nature in Christ is not *anypostatos*, nor itself an *hypostasis*, but *enypostatos* (1277D), that is, it has its *hypostenai en tō logō* (1944C)."¹⁶ Loofs here makes a connection between Leontius's use of *enypostatos* in *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* (1277D) and a second quote from a separate text attributed to Leontius, *Solutio argumentorum a Severo objectorum* (1944C).

However, there are several problems with the analysis by Loofs. In *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* Leontius clearly does not say that the human nature is in the hypostasis of the Logos. The onus of proof rests with Loofs. He is forced to appeal to *Solutio argumentorum*, a treatise written at a different time and against a different adversary. But a closer examination of the passage he quotes invalidates his appeal. First, Loofs changed the word order of the original text, putting *hypostenai* before *en tō logō*, to strengthen his argument (1944C). Second, he twists the grammar: the verb form is passive infinitive and does not fit his translation. To cap it off, the text quoted by Loofs is actually put by Leontius in the mouths of his adversaries. The context of the quote in *Solutio argumentorum a Severo objectorum* is an argument that such statements (such as *en tō logō hypostenai*) about the nonpreexistence of the human nature do not guarantee a single hypostasis. Therefore, Leontius wants to argue on stronger grounds for one hypostasis. The critical thing to note is that even if Leontius conceded this point to his Cyrillian interlocutors, this is not relevant to the crucial question of the meaning of *enypostaton*, because the word *enypostaton* appears nowhere in the *Solutio argumentorum* passage.

Finally, Loofs misunderstands the word *enypostaton* itself. As Daley notes in a recent essay, "One of Loofs' most influential mistakes was to take the word *enypostaton* . . . not to mean 'hypostatic,' 'having a concrete existence,' as in fact it does, but to mean 'hypostasized' or 'existent within' something else: to take the *en-* in the term, in other words, as a localizing prefix rather than simply the opposite of an alpha privative."¹⁷ If *enypostaton* means just "subsisting" and does not carry the metaphysical implications proposed by Loofs, then Leontius can be seen as a creative systematizer of Chalcedon, rather than a radical innovator or neologist.

Aloys Grillmeier reached a similar conclusion: "Chalcedon speaks of one *hypostasis* only. It seems that contrary to an '*opinio communis*' Leontius of Byzantium has not advanced much further. It was believed [wrongly] that Leontius had found another meaning of *hypostasis*

¹⁶ Friedrich Loofs, "Leontius von Byzanz" 65; my translation. Loofs recognizes that Leontius would not predicate *anypostaton* of the human nature of Jesus. This is important for my argument which follows. Some of the Protestant Scholastics did predicate the term of the human nature. For now, the focus is on whether Leontius predicated *enypostaton* of the human nature in any special way.

¹⁷ Daley, "A Richer Union" 241.

which went well beyond the one given here.”¹⁸ And more recently Grillmeier further argued “. . . that which is *enhypostaton* has being and actuality in itself. Thereby it is also shown that the prefix *en* in the compound word *enhypostaton* has been falsely interpreted. It is the opposite of an *alpha privativum* (e.g. a-hypostaton) and means precisely the possession of that property which was denied by the negation. *Enhypostaton* thus means nothing other than ‘to have a concrete existence,’ ‘to have actuality.’”¹⁹

