

Repentant Heretics in Fifth-Century Lydia: Identity and Literacy

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For Stephen Mitchell

I. Introduction

With the spread, and then the dominance, of Christianity a whole set of new conceptions came to transform the values of Graeco-Roman society: the idea of a sacred text which represented at once a narrative, a source of theological truth and a guide to conduct; the idea of a single God who had created the world; and the notion that right belief about God, the world and appropriate practice was attainable, and that wrong belief or practice could be identified and rejected — and that, when the Emperors themselves became Christian, they had the right and the duty both to insist on the formulation of right belief and to use the power of the state to punish deviation.

Unfortunately, the variety of messages which could be drawn from the Bible, both the Old Testament and the New, and the complexity and variety of the possible interpretations which could be attached to the notions of a divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit, defeated all attempts at attaining uniformity of belief. So also, in the fifth century above all, did the attempt to conceive of the relation of the divine and the human in the person of Christ. Worse still, from the point of view of conformity as an ideal, both the Judaism which Christians encountered every time that they opened the Bible and the Jewish communities to be found scattered throughout the Empire posed disturbing questions as to what should constitute right belief and appropriate practice.¹ Moreover, as we have learned above all from Stephen Mitchell's powerful studies of local religious life in inland Anatolia, it was not just in the books written by intellectuals that paganism itself developed new forms of belief and of personal religion (for instance, involving the confession of wrongdoing). In view of the fact that the material with which this paper will be concerned consists of a remarkable series of personal confessions of heresy produced by individuals in Philadelphia in Lydia, some time between 428 and 431, it is striking that the main area where 'confession-inscriptions' are found includes this city, and extends to its northeast.² Similarly, not merely theoretical treatises, but accounts of actual religious communities, and local documentary evidence, show the growth of a monotheism, or

¹ For a review of the role and significance of Jewish communities in the Greek East in the Theodosian age, see F. Millar, 'Christian Emperors, Christian Church and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, CE 379-451', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 55 (2004), 1.

² S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor II. The Rise of the Church* (1993). For the 'confession-inscriptions', see now also G. Petzl, *Die Beichinschriften Westkleinasiens (Epigraphica Anatolica 22, 1994)*, with the map at the end. For Philadelphia, see now G. Petzl, 'Ein Altersheim als Jungbrunnen? — Neues zu einer byzantinischen Inschrift aus Philadelphia in Lydien', *Chiron* 32 (2002), 173.

henotheism, directed to the 'Highest God', where it is not always clear whether what we are dealing with is paganism, Judaism or Christianity.³

All the Christian Emperors, from Constantine on, found themselves obliged, with varying degrees of energy and conviction, to attempt to use their secular power in support of the unattainable ideal of uniformity of Christian belief and practice, with measures directed against groups which were identified as 'heretical',⁴ paralleled by legislation restraining, though not forbidding, Jewish observance,⁵ and others directed to the abolition of paganism, the banning of sacrifice and the closure of temples. Few reigns, however, were more deeply marked by Christian piety, and by commitment to the ideal of unity of belief, than that of Theodosius II, lasting forty-two years from the death of his father Arcadius in 408 to his own accidental death, still only 49, in July 450.

The commitment to the extirpation of heresy took on a more active and dynamic form from 428 onwards, and led to a series of controversial Oecumenical Councils of the Church, the first and second Councils of Ephesus, called by Theodosius himself in 431 and 449, and that of Chalcedon, called by Marcian in 451, a year after Theodosius' death. The enormous mass of contemporary documentation assembled in relation to these Councils, edited by Eduard Schwartz, known, somewhat misleadingly, as 'the Acts of the Councils' (henceforward *ACO*), and preserved in Greek, and in Latin translation — and for some of the proceedings of Ephesus II separately in Syriac translation — offers a range of evidence for State, Church and society, and for the spoken Greek of the fifth century, which far outweighs anything available for earlier periods.⁶ A significant part of this material represents itself as verbatim reports of proceedings, amounting to many hundreds of pages in all. But there are also numerous documents which were quoted at, or perhaps just read into, the records of actual sessions, as well as long series of associated letters or homilies which were collected by contemporaries because of their

³ See esp. S. Mitchell, 'The Cult of Theos Hypsistos between Pagans, Jews and Christians', in P. Athanassiadi and M. Frede (eds.), *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (1999), 81.

