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# THE TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE OF EUTYCHIUS OF ALEXANDRIA (877-940 A.D.)

BY

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Sa'īd ibn Biṭrīq, otherwise known as Eutychius, was Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria from 933 A.D. to 940 A.D. He had a reputation as a scholar, having written on history, medicine and theology as well having composed polemical works against the views of the Nestorians and Jacobites (1). In the *Kitāb al-Burhān* (2), his major theological work, Eutychius undertakes a distinctively Arab approach to the doctrine of the Trinity: Arab both by reason of the language and terminology employed and by reason of the attempt Eutychius makes to comprehend the Islamic experience of God. His approach emerges more clearly when his work is compared with that of its most important predecessor, the *De Fide Orthodoxa* of St. John of Damascus.

It must be born in mind that the *Kitāb al-Burhān* is a pastoral work addressed to Christians. The contribution which Eutychius makes to the Christian expression of the oneness and threeness of God may best be seen as the outcome of Eutychius' whole-hearted involvement in the Islamic environment and his willingness, implied repeatedly in the *Kitāb*

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(1) An assessment of the work of Eutychius and of his place in Melkite scholarship will be found in *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* Vols. I and II — Vatican, 1959 and 1960, by Georg Graf. Reference should also be made to the same author's *Verzeichnis arabischer kirchlicher Termini*; Corpus Script. Orient. Subsidia — Tome 8, Louvain, 1954.

(2) The English translation and Arabic edition of the *Kitāb al-Burhān* referred to throughout this article will be found in *Corpus Script. Christ. Orient*; Scriptorum Arabici — tomes 20-23. Professor W. Montgomery Watt and Dr. Pierre Cachia.

*al-Burhān*, to be part of the evolution of a people who were both Christian and Arab. It is this commitment which gives life to his « clear exposition » of the Trinity to those fellow Christians who lived in an Islamic environment and makes the *Kitāb al-Burhān* still a valuable starting-point for a Christian-Muslim theological dialogue.

#### KITĀB AL-BURHĀN AND DE FIDE ORTHODOXA.

The *Kitāb al-Burhān* bears resemblance to the *De Fide Orthodoxa*. It is unlikely that this resemblance would be fortuitous, for it would be strange if Eutychius were not acquainted with the work of his Melkite predecessor from whom he was separated by two hundred years. Both works are expositions of dogma derived from the statements of the ecumenical Councils and from the writings of the Greek Fathers: both works are pastoral in that they are addressed, at least by implication, to contemporary Christian audiences.

*The Kitāb al-Burhān* is divided into four parts, the first part dealing with the Godhead, the Incarnation and the economy of grace, the second with prophecies and types testifying to the truth of Christian doctrine, the third part dealing with the Scriptural evidence for Christian beliefs and the fourth containing propositions directed against the Jews. The *De Fide Orthodoxa* is similarly divided but the emphasis is different. Much more space is given by the *Kitāb al-Burhān* to the use of arguments from Scripture and prophecy and while the Jews are mentioned in one section only of Book IV of the *De Fide Orthodoxa* and that merely in connection with some dispute over the observance of the Sabbath, by contrast a whole section of the *Kitāb al-Burhān* is devoted to Scriptural evidence refuting the Jewish denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ and related Christian doctrines. This refutation should be seen in the context of the Islamic civilization, well-established by Eutychius' day, in which Christian use of the Scriptures had to take into account contradictory usage by Jewish apologists.

Eutychius in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* always writes with an appreciation of a wider Islamic audience and a reading of his work leaves one with the

certainty that Eutychius felt at home in the Islamic cultural environment in which he lived and worked. The evidence for this is not so much the obvious references to Quranic names of God and such usages as the Quranic name for Satan (*Iblīs*), rather it is the constant reiteration of the theme of the Creator and His creation and Eutychius' concern to defend the uniqueness of God. These Quranic references and echoes form an integral part of his exposition of Christian doctrine which is noteworthy for its calmness, dignity and matter-of-factness.