Other Church Fathers throughout the first millennium of Christian theology used the terms *enypostaton* and *anypostaton* to mean simply “subsisting” and “not subsisting” respectively. A few examples of this common usage before, during, and after the time of Leontius are instructive. It is appropriate to start with the Cappadocians because they are quoted extensively as authorities in the florilegium of *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*. In a letter to Count Terentius, Basil of Caesarea explained that because “ousia bears the same relation to hypostasis as the common does to the particular it makes no sense for them to say that the Persons are without hypostasis [*anypostata*],”²⁰ for of course the persons are not merely abstract essences, but truly exist. In Chapter 2 of his *Oratio Catechetica*, Gregory of Nyssa argued that the Word of God is not *anypostaton*, i.e. not “without subsistence.”²¹ Cyril of Jerusalem in his *Catechetical Lectures* (XVII, 5) refers to the Holy Spirit as “not diffused throughout the air, but having actual subsistence [*enypostaton*].”²² Leontius of Jerusalem, a contemporary of our Leontius, uses *enypostatos* to mean “subsisting” in his arguments with the dyophysites; for him, all natures are *enypostaton*.²³ John of Damascus in the eighth century used the terms in this straightforward way in his treatment of Cyril and Leontius of Byzantium in Book 3, Chapter 9, of *De fide orthodoxa*. He refers directly to Leontius’s argument in Chapter 1 of *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*, and asserts that the flesh and the Word have one and the same subsistence. Therefore, the Damascene argues, one cannot speak of either of them as *anypostaton*.²⁴ Since Leontius was consciously trying to follow the ear-

¹⁸ Grillmeier, “The Understanding of the Christological Definitions” 80.

¹⁹ Grillmeier, “Die anthropologisch-christologische Sprache” 68–69; my translation.

²⁰ PG 32, 789A–789B; my translation. For an English translation of the full text, see *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, 8.254.

²¹ PG 45, 17B; see *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, 5.477.

²² PG 33, 973A–975A; my translation. See *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, 7.125, where the translators render *enypostaton* as “having a real substance.”

²³ *Adversus Nestorianos*, PG 86, 1561C; see Evans, *Leontius* 140.

²⁴ PG 94, 1017A. Later in the same paragraph, he explains that “the flesh of the Word . . . did not have a separate *hypostasis* alongside the *hypostasis* of the Word of God, but by subsisting in it [that single *hypostasis*], it really did come to subsist [*enypostatos*]”; my translation. See *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, 9.53. Notice that this passage does not assert the equivalence of *enypostatos* and “subsisting in another.” The ambiguity of this text in John of Damascus makes it a possible locus (the only other likely patristic locus besides Leontius that I know of) for the Protestant Scholastic

lier fathers, if he had in fact wanted to invent a new meaning for words they all used, it seems he would have been very explicit in announcing his intention. Without such an announcement, it makes more sense to assume he used the terms in a way similar to other speakers of this theological language.

A CLOSER LOOK AT LEONTIUS

To translate the terms as used by Leontius in a common, noninnocentive way does not take away from the powerful importance of his doctrinal presentation of Christ. The critical passage in *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos* where Leontius uses the terms *enypostatōn* and *anypostatōn* has never, to my knowledge, been given a full English translation. Given the importance of this section for understanding the flaws of the enhypostasis theory, I offer the following translation:²⁵

A subsistence [*hypostasis*] and "that which subsists" [*enypostatōn*] are not the same, no more than a substance [*ousia*] and that which is substantiated [*enousion*] are the same. Subsistence [*hypostasis*] designates the particular individual, but "that which subsists" [*to enypostatōn*] refers to the essence. *Hypostasis* defines a person [*prosōpon*] by means of particular characteristics. "That which subsists" [*to enypostatōn*] signifies something that is *not* an accident; the latter has its being in another and is not seen in itself. It is the case for all such qualities, both those called essential and those called nonessential, that they are not themselves an essence, i.e., a subsistent thing, but are perceived always in association with an essence, e.g., as cold is in a body and knowledge is in a soul. One speaks truly in saying: "there is no such thing as a non-subsistent nature [*physis anypostatos*]." But one draws a false conclusion if one infers that a thing is a hypostasis from the assertion that it is not without subsistence [*mē anypostatōn*]. Similarly, one can rightly say: "there is no such thing as a body without form [*sōma aschēmatiston*]." But it would be incorrect to conclude that the form is a body; rather, it is only perceived in the body. Certainly, there is no non-subsistent nature, i.e., essence. A nature, however, is not a hypostasis, for there cannot be a reversal here. A hypostasis is also a nature, but a nature is not also a hypostasis. A nature [*physis*] admits of the predication of "being" [*einai*], but a hypostasis may be further defined as that which "is by itself" [*kat' eauton einai*]. The former indicates the character of a universal; the latter identifies a particular within a species. "Nature" designates the peculiarity of that which is held in common; hypostasis marks off a

misreading of the terms. Since the Damascene explicitly refers to Leontius of Byzantium, however, it makes sense to focus our analysis on him. Further research on the sources of the Protestant Scholastics may shed new light on the etiology of the christological formula in its current dual form.