⁴ It perhaps hardly needs to be stated that the characterisation, and naming, of groups within Christianity as 'heretical' represents a process of construction by others, and, as expressed by contemporaries (and indeed by moderns), can never be taken as constituting simple reports on observable realities. This paper is itself an illustration of the fluctuating nature of heresy-identification by opposed forces. For illuminating recent treatments of this theme see Averil Cameron, 'How to read Heresiology', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33 (2003), 471, and W. Brandes, 'Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Seventh Century: Prosopographical Observations on Monotheletism', in Averil Cameron (ed.), *Fifty Years of Prosopography: the Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond (Proceedings of the British Academy 118, 2003)*, 103.

⁵ See A. Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (1987). Note also Averil Cameron, 'Jews and Heretics — A Category Error?', in A.H. Becker and A.Y. Reed (eds.), *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (2003), 345.

⁶ E. Schwartz (ed.), *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* I.1-8 (Ephesus) and II.1-6 (Chalcedon), the separate volumes published at various dates between 1927 and 1938. For *Acta* deriving from, or relating to, the second session of the Second Council of Ephesus, known from a Syriac ms of 535, see J.P.G. Flemming, *Akten der ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449, Abh. Kön. Ges. d. Wiss., Gött. Ph.-hist. Kl.* 17 (1917), with the English translation of this and other related Syriac texts in S.G.F. Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus* (1881).

relevance to the issues, but were in no sense part of the *Acta*, in the sense of actual proceedings, themselves.

For the Council of Chalcedon we have something which approaches a complete record of all the sessions (perhaps 19 in total, but even here there are discrepancies between the Greek and Latin versions). For the two Councils of Ephesus the record is much more erratic and incomplete, and in neither case can we tell how many sessions were held — and in the case of the first Council in 431 there never was a single ‘Council of Ephesus’, for the two opposing parties met separately, and never sat down together. All depends on the vagaries of the records preserved in a variety of medieval manuscripts; and it happens, as we will see, to be just one such manuscript, preserving a record of proceedings in rather anomalous form, which allows us a glimpse of local life, and the varieties of Christian belief, of personal identities and statuses, and of levels of literacy, in Philadelphia in Lydia between 428 and 431. This paper hardly attempts to do more than to lay out this evidence intelligibly, and with that to offer a small supplement, and a tribute, to Stephen Mitchell’s *Anatolia II*, falling as it does between the chapters (17.ix-x) on Novatianism in Asia Minor, and on the epigraphy of Anatolian heresies (both extremely relevant to the material presented here), and on the rise of Monasticism (18) on the one hand, and the brilliant analysis (ch. 19) of the *Life* of Theodore of Sykeon, of the sixth and early seventh centuries, on the other. Before we come to this material, however, we need to look briefly at the historical context.

II. Theodosius II, Nestorius and Heresy

By a paradox which is not untypical of the efforts of government to impose uniformity and conformity, Emperors, when laying down penalties on heretical groups, were compelled to identify and name these, and thereby to reveal just how many such groups there were, or were imagined to be, within the broad structure, or separate competing structures, of the Church. As mentioned above, Theodosius’ efforts in this direction took on a new level of scope and complexity in the middle of his reign. It was on May 30, 428, that he wrote from Constantinople, in the name of himself and his western co-Emperor, Valentinian III, to the Praetorian Prefect of Oriens, Florentius, to set out a series of restrictions on the rights of heretical Christian groups, naming no fewer than twenty of these in the process.⁷ Here, as so often, an Imperial pronouncement comes very close to the thought and attitudes to be found in theological writings, in this case the works exploring the different varieties of heresy, for instance by Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Epiphanius, or by Theodosius’ contemporary, Theodoret.⁸ We need not repeat here the full list of names derived from combining the two versions of Theodosius’ letter, in the *Codex Theodosianus* and in the *Codex Justinianus*. But two names, or pairs of names, are specially relevant for what follows: ‘Novatiani sive Sabbatiani’ and ‘Tetraditae sive Tessarescaedecatitae’. Both contain hints of alleged judaising influences, for ‘Tessarescaedecatitae’, or in untransliterated Latin ‘Quartodecimani’, were those who were regarded as holding that the date of Easter should be that of Passover, on 14th Nisan by