In the *De Fide Orthodoxa* the first part contains the doctrines concerning the nature of the Godhead and the Trinity, the second deals with cosmology and the nature and psychology of man, the third part discusses the divine economy of grace, the Incarnation, the psychology of Christ and the main events of His earthly life and the fourth outlines matters of current theological controversy such as the two natures of Christ, the mystery of the Eucharist and the veneration of images.

Both works begin with a treatment of the transcendence of God the Creator. This is immediately followed in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* by a cosmological account of the creation of man. When it comes to the discussion of the Trinity, both works develop the analogical arguments derived from the notion of man's word and his spirit and from the imagery of the sun with its disc, beams and radiance.

Again, in the discussion of how the terms of fatherhood and sonhood are to be applied to God, both books stress the same points, namely that the Father alone is without cause and beginning and that He is the cause of all that is other than He, including the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is known as Word in order to make clear that generation within the Godhead is not to be compared with human physical generation but rather with the production by the human mind of intelligent words. He is called Son to emphasize that "He is the impress of the Father's substance and has subsistence, being perfect and in all respects similar to the Father, save that He is begotten" (3).

St. John does not find it necessary to give space to warning against

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(3) De Fid. Orth. Book I.

misconceptions about God arising from the use of the imagination in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity, whereas Eutychius, given his audience, finds himself obliged to make explicit the dangers of polytheism and of modalism.

Also, St. John discusses two names of God, «He that is», being His first and more important name, and “*o theos*”. The latter name he explains in a manner similar to the Cappadocian Fathers. Eutychius, on the other hand, supplements his use of the term “Allah” with other Quranic names of the Deity, for in Christian as well as in Muslim usage the word “Allah” was seen to be the personal name of the Deity in a sense in which “*o theos*” was not.

Furthermore, in section 170 of the *Kitāb al-Burhān* Eutychius answers the question as to how it was that Christ did not tell people that He was God and thus dispel all doubt, as follows: “If Christ had said He was God, He would have led those people who believed in Him into great error, because whoever says the word “God” has named the whole of the divine *jawhar* and the one *kiyān* (4), and by saying the word ‘God’ has conjoined the three *aqānīm*, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. If Christ had said, ‘I am God’, He would have asserted Himself to be the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to possess the three *aqānīm*, and to be the Begetting, the Begotten and the Proceeding. That is falsehood and error...”

In his discussion of the Incarnation Eutychius follows St. John. There is the same emphasis on the “new creation” and on the two natures of Christ. Yet Eutychius relies much less on philosophical arguments and gives more weight to the Scriptural evidence. He also makes use of simple analogies drawn from material things. Then, whereas St. John takes a previously-developed account of human psychology and applies this to Jesus Christ, Eutychius makes no reference to psychology except in reference to the question of the will in Christ. Finally, Eutychius gives a detailed

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(4) There would seem to be in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* a tendency to reserve personality to the Father alone. Therefore *uqnīm* has not been translated in this article for this term developed its meaning in a context where the generic name for God was identical with His proper name which was Allah. It has also seemed preferable not to translate *jawhar* and *kiyān*, pending further investigation into the whole question of Arab Christian theological terminology.

account of Christ's miracles and lays emphasis on His reappearance as Judge at the general Resurrection .

In sum one could say that in *De Fide Orthodoxa* Jesus Christ is presented as God on the grounds that He is the Incarnate Son and Word of the Father, while in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* Jesus Christ is presented as God on the evidence from Scriptures that He performs the acts characteristic of God. Over and over again Eutychius stresses God's manifestation of Himself in His deeds directed towards men. It is also true that he presents the Word as active and as activating, but only with and through the Spirit. The emphasis in the *Kitāb al-Burhān* is on the Father Who generates and on the the Spirit Who proceeds rather than on the Son Who is generated.

#### THE ONENESS AND THREENESS OF GOD.

Eutychius' Trinitarian doctrine is firmly based on his affirmation of the Creator and of His creation. We must begin, then, with his assertion that the universe is created. His argument is the argument from change; things in their totality are either created or they are not. If they were not created, they would not be subject to change; but this is manifestly not so. The fact of change is obvious to all and it follows that things in their totality are created. Therefore there must be one who created them. He who creates must not himself be created; otherwise we would be faced with the possibility of an endless series of creating beings. This is a concept without meaning. Also he who is not created and who is not subject to change must be a god. The inference is that the Creator is the supreme God Who establishes, preserves and orders creation.