²⁵ The text is found in PG 86, 1277C–1280B. Brian Daley is working on a new critical edition of all Leontius's works; see "A Richer Union" 239. In producing the translation that follows, I have compared the Migne text to a draft of Daley's currently unpublished critical edition, which he graciously provided. For a German translation (sometimes overly determined by the enhypostasis theory), see Stephan Otto, *Person und Subsistenz: Die philosophische Anthropologie des Leontios von Byzanz. Ein Beitrag zur spätantiken Geistesgeschichte* (Munich: W. Fink, 1968) 192–93.

particular from the common. To summarize: things sharing the same essence [*homoousia*], with a common structure of being, are properly said to be of one nature. But one can define as "hypostasis" either [A] things which share a nature but differ in number, or [B] things which are put together from different natures, but which share reciprocally in a common being. By "sharing being" I mean insofar as the nature and essence of each is perceived not by itself but only with the other, with which it has been joined and composited. It is not as if each completed the essence of the other, as in the relation between essences and things essentially predicated of them, which we call their qualities. One finds this "sharing of being" in various things, not least in the relation between soul and body, which have a common hypostasis but individual natures, each with a distinct structure of being.

From this text it is clear that Loofs's interpretation of *enypostatōn* as referring explicitly and only to a nature that has its subsistence or hypostasis in the hypostasis of another nature is doubly wrong. First, the term is not limited, as Loofs apparently thought, to what I have designated as [B] cases, in which there is a union of different natures. *Enypostatōn* simply refers to an essence that is in fact subsisting. Second, even when it is predicated of a thing in the category of [B], the hypostasis of that nature is not *in* the hypostasis of another nature; rather, that nature shares a common hypostasis with the other nature. In such hypostatic unions, each individual nature maintains its own distinct structure of being (*logos*). The paradigm case is the union of soul and body, where the natures share a common subsistence that is constituted by their relationality. Leontius naturally predicates *enypostatōn* of both soul and body, for each is subsistent.

In fact, the translation of the terms in the normal way illustrated above also makes more sense of Leontius's internal argument. If one reads the text carefully through the lens of Loofs, it would render Leontius a heretic. Describing the union of two natures of the type fitting the Word and the flesh, Leontius says in Chapter 7 that they are perceived "with one another and in one another."²⁶ Loofs's *enypostatōn* theory would require that the divine nature was also in the hypostasis of the human nature. However, if Leontius was using the term *enypostatōn* the way everyone else did, then it would make sense to predicate it of the *Logos* too, because the *Logos* does subsist. As early as 1938, Marcel Richard recognized that for Leontius all natures (substances, *ousia*) are "enypostatic," but he did not push the logic to show that this contradicts the reading by Loofs.²⁷ Of course all natures are "enypostatic" because the latter simply means "hypostasized" or "sub-

²⁶ PG 86, 1304B: *met' allelon kai en allelois theoroumene*. The word *enypostatōn* is not used in this later section of Leontius' argument. Had he intended to use it in the way Loofs thought he did, one would have expected it to be expounded precisely here.

²⁷ Marcel Richard notes that *enypostatōn* is "une caractéristique essentielle de la substance" ("Léonce et Pamphile," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 27 [1938] 27–52, at 33).

sisting" and, given Aristotelian assumptions, a nature cannot subsist *ante rem* but only *in rebus*.

