Archpriest Georges Florovsky (1893-1979)

Cur Deus Homo?
The Motive of the Incarnation*

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"I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA." (REV. 1:8)

I

The Christian message was from the very beginning the message of Salvation, and accordingly our Lord was depicted primarily as the Savior, Who has redeemed His people from bondage of sin and corruption. The very fact of the Incarnation was usually interpreted in early Christian theology in the perspective of Redemption. Erroneous conceptions of the Person of Christ with which the early Church had to wrestle were criticized and refuted precisely when they tended to undermine the reality of human Redemption. It was generally assumed that the very meaning of Salvation was that the intimate union between God and man had been restored, and it was inferred that the Redeemed had to belong Himself to both sides, i.e. to be at once both Divine and human, for otherwise the broken communion between God and man would not have been re-established. This was the main line of reasoning of St. Athanasius in his struggle with the Arians, of St. Gregory of Nazianzus in his refutation of Apollinarian-

ism, and of other writers of the IVth and Vth centuries. "That is saved which is united with God," says St. Gregory of Nazianzus.[1] The redeeming aspect and impact of the Incarnation were emphatically stressed by the Fathers, The purpose and the effect of the Incarnation were defined precisely as the Redemption *of man and his* restoration to those original

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1 *Epist. 101, ad Cledonium* (M., *P.G.,* 37, Col. 118).

conditions which were destroyed by the fall and sin. The sin of the world was abrogated and taken away by the Incarnate One, and He only, being both Divine and human, could have done it. On the other hand, it would be unfair to claim that the Fathers regarded this redeeming purpose as *the only reason* for the Incarnation, so that the Incarnation *would not have taken place at all, had not man sinned.* In this form the question was never asked by the Fathers. The question about the *ultimate motive* of the Incarnation was never formally discussed in the Patristic Age. The problem of the relation between the mystery of the Incarnation and the original purpose of Creation was not touched upon by the Fathers; they never elaborated this point systematically. "It may perhaps be truly said that the thought of an Incarnation independent of the Fall harmonizes with the general tenor of Greek theology. Some patristic phrases seem to imply that the thought was distinctly realized here and there, and perhaps discussed."[2] These 'patristic phrases' were not collected and examined. In fact, the same Fathers could be quoted in favor of opposite opinions. It is not enough to accumulate quotations, taking them out of their context and ignoring the purpose, very often polemical, for which particular writings were composed. Many of these 'patristic phrases' were just 'occasional' statements, and they can be used only with utter care and caution. Their proper meaning can be, ascertained only when they are read in the context, i.e. in the perspective of the thought of each particular writer.

II

Rupert of Deutz (d. 1135) seems to be the first among the medieval theologians who formally raised the question of the *motive* of the Incarnation, and his contention was that the Incarnation belonged to the original design of Creation and was therefore independent of the Fall. Incarnation was, in his interpretation, the consummation of the original creative purpose of God, an aim in itself, and not merely a redemptive remedy for human failure.[3] Honorius of

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[2] Bishop B. F. Westcott, "The Gospel of Creation," in *The Epistles of St. John, The Greek Text with notes and essays,* Third Edition. (Macmillan, 1892), p. 288.

[3] Rupertus Tuitensis, *De Gloria et honore Filii hominis super Matthaeum,* lib. 13, (M., P.L., 148, Col. 1628): "Here it is first proper to ask whether or not the Son of God, Whom this discourse concerns, would have become man, even if sin, on account of which all die, had not intervened. There is no doubt that He would not have become mortal and assumed a mortal body if sin had not occurred and caused man to become mortal; only an infidel could be ignorant as to this. The question is: would this have occurred, and would it somehow have been necessary for mankind hat God become man, the Head and King of all, as He now is? What will be the answer?" Rupert then quotes from St. Augustine about the eternal predestination of the saints *(De Civitate Dei,* 14. 23.) and continues: "Since, with regard to the saints and all the elect there is no doubt but that they will all be found, up to the number appointed in God's plan, about which He says in blessing, before sin, 'Increase and multiply,' and it is absurd to think that sin was necessary in order to obtain that number, what must be thought about the very Head and King of all the elect, angels and men, but that He had indeed no necessary cause for becoming man, but that His love's 'delights were to be with the children of men.' [Proverbs 8:31]" Cf. also *De Glorificatione Trinitatis,* lib. 3. 20 (M., P.L., 169, Col. 72): "Therefore, we say quite probably, not so much that man (was made) to make up the number of the angels [i.e., for those who