Next Eutychius proceeds to outline the cosmology derived from neo-Platonism which still prevailed in his time. Creation can be classified as being of two kinds, immaterial (*laṭīf* or *ruhānī*) and material (*thaqlī* or *ghalīz*) Creation as a whole has three limits, beginning (*mubtada'*), place (*mawḍi'*) and characterization by external qualities (*sifāt al-ḥilya*). Immaterial creation has the first two of these limits and material creation has all three. The Creator alone has no limits. He is pre-eternal (*azalī*), He is present in every place and He has no external characteristics, for He is more subtle than any immaterial thing.

The question of man's knowledge is the next to be considered. Since God has no external characteristics through which He can be known by the senses, it follows that He can only be known by the reason. In order to be able to withstand the light of the knowledge of God, the human reason must be purified from unbelief and sin. It is emphasised that this kind of knowledge is a gift from God without man's having been able to obtain it of his own efforts. This knowledge comes to us freely just as the sun's rays reach men without their having any power over the sun's radiance. "Knowledge does not reach God, because the distance between the Creator and the creation is too great for the creature to reach a knowledge of the Creator... (5)... Consequently there is no attaining the knowledge of God and of His nature (*tabī'a*) which is His *jawhar* and a creature does not reach the description (*ṣifa*) of it" (6). "God is not known in Himself or in His *jawhar*, but by His nature (as shown) in His works" (7). "God is known only by His works and activity and transcendence" (8).

Just as the positive knowledge of God through creation reaches men for their benefit and guidance, so also does the negative knowledge of God. For God has implanted in them a hope for knowledge of Him. "God has taught men knowledge... to the extent that would benefit them, so that by that knowledge He might draw them to Himself; and He has veiled from them that which, had it come to them, would have harmed them because they were too weak for it" (9). This veiled knowledge is God's revelation of Himself in the Scriptures through the prophets, "whose reasons were sound through faith and pure through good works." "Thereby He calls (men) to wonder at what He has veiled from them; and to purity of reason through good works."

Euty chius then goes on to describe the Creator with a number of Quranic epithets. Giver of life and death (*muhyī* and *mumīt*), merciful (*rahmān*), compassionate (*ḥannān*), mighty (*'aziz*), omnipotent (*qādir*),

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(5) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 7.

(6) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 8.

(7) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 13.

(8) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 12.

(9) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 10.

ruler (*mālik*), loftiness (*‘ulūwa*), master (*rabb*), Lord of lords (*sayid al-sāda*), wise (*hakīm*), knower of secrets (*‘allām al-ghuyūb*). It is emphasised that all these names describe God’s activity, not His *jawhar*.

Next Eutychius treats of the anthropomorphic manifestations of God described in the Scriptures. He explains these in two ways; first, as further instances of God’s revealing Himself to men in a veiled and negative way, for none of these descriptions of God in human terms reveals anything of His *jawhar*, and second, as positive expressions of God’s will to inform men that there was to be an Incarnation (*tajassud*) of His Creator Word in a human *jawhar*, so that two natures were to be united in one Christ, that is, the veiled divine and creative nature would be united with a created human nature. The two natures would be joined together by the hypostasis (*qawām*) of the Word of God (*kalimat Allah*) (10).

There follows a brief reiteration of the uniqueness and unity of God. It is now that Eutychius brings in the question of the origin of evil, with a specific reference to *al-zanādiqa*, that is, to the Manichaeans or to persons who held similar views. Contrary to the Manichaeans Eutychius holds the view that a created thing which continues in obedience to the Creator, is good. Whoever goes voluntarily from the path of obedience has entered into a condition of evil. Evil is defined as the non-existence of good. Evil is an accident (*‘araḍ*) and it is not natural.