Why would Loofs make such a terminological mistake, and why was it so readily accepted and dyed into the wool of christological interpretation in modern times? The first clue is Loofs's use of the German noun form "Enhypostasie" (the English form is *enhypos-tasis*; both translate *enhypos-tasia*) to refer to the human nature of Christ. But the word *enhypos-tasia* is not found in *Contra Nestorianos et Eutychianos*. Indeed, one may search the entire *corpus Leontianum* for it to no avail. Leontius consistently uses the adjectival form *enypostatos* and it means simply "hypostatic." Similarly, there is no such word as *anhypos-tasia* in Leontius, only the adjective *anypostatos* which always means "without hypostasis" or "not hypostatic." For a nature to be *enypostaton* means for it to have concrete existence; for a nature to be *anypostaton* makes no sense. The latter cannot be predicated of the former since both Leontius and his adversaries held to the Aristotelian view of metaphysics.

The noun form *enhypos-tasia* is found nowhere in any of the early Fathers, because it simply is not a word in their vocabulary. A search of the *Thesaurus linguae graecae* database shows no instances in the Greek Fathers of *enypostasia* or *enhypos-tasis* and only one case of *anypostasia*. The latter is found in an obscure author within a seven-word fragment which is not even a sentence, but merely a list of words. Why then did Loofs use the noun form to describe Leontius's theory? Had theologians in the history of the Church ever utilized this term prior to Loofs? One does find it alongside *anhypos-tasia* in the writings of some Protestant Scholastics during the late 16th and 17th centuries.

ANHYPOSTASIA AND ENHYPOSTASIA IN PROTESTANT SCHOLASTICISM

If the seeds of the *enhypos-tasis* theory reading of Leontius were planted during the formative period of Protestant theology and grew alongside other doctrinal developments, then eradicating the terminology of the dual formula as referring to the human nature of Jesus may be more difficult for the Lutheran and Reformed traditions than for Catholic theology.²⁸ The situation is even more complicated for scholarship on Barth if the formula is taken to be the material and methodological centerpiece of his whole theology.

When Barth adopted these terms, he clearly thought they repre-

²⁸ Many (if not most) Catholic writers have also accepted the interpretation of Leontius as equating "enhypos-tatic" with existing in the hypostasis of another. Piet Schoonenberg, e.g., offers several objections to the Protestant Scholastic theories of *anhypos-tasia* (*The Christ* [New York: Herder and Herder, 1971] 58-65); most Catholic scholars would tend to follow him here. The only Catholic author I found who affirms the *anhypos-tasis* side of the dyad as a "classical" doctrine is John Macken, S.J., *The Autonomy Theme in the "Church Dogmatics": Karl Barth and His Critics* (New York: Cambridge University, 1990) 149; for Macken's criticism of Jüngel's expansion of the formula, see below.

sented ancient dogma. But they are not ancient theological terms; they are not even words in the vocabulary of the Greek Fathers. Barth took them from the theological textbooks of Heinrich Hepppe and Heinrich Schmid who quoted the Protestant Scholastics at length. One representative text is found in the Lutheran theologian Schmid when he refers to Hollaz's summation: "To the human nature of Christ there belong certain distinctive characteristics or prerogatives . . . such are (a) *anhypostasia*, the being without a peculiar subsistence, since this is replaced by the divine person (*hypostasis*) of the Son of God, as one far more exalted."²⁹ Schmid then discusses Quenstedt's clarification of the distinction between "*anhypostasia* and *enhypos-tasia*." Finally, he quotes Gerhard: "Relatively, that is said to be *anhypostaton*, which does not subsist in its own, but in the *hypostasis* of another In this sense, the flesh of Christ is said to be *anhypostatos*, because it is *enhypos-tatos*, subsisting in the *logos*."³⁰