Autun (d. 1152) was of the same conviction.[4] The great doctors of the XIIIth century, such as Alexander of Hales and Albert Magnus, admitted the idea of an Incarnation independent of the Fall as a most convenient solution of the problem.[5] Duns Scotus (c. 1266-1308) elaborated the whole conception with great care and logical consistency. For him the Incarnation apart from the Fall was not merely a most convenient assumption, but rather an indispensable doctrinal presupposition. The Incarnation of the Son of God was for him the very reason of the whole Creation. Otherwise, he thought, this supreme action of God would have been something merely accidental or 'occasional'. "Again, if the Fall were the cause of the predestination of Christ, it would follow that God's greatest work was only occasional, for the glory of all will not be so intense as that of Christ, and it seems unreasonable to think that God would have foregone such a work because of Adam's good deed, if he had not sinned." The whole question for Duns Scotus was precisely that of *the order of Divine 'predestination' or purpose,* i.e. *of the order of* thoughts in the Divine counsel of Creation. Christ, the Incarnate, was the first object of the creative will of God, and it was for Christ's sake that'anything else had been created at all. "The Incarnation of Christ was not foreseen occasionally, but was viewed as an immediate end by God from eternity; thus, in speaking about things which are predestined, Christ in human nature was predestined before others, since

He is nearer to an end." This order of 'purposes' or 'previsions' was, of course, just a logical one. The main emphasis of Duns Scotus was on the unconditional and primordial character of the Divine decree of the Incarnation, seen in the total perspective of Creation.[6] Aquinas

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had fallenj, but that both angels and men were made because of one man, Jesus Christ, so that, as He Himself was begotten God from God, and was to be found a man, He would have a family prepared on both sides... From the beginning, before God made anything, it was in His plan that the Word [*Logos*] of God, God the Word [*Logos*], would be made flesh, and dwell among men with great love and the deepest humility, which are His true delights." (Allusion again to Proverbs 8:31.)

4 Honorius of Autun, *Libellus octo quaestionum de angelis et homine,* cap. 2 (M., P.L., 172, Col. 72): "And therefore the first man's sin was not the cause of Christ's Incarnation; rather, it was the cause of death and damnation. The cause of Christ's Incarnation was the predestination of human deification. It was indeed predestined by God from all eternity that man would be deified, for the Lord said, 'Father, Thou hast loved them* before the creation of the world,' [cf. John 17:24] those, that is, who are deified through Me... It was necessary, therefore, for Him to become incarnate, so that man could be deified, and thus it does not follow that sin was the cause of His Incarnation, but it follows all the more logically that sin could not alter God's plan for deifying man; since in fact both the authority of Sacred Scripture and clear reason declare that God would have assumed man even had man never sinned. [*S. Script., Jn. 17:24, reads 'me' for 'them'.]

5 Alexander Halensis, *Summa theologica,* ed. ad. Claras Aquas, dist. 3, qu. 3, m. 3; Albertus Magnus, *In* 3, 1. *Sententiarum,* dist. 20, art. 4, ed. Borgnet, t. 28, 361: "On this question it must be said that the solution is uncertain, but insofar as I can express an opinion, I believe that the Son of God would have been made man, even if sin had never been."