Now that he has forestalled the possible accusation that he is a polytheist and a dualist, Eutychius begins his exposition of the Trinity in a positive fashion. His first reference is to God (*Allah*) and His Creator Word (*kalimatuhu-l-khāliq*) who is the Word of God (*kalimat Allah*). This Word of God is the hypostasis (*qawām*) which joins together the *jawhar* of Allah with the *jawhar* of a man to form Jesus Christ. “It is necessary then for him who seeks to know God and to believe in Him and to worship Him that he should know that God is complete, not without a Word (*kalima*), and that His Word is established, subsisting, everlasting, never ceasing, not beginning and not ending, for God was never animal-like without a Word, but He always had a Word begotten from Him — not like our word which

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(10) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 20.

has no permanence (*qawām*), living, complete, not separated from Him but established in Him forever, for outside of Him there is no place for it to be in where He is not. No place is empty of Him, and He and His Word fill all things, but nothing holds Him” (11).

After this bold beginning Eutychius proceeds to develop his Trinitarian doctrine by means of analogy. He says that man possesses reason which has the property of being able to beget a word. Reason and word are distinct and yet they are one thing (*shay*) in nature because of their conjunction in a single soul or self (*nafs*). They differ because of their hypostases which are respectively to beget and to be begotten. Likewise God and His Word are one thing (*shay*) in nature because of their conjunction in one soul or self (*nafs*); they are two hypostases because the function of the one is to beget and of the other is to be begotten.

Next Eutychius treats the question of spirit (*ruh*) as follows: the human word has a spirit but this spirit is foreign to it because it does not belong to or inhabit the human but rather its natural habitation is the air. It is this spirit which makes the human word sonorous when uttered by a man. Through this spirit the power or meaning (*qūwa*) of the word becomes manifest. Eutychius argues that God’s Word must also have a Spirit because God’s Word cannot be in any way inferior to man’s word; but because God’s nature is utterly simple (and self-sufficient) therefore God’s Spirit is not something foreign to God or outside His nature. Therefore God’s Spirit is a *jawharīya* power (*qūwa jawharīya*) of God with an hypostasis (*qawām*) which is peculiar to it. God’s Spirit proceeds from the Father and abides in the Word. God’s Spirit manifests the Word and is inseparable both from God (i.e. the Father) in Whom It dwells forever and from the Word to Whom it is attached forever.

There follows a passage with a Quranic ring. “When God wills a thing He only says to it ‘Be’, and it is, because He has power for all that He wants, and (He) effects all that He wills. He wills by His mind, and speaks by His Word, and fashions by His Spirit” (12).

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(11) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 31.

(12) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 34.

Eutychius then sums up his positive statements on the Trinity as follows: there are three hypostases (*qawāmāt*), the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, three names for three *prosopa* (possible translation of *jihāt*) in the *jawhar* of the one God (13). The Father is characterised by begetting, the Son by begottenness and the Holy Spirit by procession (14).

Eutychius now asserts the converse of his previous argument by stating that man's spirit, not to be confused with the spirit of man's word, is created in God's image. Therefore man's spirit is a rational, logical soul (*nafs*) which possesses reason, word and spirit. Eutychius reinforces this statement with a mention of another, though more remote, created image of God, namely the sun with its disc, beams and radiance. He says that it is the reason of God which is the creator of reasons, the Word of God which is the creator of words and the Spirit which is the creator of spirits. "He (the Creator God) is a pre-eternal reason, begetting the Word and causing the Spirit to proceed. He is thus one pre-eternal Father from Whom all fatherhood is derived and named in heaven and earth, the beginning (*bad'*) of everything and the cause (*sabab*) of everything yet (Himself) without beginning and without cause; everything is from Him but He is from nothing; He is begetter but not (Himself) begotten. He is the Creator of everything, and alone the Father of the Word by the nature of the *jawhar*" (15).

"His Word, too, is pre-eternal. He is the unique Son of God begotten from the Father before all times, light from light, very God from very God, begotten not created, from the *jawhar* of the Father; by Him all things were made (or given existence). There was no time before His begetting, and He has no beginning; for that reason we say before all times. It has ever been the case that the Son is not made (given existence), and (that) He did not exist after not existing, but (that) He is the radiance of the light of the Father and the externalisation (*hilya*) of His *qawām*, and His living wisdom and His power and His enduring Word... He is

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(13) The suggestion that *jihāt* may be a translation of *prosopa* is made by the writer of this article. Further on it will be seen that Eutychius mentions *wujūh* as a term which is unacceptable in reference to the members of the Trinity.