Apparently Lutheran Scholastics created the terms *anhypostasia* and *enhypos-tasia* since they appear in this noun form for the first time here. Two things are important to note. First, it would be true to their sensibilities to turn the adjectival forms of *enhypos-tatos* and *anypostatos* into nouns. Perhaps the Lutheran Scholastics were influenced here by the nominalism of William of Ockham. With a tendency to eschew the whole discussion of universals and particulars, natures and hypostas-es, they may have preferred simply to point at a concrete entity (like the humanity of Jesus) and name it something concrete (like *enhypos-tasia*). This move may have even tacitly provided latent support for the Lutheran inclusion of the *genus maiestaticum* in the doctrinal debates over *communicatio idiomatum*. Second, whatever the motivation for the introduction of the terms, they have no basis in the patristic literature. I have also shown that even if *enhypos-tasia* had been a word in the early Church, it would not have described a nature that has its existence in the hypostasis of another nature.

What about *anhypostasia*? Here the case against the Lutheran Scholastic usage is even stronger. Loofs himself recognized that Leontius referred to the flesh of Christ as "not *anypostaton*." But the Scholastics quoted above said that the human nature is *anhypostasia*. Even if the latter were in fact a word, this would amount to saying that the flesh of Jesus "is isn't," which makes no sense. Both Leontius and the Lutherans want to affirm what I have called in my introductory remarks the first position, namely that the human nature of Jesus does not have an independent subsistence outside the union with the Logos. Leontius would never have supported the second position, namely that the terms *anhypostasis* and *enhypos-tasis* are appropriate terms to express this christological doctrine.

²⁹ Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1875) 300.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 301.

Although the Reformed Scholastics apparently never actually used the noun form of these terms, they nevertheless misunderstood the adjectival forms and utilized them in a similar way. Here are two representative Scholastic texts quoted in Heppé. The first is from the *Leiden Synopsis*: "... the Son of God, the second eternal person of the sacrosanct Trinity, assumed into the unity of his person right from the moment of conception not a pre-existent person but one *anhypostatos* of its own hypostasis or devoid of subsistence, and made it belong to himself. [The flesh] subsists in him and is borne and supported by him."³¹ The second quote is from Heidegger: "Assuredly there must of necessity be one hypostasis, one subsistent person. Either the divine nature subsists in the human, or the human in the divine. That the divine nature should subsist in and be sustained by the human is opposed to its infinite perfection. So the human is per se *anhypostatos* and becomes *enhypostatos* in the *logos*, who being pre-existent, in fact existent from eternity, has received in time the form of a servant . . . as its shrine and instrument."³² Loofs, and virtually everyone else, adopted this way of transliterating the terms (i.e. including the "h"), which has had the negative effect of making even the adjectival forms look like nouns. One must conclude that these Protestant Scholastics misappropriated the terms and employed them in a way contradictory to their use by Leontius and the other Greek Fathers.

THE ANHYPOSTASIS-ENHYPOSTASIS FORMULA IN KARL BARTH

I have already alluded to the fact that the effects of this interpretation did not stop with the Scholastics. Its ramifications have been particularly evident in the theology of Karl Barth and his followers. In his *Church Dogmatics* Barth calls the dual formula of *anhypostasis* and *enhypostasis* "the sum and root of all the grace addressed to him," i.e., to the human nature of Jesus Christ.³³ While he intended to represent faithfully their teaching, Barth's use of dialectic reshaped the dual formula beyond its character in the Scholastics. He discussed the terms in more detail in the second volume on the Word of God:

Anhypostasis asserts the negative. Since in virtue of the *egeneto*, i.e., in virtue of the *assumptio*, Christ's human nature has its existence—the ancients said, its subsistence—in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (*hypostasis*, "person") of the Word, it does not possess it in and for itself, *in abstracto*. Apart from the divine mode of being whose existence it acquires it has none of its own; i.e., apart from its concrete existence in God in the event of the *unio*, it has no existence of its own, it is *anhypostatos*. *Enhypostasis* asserts the positive. In virtue of the *egeneto*, i.e., in virtue of the *assumptio*, the human nature acquires existence (subsistence) in the existence of God, meaning in the mode of being (*hypostasis*, "person") of the Word. This divine mode of being

³¹ Heinrich Heppé, *Reformed Dogmatics*, revised edition, ed. Ernst Bizer, trans. G. T. Thomson (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1950) 418.