⁷ Cod. Theod. XVI.5.65 = Cod. Just. I.5.5 + I.6.3.

⁸ Theodoret, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* I-V, in Migne, *Patr. Gr.* LXXXIII, cols. 336-556.

the Jewish calendar. The opening sentence of the Imperial letter embodies a typical level of rhetorical force, while reflecting innumerable local conflicts between groups disputing possession of Christian churches:⁹

The madness of the heretics must be so suppressed that they shall know beyond doubt, before all else, that the churches which they have taken from the orthodox, wherever they are held, shall immediately be surrendered to the Catholic Church, since it cannot be tolerated that those who ought not to have churches of their own should continue to detain those possessed or founded by the orthodox and invaded by such rash lawlessness.

Imperial legislation by itself, however, would not be enough, and Theodosius had already engineered the election as bishop (or 'archbishop' or 'patriarch' — all three terms could be used by contemporaries) of Constantinople of Nestorius, a presbyter from Antioch, who came originally from the small city of Germanicia in Euphratesia (northern Syria), and had a reputation for eloquence. All our sources, starting with the most important contemporary narrative, in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Socrates (*HE* VII.29), agree that the Emperor took the initiative in the selection of Nestorius.¹⁰ There seems, however, to be no source which states explicitly that the new bishop was intended to push through a programme of non-tolerance of heresy, in the capital city and elsewhere. At any rate, when Theodosius issued his letter to Florentius, Nestorius had already taken office, and had immediately taken steps, of various kinds, which stirred outrage throughout the Greek-speaking eastern empire, and caused reverberations also in the Latin west. For present purposes, the narrative of Socrates will be an adequate guide. Elected on April 10, Nestorius began at once by proclaiming his anti-heretical mission, linking the purging of heretics from the Empire with consequent military success against Persia. It is very relevant that Socrates, an important contemporary observer, regarded Nestorius' words and actions as rash, ill-considered and inappropriate. By implication, the preceding relative tolerance had been preferable. Nestorius did indeed set to work without delay. Five days after his election he attacked an Arian church in Constantinople, whose congregation set it on fire in despair, destroying some neighbouring buildings. Undeterred, Nestorius moved against the Novatians of Constantinople, whose bishop Paulus was well-respected for his piety — but he was then restrained by the admonition of the 'powerful'. Socrates mentions also, but declines to describe, the evils which Nestorius went on to inflict on the Tessaereskaidekatitai throughout the provinces of Asia, Lydia and Caria, and which were the cause of many deaths in Miletus and Sardis (*HE* VII.29). Two chapters later, Socrates describes, with equal distaste, Nestorius' measures against the 'Macedonians', seizing churches of theirs in Cyzicus and in the capital (VII.31). Socrates does not return to the story of what happened to any groups of heretics outside the capital, and but for the documents discussed below we would know no more about any of them.

In the mean time Nestorius had gained notoriety by his own preaching, and that of a presbyter of his, Anastasius (VII.31). We need not follow the details of the furore which arose when Nestorius and Anastasius began to preach their 'two-nature' doctrine of the

⁹ *Cod. Theod.* XVI.5.65, *praeef.*, trans. C. Pharr, *The Theodosian Code* (1952).