(14) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 36.

(15) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 53.

not called Father apart from a Son, and if He existed when He had no Son, He would not be a Father. If it was the case that He only had a Son afterwards, then He would be a Father afterwards, but not before that. This view, however, implies change, from not being a Father to becoming a Father, and that is the worst unbelief..." (16).

"As for all the creatures, they are given existence afterwards by the will of the Father and His Word and His Spirit; they are something from nothing, and (are) not from the *jawhar* of the Father" (17).

Eutychius continues his dissertation with warnings about misconceptions of the Trinity. He stresses the difference between begetting in the divine sense and begetting in the human sense and he warns against the use of the imagination in forming concepts of God and more especially in forming concepts of the Trinity. People are not to imagine that there are three Gods. They are not to let enter their minds the idea that there are many gods or that there are three separate aspects (*wujūh*) differing in likeness and figure and outward appearance, such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or that there are three kings sitting separately on three thrones, or yet that there are three stars or lamps, or three angels such as Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. For all that is unbelief and error which is followed by idolaters.

Fatherhood and sonhood in God are not the same as fatherhood and sonhood among men and likewise the Word of God is not the same as man's spoken word which passes out of himself into the air. Likewise the Spirit of God is not the same as the spirit of man, nor is it like that of angels, nor is it like the spirit of beasts or the spirit of the winds. The production of the word and of its spirit in man is twofold. It is first immaterial, being without speech, hidden in the reason and it is only secondly material, an utterance composed of the breath (spirit) of the air and the co-operation of many members of the body, such as the windpipe, mouth etc. — this utterance is then borne by the air to its hearers, so that the word with its sound reaches their hearing (18).

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(16) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 54.

(17) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 55.

(18) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 64.

There is now a return to a consideration of the theme of the Creator and His creation. Eutychius reiterates that God created by His Word along with the volition of His reason and the will of the Spirit. God gave Adam the logical, rational spirit of life by a breath of His Spirit Who gives life to everything with the approbation of reason and the concurrence of the Word (19). At this point Eutychius transcribes the first three verses of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel. Further on he quotes "Christ the Word of God" as saying in the same Gospel: "I and the Father are one; I am in the Father and the Father in me; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; no one is able to come to the Father save by me" (20). These four quotations are all used here in order to support Eutychius' argument concerning the unity and solidarity of the three divine *qawāmāt* rather than as arguments for the divinity of Christ.

Eutychius completes his Trinitarian teaching as follows: "The exposition of the unity of God's *jawhar* has now been completed. It (His *jawhar*) is His nature (*tabī'a*) and His *kiyān* and the threeness of His hypostases (*qawāmāt*), these being His *aqānīm* (21) and the *prosopa* (*jihāt*) of knowledge (*'ilm*), Word and Spirit. Hypostasis (*qawām*) may be explained as something which remains fixed and permanent in its condition never changing or moving" (22).

#### TERMINOLOGY OF EUTYCHIUS.

Eutychius appears to use *jawhar*, nature and *kiyān* to indicate different ways of looking at the same thing. It seems better not to attempt definition of *jawhar* and *kiyān* until comparative studies have been made of other Arab Christian usage of these terms. *Qawāmāt*, on the other hand, would

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(19) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 66.

(20) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 69.

(21) Dr. Cachia in the notes prefacing his edition of the *Kitāb al-Burhān* says that in some instances the S text has had *qawām* emended to *uqnūm* but this was not found to be the case in any of the key passages quoted in this article. It is interesting that *qawām* was to disappear from use as the term designating a member of the Trinity. Its place was taken by *uqnūm* so that in writers later than Eutychius *uqnūm* probably includes the meaning of hypostasis as well as its own special significance in Christian Arabic terminology.

(22) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 71.

seem to be adequately translated by hypostases, with the signification in Eutychius' Trinitarian doctrine of three distinct objects, each equally God.

His use of *jihāt* is difficult to translate with a single word. The simplest translation would be the technical Trinitarian term *prosopa*; yet it is important to note that Eutychius wishes to stress the abstract sense of this term, for he specifically gives the more concrete *wujūh* as an example of unwise and misleading terminology which would leave one open to the accusation of polytheism.