³² *Ibid.* 428.

³³ Barth, *Dogmatics* IV/2.91.

gives it existence in the event of the *unio*, and in this way it has a concrete existence of its own, it is *enhypostatos*.³⁴

T. F. Torrance, co-editor of the English translation of Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, followed him in this dialectical usage of these terms to express the relation of the two natures of Jesus Christ. However, Torrance went beyond Barth and pressed the dual formula into further service. Explaining the "logic of God," which is revealed in the nature of the incarnate Logos, Torrance argued that "the logic of Grace and the logic of Christ [the two sides of the logic of God] are to be related to one another as the doctrines of *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia*."³⁵ In the context of theological thinking, the former posited the unconditional priority of grace, while the latter affirmed an unimpaired place for human response. Holding these two together, Torrance suggested, is necessary for "thinking out the interior logic of theological thought."³⁶ My analysis of the terms *enypostatos* and *anypostatos* in this article should at least cause one to pause and consider whether invoking the dual formula is the best way of accomplishing Torrance's goal of describing the logic of theology.

Eberhard Jüngel echoes Barth by incorrectly referring to *enhypostasis* and *anhypostasis* as a "patristic doctrine."³⁷ Like Torrance, he expands the scope of the formula, arguing that it might also be operative implicitly in Barth's doctrine of election. Interestingly, Jüngel offers an anonymous Greek phrase—*enypostatos tō logō tou theou*—to clarify his argument.³⁸ Although he gives no reference for this quote, it is certainly reminiscent of the misquoting of Leontius by Loofs, which has been analyzed above. Jüngel even calls for a new formulation of the doctrine of God in these terms: "God's being *ad extra* would be *anhypostatic* if in this relation an *enhypostasis* of the being of God as Father, as Son and as Spirit was not fulfilled."³⁹ John Macken, S.J., traced Jüngel's further application of the formula to the issue of the autonomy and heteronomy of the human self in relation to Christ. Macken apparently accepted Barth's application of the formula to Christ, but found Jüngel's expansion of the formula to the Christian life too restrictive for a sound distinction between nature and grace.⁴⁰

These authors treat the *anhypostasis-enhypostasis* formula as a single motif in Barth's thought. Bruce McCormack, on the other hand, has argued more strongly than in Barth's 1924 *Göttingen Dogmatics* "the *anhypostatic-enhypostatic* model had supplanted the time-eternity dialectic as the central parable for expressing the *Realdia-*

³⁴ Ibid. I/2.163.

³⁵ T. F. Torrance, *Theological Science* (London: Oxford University, 1969) 217.

³⁶ Ibid. 218.

³⁷ Eberhard Jüngel, *The Doctrine of the Trinity: God's Being Is in Becoming* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) 98.

³⁸ Ibid. 81, 98.

³⁹ Ibid. 104.

⁴⁰ Macken, *The Autonomy Theme in the "Church Dogmatics"* 168.

lektik of God's veiling and unveiling,"⁴¹ and that the adoption of this formula marked the beginning of a new phase in his theology that continued through the *Church Dogmatics*. It makes sense to think that Barth made a theological decision to root dogmatics in the Incarnation in 1924, as McCormack suggests. But it is less clear that the *anhypostasis-enhypostasis* formula became the central parable for pointing to the *Realdialektik* because, as Barth himself recognized both in the *Göttingen Dogmatics* and in the *Church Dogmatics*, the referent of these terms is not God but the human nature of Jesus.⁴² One might expect a parable that aims to replace the "time-eternity" dialectic to reach beyond the predicates of the human nature of Jesus. To find such a parable, one might explore, for example, the broader arena of God's revelation "in Christ," which includes for Barth not only Word but also Spirit, not only the objective but also the subjective reality of God's self-revelation. Here too one can find at least the seeds of other parables in Parts 5–7 of the *Göttingen Dogmatics*.