6 Duns Scotus, *Opus Oxoniense,* 3, dist. 19, ed. Wadding, t. 7, p. 415. Cf. *Reportata Parisiensia,* lib. 3, dist. 7, qu. 4, schol. 2, ed. Wadding, t. 11. 1, p. 451. "I say, nevertheless, that the Fall is not the cause of Christ's

(1224-1274) also discussed the problem at considerable length. He saw the whole weight of the arguments in favor of the opinion that, even apart from the Fall, "nevertheless, God would have become incarnate," and he quoted the phrase of St. Augustine: "in the Incarnation of Christ, other things must be considered besides absolution from sin." *(De Trinitate, XIII.* 17). But Aquinas could not find, either in Scripture or in the Patristic writings, any definite witness to this Incarnation independent of the Fall, and therefore was inclined to believe that the Son of God would not have been incarnate if the first man did not sin: "Although God could have become incarnate without the existence of sin, it is nevertheless more appropriate to say that, if man had not sinned, God would not have become incarnate, since in Sacred Scripture the reason for the Incarnation is everywhere given as the sin of the first man." The unfathomable mystery of the Divine will can be comprehended by man only in so far as it is plainly attested in Holy Scripture, "only to the extent that [these things] are transmitted in Sacred Scripture," or, as Aquinas says in another place, "only in so far as we are informed by the authority of the saints, through whom God has revealed His will." Christ alone knows the right answer to this question: "The truth of the matter only He can know, Who was born and Who was offerred up, because He so willed."[7] Bonaventura (12211274) suggested the same caution. Comparing the two opinions-one in favor of an Incarnation apart from the Fall and the other dependent on it, he concluded: "Both [opinions] excite the soul to devotion by different considerations: the first, however, more consonant with the judgment of reason; yet it appears that the second is more agreeable to the piety of faith." One should rely rather on the direct testimony of

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predestination. Indeed, even if one angel had not fallen, or one man, Christ would still have been predestined thus— even if others had not been created, but only Christ. This I demonstrate thus: anyone who wills methodically first wills an end, and then more immediately, those things which are more immediate to the end. But God wills most methodically; therefore, He wills thus: first He wills Himself, and everything intrinsic to Himself; more directly, so far as concerns things extrinsic, is the soul of Christ. Therefore, in relation to whatever merit and before whatever demerit was foreseen, He foresees that Christ must be united to Him in a substantial union... The disposition and predestination is first complete concerning the elect, and then something is done concerning the reprobate, as a secondary act, lest anyone rejoice as if the loss of another was a reward for himself; therefore, before the foreseen Fall, and before any demerit, the whole process concerning Christ was foreseen... Therefore, I say thus: first, God loves Himself; second, He loves Himself by others, and this love of His is pure; third, He wills that He be loved by another, one who can love Him to the highest degree (in speaking about the love of someone extrinsic); fourth, He foresees the union of that nature which ought to love Him to the highest degree, although none had fallen [i.e., even if no one had fallen]... and, therefore, in the fifth instance, He sees a coming mediator who will suffer and redeem His people; He would not have come as a mediator, to suffer and to redeem, unless someone had first sinned, unless the glory of the flesh had become swelled with pride, unless something needed to be redeemed; otherwise, He would have immediately been the whole Christ glorified." The same reasoning is in the *Opus Oxoniense,* dist. 7, qu. 3, scholiurn 3, Wadding 202. See P. Raymond, "Duns Scot," in *Dictionnaire de la Théologie Catholique,* t.4, Col. 1890-1891, and his article, "Le Motif de l'Incarnation: Duns Scot et l'Ecole scotiste," in *Études Franciscaines* (1912); also R. Seeberg**,** *Die Theologie des Johannes Duns Scotus* (Leipzig, 1900), s. 250.