The other term used by Eutychius which it is difficult to translate is the very interesting word *uqnūm* which appears in two key passages of the *Kitāb al-Burhān*. One passage is that previously cited in this article in the section entitled "The Oneness and Threeness of God" and the other appears in Eutychius' discussion of the Incarnation where he makes the statement that one does not give birth to a nature (*ṭabī'a*) but to an *uqnūm*. He says that the humanity (*nāsūt*) of Christ has the *uqnūm* of the Son of God. The question now arises; if *qawām* is the equivalent of hypostasis and *jiha* implies an abstract sense of *prosopon*, what is the technical sense in which Eutychius uses the term *uqnūm*? This term, used in modern classical Arabic to translate *persona*, only appears in medieval classical Arabic in connection with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Now lexicons tend to regard *uqnūm* as a textual corruption of *quyyām*, in its turn a corruption of *qawwām*. It is not disputed that such a corruption could have occurred in certain texts but the notion of textual corruption in all cases is not adequate as an explanation of the origin of the word *uqnūm*. Elias of Nisibis (975-1049 A.D.) in his treatise "Concerning the oneness of the Creator and the threeness of His *aqānīm*" (*risāla fi waḥdānīyat al-khālīq wa tathlīth aqānīmīhi*) refers to *uqnūm* as being originally a Syriac word used in that language to designate that which is neither *kiyān 'amm* nor *'araḍ* (23). Since Elias was well-known as a scholar in both Syriac and Arabic there would not seem to be any reason to doubt this statement.

It remains then to establish as accurately as possible what this term

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(23) Elias also says that in Christian Arabic usage *jawhar* was a translation of the Syriac *kiyān*, which had the meaning of "self-existent being".

conveyed in Syriac at the time of its acceptance as the Arabic term for member of the Trinity. Now from the evidence of the usages of Elias of Nisibis and of Eutychius the term *uqnūm* would seem to have become established in Arabic sometime in the tenth century A.D. In an appendix to Part I Volume II of "*Islam and Christian Theology*" Dr. Sweetman says that the Syro-Arabic lexicons give the following Arabic meanings for the Syriac *qnūmā* transliterated into Arabic as *aqnūm*, namely "*shakhs mar'i aw ghair mar'i*" and "*nafsi*". These translate respectively as "visible or invisible person" and "pertaining to self".

It is outside the scope of this article to enter into a discussion of the long and complicated history of the use of *qnūmā* in Syriac. Two points that seem to be well-established, however, are that *qnūmā* was extensively used in the Syriac Old and New Testaments with a reflexive meaning akin to "self" or "*ipse*" and that the Nestorians used *qnūmā* as a translation of the Cappadocian usage of the word hypostasis.

Another suggestion is that in addition to these meanings the word *qnūmā* may have been influenced by the Greek *gnome*.

It should also be noted that in *Verzeichnis arabischer kirchlicher Termini*, Georg Graf gives *uqnūm* as having been derived from the Greek *oikonomos*. His reason for this is apparently that the term *aqnūm* or perhaps *qnūm* was used by Abu Qurra with the meaning of "diocesan treasurer". Without further explanation Graf then gives the meaning of *uqnūm* when applied to the Trinity as person or hypostasis. These remarks can be taken with the possibility that the theological works of St. Hippolytus, who in *Adversus Noetus* expressed himself as follows on the Trinity: "I shall not say two gods, but one only; two *prosopa*, and in economy (*oikonomia*) as third, the grace of the Holy Spirit", may have been translated into Syriac or Arabic. The suggestion can then be made that some tincture of that line of development of Trinitarian doctrine called by G.L. Prestige "Organic Monotheism" may have found its way into either the Syriac or Arabic theological term *qnūmā* or *uqnūm*, or indeed into both independently (24).

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(24) On the question of the range of meanings inherent in *oikonomia* see *God in Patristic Thought* by G.L. Prestige with special reference to the chapter entitled "Divine Providence" pp. 57-67.