Despite the fact that Barth refers to the formula only three or four times in I/2 and IV/2, it was clearly important for him. This twofold doctrine, which he incorrectly thought was "unanimously sponsored by early theology in its entirety,"⁴³ is not a superfluous theologoumenon: "this concept [*anhypostasis-enhypostasis*] is quite unavoidable at this point if we are properly to describe the mystery."⁴⁴ My preceding analysis of the formula suggests that those who desire to join Barth in affirming the importance of the concept should make an explicit and careful distinction between the concept and the contingency of the dyad which has come to express it. In any case, by arguing that the dual formula is not necessarily the central parable, and that these terms are not necessary for expressing Barth's view of the *Realdialektik*, one may reject the Protestant Scholastic terminology and its problems without simultaneously rejecting Barth's contributions to the doctrine of revelation.

The later Barth referred to the Church as *anhypostasis* and *enhy-postasis* in relation to Christ,⁴⁵ and without using the terms he applied a similar structural apparatus to the experience of awakening to conversion in the individual Christian as well.⁴⁶ The individual is not a new man outside the regenerative activity of the divine Spirit, but is a

⁴¹ McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* 367. McCormack suggests that Barth's use of the model was "thoroughly Reformed" (371). However, Barth seems to follow the Lutherans quoted by Schmid in adopting the noun forms rather than limiting himself to the adjectives as in the Reformed Scholastics quoted by Heppé. Barth wrote the preface to the Bizer edition of Heppé's book—there he confesses to a heavy reliance on both Heppé and Schmid in preparing the *Göttingen Dogmatics*. Barth treats the dual formula in the *Göttingen Dogmatics*, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 157.

⁴² Barth, *Dogmatics*, IV/2.91; *Göttingen Dogmatics*, 157.

⁴³ *Ibid.* I/2.163.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* IV/2.59.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* IV/2.50.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* IV/2.557–63.

new man through that activity. What seems most important to Barth is not the terms, but a specific kind of relational unity that maintains the asymmetry of the divine initiative. This suggests that for Barth the critical issue is not the *anhypostasis-enhypostasis* formula, but an insistence on the creature's total reliance on God's grace.

CONCLUSION

I conclude by stressing again the importance of distinguishing the following statements: (1) that the human nature of Jesus does not subsist except in its union with the Logos in the one Person of Christ, and (2) that *enhypos-tasis* and *anhypostasis* are good terms to describe this fact about the human nature of Jesus. If one is compelled to reject the second thesis, and the use of the formula in the way meant by the Protestant Scholastics, Loofs, and Barth, this does not mean that one rejects what they were trying to express by using those terms, namely, the first thesis. Instead, one needs to search for better ways to state the mystery of the relation between the Logos and the flesh in Jesus Christ. What is at issue is the clarity of one's confession that the Lord is fully divine and fully human in one Person.

A final implication that may be drawn from this analysis is the importance of recognizing how powerfully theological anthropology shapes Christology. For Leontius, the paradigmatic analogy for the relational unity of the Word and the flesh in Jesus Christ was the relational unity of soul and body in a human person. For the Lutheran Scholastics, it appears that the nominalist avoidance of speaking of a universal human nature led them to misinterpret the terms *enypostaton* and *anypostaton*. Barth's tendency, in his polemic against *analogia entis*, to eschew speculative anthropology of any kind, led to such a strong emphasis in his theological method on the transcendent that he was accused of revelational positivism. While it would be reductionistic to suggest a causal determinism in the relation of anthropology and Christology, one cannot deny that there is a reciprocal influence between them. The importance of the nature and quality of relationality in both doctrines should also lead theologians to make explicit their underlying presuppositions about epistemic and ontic relational structures in all anthropological and christological reflection.