7 *Summa theol.,* 3[a], qu. 1, art. *3; in 3 Sentent.,* dist. 1, qu. 1, art. 3.

the Scriptures than on the arguments of human logic.[8] On the whole, Duns Scotus was followed by the majority of theologians of the Franciscan order, and also by not a few outside it, as, for instance, by Dionysius Carthusianus, by Gabriel Biel, by John Wessel, and, in the time of the Council of Trent, by Giacomo Nachianti, Bishop of Chiozza (Jacobus Naclantus) I and also by some of the early Reformers, for instance, by Andreas Osiander.[9] This opinion was strongly opposed by others, and not only by the strict Thomists, and the whole problem was much discussed both by Roman Catholic and by Protestant theologians in the XVIIth century.[10] Among the Roman Catholic champions of the absolute decree of the Incarnation one should mention especially François de Sales and Malebranche. Malebranche strongly insisted on the *metaphysical necessity* of the Incarnation, quite apart from the Fall, for otherwise, he contended, there would have been no adequate reason or purpose for the act of Creation itself.[11] The controversy is still going on among Roman

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8 Bonaventura, *in* 3 *Sentent.,* dist. 1, qu. 2, ed. Lugduni (1668), pp. 10-12.

9 Cf. A. Michelé, "Incarnation," in *Dictionnaire de la Théolog;e Calholique,* t. 7, col. 1495 ss. John Wessel, *De causis Incarnationis, l*ib. 2, C. 7, quoted by G. Ullman, *Die Reformatoren vor der Reformation,* Bd. 2 (Gotha, 1866), s. 398 ff. On Naclantus see Westcott, *op. cit., p.* 312 ff. Andreas Osiander, *An Filius Dei fuit incarnatus, si peccatum non intervenisset in mundum? Item de imagine Dei quid sit? Ex certis et evidentibus S. Scripturae testimoniis et non ex philosophicis et humanae rationis cogitationibus derempta explicatio* (Monte Regia Prussiae, 1550) ; see 1. A. Dorner, *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Lehre von der Person Christi,* 2 Aufl. (1853), Bd. 2, s. 438 ff. and 584; Otto Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus,* Bd. 2 (Leipzig, 1912), s. 462. Osiander was vigorously criticized by Calvin, *Institutio,* lib. 2, cap. 12, 4-7, ed. Tholuck, 1, s. 304-309.

10 See for instance the long discussion in "Dogmata Theologica" of L. Thomassin (1619-1695) in tomus 3, *De Incarnatione Verbi Dei,* 2, cap 5 to 11, ed. nova (Parisiis, 1866), pp. 189-249. Thomassin dismisses the Scotist theory as just a "hallucination," contradicted openly by the evidence of Scripture and the teaching of the Fathers. He gives a long list of Patristic passages, mainly from St. Augustine. Bellarmin (1542-1621) dismisses this idea in one phrase: "For if Adam had remained in that innocence wherein he had been created, doubtless the Son of God would not have suffered; He probably would not even have assumed human flesh, as even Calvin himself teaches"; *De Christo,* lib. 5, cap. 10, editio prima Romana (Romae, 1832), t. 1, p. 432. Petavius (1583-1652) was little interested in the controversy: "This question is widely and very contentiously disputed in the schools, but, being removed from the controversy, we will explain it in a few words." There is no evidence for this conception in Tradition, and Petavius gives some few quotations to the opposite effect. "Opus de Theologicis Dogmatibus," tomus 4, *De Incarnatione,* lib. 2, cap. 17, 7-12, ed. (Venetiis, 1757), pp. 95-96. On the Protestant side see a brief discussion in John Gerhard, *Loci Theologici,* Locus Quartus, "De Persona et Officio Christi," cap. 7, with valuable references to the earlier literature and an interesting set of Patristic quotations; ed. Sd. Preuss (Berolini, 1863), t. 1, pp. 513-514, and a longer one in J. A. Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica, sive Systema Theologicum* (Wittebergae, 1961), Pars 3 & 4, Pars 3, Cap. 3, Membrum 1, Sectio 1, Quaestio 1, pp. 108-116. On the other hand, Suarez (1548-1617) advocated a reconciliatory view in which both conflicting opinions could be kept together. See his comments on *Summa,* 3^{a}, Disput. 4, sectio 12, and the whole Disp. 5^{a}, *Opera Omnia,* ed. Berton (Parisiis, 1860), pp. 186-266.