To sum up, it would seem that at the time of its entry into Arabic theological terminology as *uqnūm*, the Syriac term *qnūmā* would have retained both its reflexive and its objective senses. It would seem also likely that the emphasis in meaning of the term was on the inner meaning of the thing specified rather than on the outward appearance. There is also the intriguing possibility that *uqnūm* may bear some of the many shades of meaning inherent in the Greek *oikonomia*. In that case *uqnūm*, at least as early as Eutychius, would have borne a sense best conveyed by some such phrase as "organic member of the Godhead, being the mysterious dispenser both within the Godhead and in relation to creatures of the inherent properties of the Creator God, one of Whose proper names is Allah". One cannot stress too much that for the Arab Christian theologians of the medieval period "Allah" is first and foremost the proper name of a living being, rather than the generic term for a theological or philosophical concept.

#### THE INCARNATION.

There are two points in Eutychius' exposition of his doctrine of the Incarnation which have some bearing on his Trinitarian teaching. The first of these is the argument which he uses to support his assertion of the personal identity of the Son of the Father and the Son of Mary. Eutychius says that one does not give birth to *ṭabā'i* but to *aqānīm*. The humanity of Christ has the *uqnūm* of the Son of God. "The Word which caused that flesh to be in Mary resembled the seed from which is the origin of the flesh" (25). Eutychius' use of *uqnūm* in this context underlines the statement quoted in preceding sections of this article where he uses *qawām* and *uqnūm* as terms indicative of the relationship of the Son or Word to the Godhead.

The second point which is of interest is that which appears in the section of his dissertation on the Incarnation where Eutychius is asserting that Christ is perfect God because He performs the acts characteristic of the Divine Being (*af'āl al-ilāhūt*). He uses several Quranic epithets to underline his illustrations. Thus Christ is Creator of what He wills (*khallāq limā yasha'u*);

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(25) *Kitāb al-Burhān*, Section 139.

He created from clay two eyes for a blind man (*John* 9: 1-7) and He made wine out of water. He is "Knower of things hidden" (*'allām al-ghuyūb*) and "Forgiver of sins" (*ghaffār lil-dhunūb*).

The attributes implied in the last two epithets are displayed in the episode of the repentance of Mary Magdalen. Euty chius asserts that on the Day of Resurrection Christ will raise to life by His own power all those in the tombs. This he says is attested to by the incident of the raising to life of Lazarus. Furthermore he says Christ is "Lord of the Day of Judgment" (*mālik yawm al-dīn*); this is confirmed by His bringing together in the Transfiguration episode on Mt. Tabor of the living and the dead.

#### INFLUENCE OF THE ISLAMIC ENVIRONMENT.

The fundamental difficulty faced by a Christian who wished to expound the doctrine of the Trinity in an Islamic environment was not so much the Muslim insistence on the oneness of God, nor the Quranic strictures on the Trinity, rather it was that the Christian approached the mystery of the Godhead in and through his experience of Jesus Christ. Euty chius was aware of this problem and attempted two lines of approach to the question of Christ and the Trinity. First, as has been mentioned, he emphasised the divine character of Christ's miraculous acts while at the same time he affirmed Christ's full manhood. In other words, Euty chius gave witness to the Christian experience of God in and through Jesus Christ.

His other line of approach was to expound the Christian doctrine of the Trinity by means of analogy. As has been noted, Euty chius' argument was that if man is a rational, logical spirit how much more true must this be of the Creator. His use of the patristic accounts of the hypostasis of each of the members of the Trinity kept him well within the bounds of orthodoxy, but this orthodoxy did not prevent him from making some progress in the expression of the mystery. In what may be an original contribution, Euty chius combined the firm Greek notion that all causality is finally reserved to the Father as the *mon arche* of being and of action with the special contribution of the Arabic language and of Muhammad in particular, that Allah is not a generic term like *o theos* but is a personal name of the Deity.

In other words, Eutychius is reserving the greater part of the personality contained in the Godhead to the Father. Christ, the Word of God receives His personality from the Father. This is not an innovation, rather it should be seen as a more explicit statement of St. Irenaeus' description of the Word and the Spirit as the two hands of the Father; for the Hand of God is a Scriptural term designating the power of God, so that we can see the Son and the Spirit as two equal manifestations of God's power and might.