11 François de Sales, *Traité de l'amour de Dieu,* livre 2, ch. 4 and 5, in *Oeuvres, édition complète,* t.4 (Annecy, 1894), pp. 99ss. and 102ss. Malebranche, *Entretiens sur la Mètaphysique et sur la Religion,* édition critique par Armand Cuvillier (Paris, 1948), tome 2, Entretien 9, 6, p. 14: "Oui assurement l'Incarnation du Verbe est le premier et le principal des desseins de Dieu; c'est ce qui justifie sa conduite"; *Traité de la Nature et de la Gráce* (Rotterdam, 1712), Discours 1, 1, p. 2. Seconde Éclaircissement, P. 302ss.; *Réflexions sur la Prémotion Physique* (Paris, 1715), p. 300: "Il suit évidemment, ce me semble, de ce que je viens de dire, que

Catholic theologians, sometimes with excessive heat and vigor, and the question is not settled.[12] Among the Anglicans, in the last century, Bishop Wescott strongly pleaded for the 'absolute motive', in his admirable essay on "The Gospel of Creation."[13] The late Father Sergii Bulgakov was strongly in favor of the opinion that the Incarnation should be regarded as an absolute decree of God, prior to the catastrophe of the Fall.[14]

III

In the course of this age-long discussion a constant appeal has been made to the testimony of the Fathers. Strangely enough the most important item has been overlooked in this anthology of quotations. Since the question of the motive of the Incarnation was never formally raised in the Patristic age, most of the texts used in the later discussions could not provide any direct guidance.[15] St. Maximus the Confessor (580-

662) seems to be the only Father who was directly concerned with the problem, although not in the same setting as the later theologians in the West. He stated plainly that the Incarnation should be regarded as *an absolute and primary purpose of God in the act of Creation.* The nature of the Incamation, of this union of the Divine majesty with human frailty, is indeed an unfathomable mystery, but we can at least grasp the reason and the

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le premier et le principal dessein de Dieu dans la création, est l'Incarnation du Verbe: puisque Jesus Christ est le premier en toutes choses... et qu'ainsi, quand l'homme n'aurait point péché, le Verbe se serait incarné"; cf. p. 211 and *passim.* See for further information: J. Vidgrain, *Le Christianisme dans la philosophie de Malebranche* (Paris, 1923), pp. 99ss. and 112ss; H. Gouhier, *La Philosophie de Malebranche et son Expérience Religieuse* (Paris, 1926), p. 22ss.; J. Maydieu, "La Création du Monde et l'Incarnation du Verbe dans la Philosophie de Malebranche," in *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique* (Toulouse, 1935). It is of interest to mention that Leibniz also regarded the Incarnation as an absolute purpose in creation; see quotations from his unpublished papers in J. Baruzi, *Leibniz et l'Organization religieuse de la Terre* (Paris, 1907), pp. 273-274.

[12] The Scotist point of view has been presented by a Franciscan, Father Chrysostome, in his two books: *Christus Alpha et Omega, seu de Christi universali regno* (Lille, 1910, published without the name of the author) and *Le Motif de l'Incarnation el les principaux thomistes contemporains* (Tours, 1921). The latter was a reply to the critics in which he assembled an impressive array of Patristic texts. The Thomist point of view was taken by Father E. Hogon, *Le Mystère de l'Incarnation* (Paris, 1913), p. 63ss., and Father Paul Galtier, S. J. *De Incarnatione et Redemptione* (Parisiis, 1926); see also Father Hilair de Paris, *Cur Deus Homo? Dissertatio de motivo Incarnationis* (Lyons, 1867) [includes an analysis of Patristic texts from the Thomist point of view]. Cf. also the introduction in the book of Dr. Aloysius Spindler, *Cur Verbum, caro factum? Das Motiv der Menschwerdung und das Verhältnis der Erlösung zur Menschwerdung in den christologischen Glaubenskämpfen des vierten und fünten christlichen Jahrhunderts* (Paderborn, 1938) ["Forschungen zur christlichen Literatur- und Dogmengeschichte," hsgg. von A. Ehrhard und Dr. J. P. Kirsch, Bd. 18, 2 Heft].

[13] See Note 1 above.

[14] Fr. Sergii Bulgakov, *Agnets Bozhii* (Paris, 1933), p. 191 ff. (in Russian). French translation, *Du Verbe Incarné* (Paris, 1943).

[15] Dr. Spindler was the only student of the problem using the proper historical method in handling the texts.

purpose of this supreme mystery, its *logos* and *skopos*. And this original reason, of the ultimate purpose, was, in the opinion of St. Maximus, precisely the Incarnation itself and then our own incorporation into the Body of the Incarnate One. The phrasing of St. Maximus is straight and dear. The 60th *questio ad Thalassium,* is a commentary on I Peter, 1:19-20: "[Christ was] like a blameless and spotless lamb, who was foreordained from the foundation of the world." Now the question is: St. Maximus first briefly summarizes the true teaching about the Person of Christ, and then proceeds: "This is the blessed end, on account of which everything was created. This is the Divine purpose, which was thought of before the beginning of Creation, and which we call an intended fulfillment. All creation exists on account of this fulfillment and yet the fulfillment itself exists because of nothing that was created. Since God had this end in full view, he produced the natures of things. This is truly the fulfillment of Providence and of planning. Through this there is a recapitulation to God of those created by Him. This is the mystery circumscribing all ages, the awesome plan of God, super-infinite and infinitely pre-existing the ages. The Messenger, who is in essence Himself the Word of God, became man on account of this fulfillment. And it may be said that it was He Himself Who restored the manifest innermost depths of the goodness handed down by the Father; and He revealed the fulfillment in Himself, by which creation has won the beginning of true existence. For on account of Christ, that is to say the mystery concerning Christ, all time and that which is in time have found the beginning and the end of

their existence in Christ. For before time there was secretly purposed a union of the ages, of the determined and the Indeterminate, of the measurable and the Immeasurable, of the finite and Infinity, of the creation and the Creator, of motion and rest-a union which was made manifest in Christ during these last times." (M., *P.G., XC,* 621, A-B.) One has to distinguish most carefully between the eternal being of the *Logos,* in the bosom of the Holy Trinity, and the 'economy' of His Incarnation. 'Prevision' is related precisely to the Incarnation: "Therefore Christ was foreknown, not as He was according to His own nature, but as he later appeared incarnate for our sake in accordance with the final economy." (M., *P.G.,* XC, 624D). The 'absolute predestination' of Christ is alluded to with full clarity.[16] This conviction was in full agreement with the general tenor of the theological system of St. Maximus, and he returns to the problem on many occasions, both in his answers to Thalassius and in his *Ambigua.* For instance, in connection with Ephesians 1:9, St. Maximus says: [By this

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[16] Cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Liturgie Cosmique: Maxime le Confesseur* (Paris, Aubier, 1947), pp. 204-205; Father Balthasar quotes *Qu. ad Talass.* 60 and adds that St. Maximus would have taken the Scotist side in the scholastic controversy, yet with an important qualification: "Maxime de reste est totalement étranger au postulat de ce débat scholastique qui imagine la possibilité d'un autre ordre du monde sans péché et totalement irréel. Pour lui la 'volonté préexistante' de Dieu est identique au monde des 'idées' et des 'possibles': l'ordre des essences et l'ordre des faits coincident en ce point supreme— (in the German edition, *Kosmische Liturgie, s.* 267-268). See also Dom Polycarp Sherwood, O.S.B., "The Earlier Ambigua of Saint Maximus the Confessor" in *Studia Anselmiana* (Romae, 1955), fasc. 36, ch. 4, pp. 155ff.

Incarnation and by our age] he has shown us for what purpose we were made and the greatest good will be of God towards us before the ages." (M., *P.G.,* 1097C). By his very constitution man anticipates in himself "the great mystery of the Divine purpose," the ultimate consummation of all things in God. The whole history of Divine Providence is for St. Maximus divided into two great periods: the first culminates in the Incarnation of the *Logos* and is the story of Divine condescension ("through the Incarnation"); the second is the story of human ascension into the glory of deification, an extension, as it were, of the Incarnation to the whole creation. "Therefore we may divide time into two parts according to its design, and we may distinguish both the ages pertaining to the mystery of the Incarnation of the Divine, and the ages concerning the deification of the human by grace... and to say it concisely: both those ages which concern the descent of God to men, and those which have begun the ascent of men to God... Or, to say it even better, the

beginning, the middle, and the end of all the ages, those which have gone by, those of the present time, and those which are yet to come, is our Lord Jesus Christ." (M., P.G., XC, 320, B-C). The ultimate consummation is linked in the vision of St. Maximus with the primordial creative will and purpose of God, and therefore his whole conception is strictly 'theocentric', and at the same time 'Christocentric'. In no sense, however, does this obscure the sad reality of sin, of the utter misery of sinful existence. The great stress is always laid by St. Maximus on the conversion and cleansing of the human will, on the struggle with passions and with evil. But he views the tragedy of the Fall and the apostasy of the created in the wider perspective of the original plan of Creation.[17]

IV

What is the actual weight of the witness of St. Maximus? Was it more than his 'private opinion', and what is the authority of such 'opinions'? It is perfectly clear that to the question of the first or ultimate 'motive' of the Incarnation no more than a 'hypothetical' (or 'convenient') answer can be given. But many doctrinal statements are precisely such hypothetical statements or 'theologoumena'.[18] And it seems that the 'hypothesis' of an

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[17] The best exposition of the theology of St. Maximus is by S. L. Epifanovich, *St. Maximus the Confessor and Byzantine Theology* (Kiev, 1915; in Russian); cf. also the chapter on St. Maximus in my book, *The Byzantine Fathers* (Paris, 1933), pp. 200-227 (in Russian). In addition to the book of Father von Balthasar, quoted above, one may consult with profit the "Introduction" of Dom Polycarp Sherwood to his translation of *The Four Centuries on Charity* of St. Maximus, *Ancient Christian Writers, No.* 21 (London and Westminster, Md., 1955). See also Lars Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor* (Lund, 1965).

[18] See the definition of "theologoumena" by Bolotov, *Thesen über das "Filioque,"* first published without the name of the author ("von einem russischen Theologen") in *Revue Internationale de Théologie,* No. 24 (Oct.-Dec., 1898), p. 682: "Man kann fragen, was ich unter Theologoumenon verstehe? Seinem Wesen nach ist es auch eine theologische Meinung, aber eine theologische Meinung derer, welche für einen jeden 'Katholiken' mehr bedeuten als die gewöhnliche Theologen; es sind theologisch Meinungen der hl. Väter der

Incarnation apart from the Fall is at least permissible in the system of Orthodox theology and fits well enough into the mainstream of Patristic teaching. An adequate answer to the question of the ‘motive’ of the Incarnaion can be given only in the context of the general doctrine of Creation.

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einen ungeteilten Kirche; es sind die Meinungen der Männer, unter denen auch die mit Recht *hoi didaskaloi tês oikoumenês* genannten sich befinden.” No “theologoumenon” can claim more than “probability,” and no “theologoumenon” should be accepted if it has been clearly disavowed by an authoritative or “dogmatic” pronouncement of the Church.