¹⁰ On Socrates see T. Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople: Historian of Church and State* (1997).

conception of Christ, under which, given the distinction between his divine and his human natures, the appellation 'Theotokos', 'Mother of God', was argued to be a theologically unacceptable term. Nor is there any need to tell here the story of the reaction, led by Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, and Caelestinus of Rome. It seems in fact that it was both his opponents and Nestorius himself who urged on Theodosius the need to hold an oecumenical council, which he duly did, writing on November 19, 430 to Cyril, with copies to metropolitan bishops, giving instructions for a Council to meet in Ephesus at Pentecost of the next year (June 7).

In the event, the main group of supporters of Nestorius, namely bishops from the secular diocese of Oriens led by Iohannes of Antioch, were late in arriving. The larger group led by Cyril waited until June 22, but then met, reviewed Nestorius' doctrines, and declared his deposition and excommunication. Four days later, Iohannes and his supporters arrived, met separately, and declared the deposition and excommunication of Cyril and of Memnon, the bishop of Ephesus. Thereafter, the two sides continued to hold sessions separately, the followers of Cyril being joined in July by delegates from Rome. As mentioned above, given the erratic reporting of the sessions of the two separate sides, derived from different manuscripts, and sometimes recorded only in Latin translation, we cannot tell how many sessions were held by either side, or how long they continued to meet. Suffice to say that it was not until the autumn that Theodosius issued an order permitting them all to go home. In the interval, he had at first accepted all three depositions, and had ordered all three bishops to be kept in custody by Imperial officials; he then relented in the case of Cyril and Memnon, but ordered Nestorius to return to his monastery in Syria. In effect therefore, after a long and extremely well-attested process of argument and persuasion, involving Theodosius in person, and in which bribery played a part which is documented in detail, the Emperor settled for the side of Nestorius' opponents, and the 'one-nature' theology which they expounded.¹¹

It was only in the autumn (it seems) that Theodosius finally took sides. From June/July until then there had been two opposing views, both represented in formal votes 'of the Council' (with a considerably larger number on Cyril's side, as they repeatedly pointed out), and two incompatible views of who was guilty of improper conduct, who was a heretic, and who had been formally deposed. It is only from an eccentric and anomalous manuscript, reporting a session of the Cyrillian side in July, that we obtain a picture of what had happened to heretics in inland Asia Minor who found themselves caught up in Nestorius' crusade.

III. The Athens Manuscript and the Proceedings of the Cyrillians in July, 431

Our best and most consistent evidence for the successive sessions held at Ephesus in June and July 431 comes from a Vatican ms of the 13th century written in Greek (*ACO* I.1.1-6). In it we can read what appear as verbatim transcriptions of sessions of the Cyrillian side on June 22 and July 10, 11, 16 and 17, and of one session of the other side,

¹¹ Various accounts of this complex sequence of events are available, of which B.J. Kidd, *A History of the Church to AD 461* III (1922), is particularly clear and helpful. I use the non-technical terms 'one-nature' and 'two-nature' deliberately, as a way of avoiding any, inevitably controversial, commitment to more formal labels.

on June 26. One session of Iohannes' party, not precisely dated, is also represented in Latin translation, from a different ms (*ACO* I.4, no. 95, pp. 43-6). These reports of proceedings are formal in character, with lists of those present, apparently verbatim reproduction of spoken interventions, quotations of documents presented, and verbatim reproduction of the texts of the written 'subscriptions' (brief personal statements of assent) which concluded each session. It may be useful to give examples of these elements, taken from the very full record of June 22, to contrast with the rather different record which serves (in spite of all anomalies of recording) to reveal the fortunes of a group of heretics in Philadelphia, Lydia.

The record of June 22 (*ACO* I.1.2, nos. 33-62, pp. 3-64) begins with the names of the participants in the genitive absolute (καθεσθέντων), 155 names in all, starting with Cyril (Κυρίλλου Ἀλεξανδρείας, διέποντος καὶ τὸν τόπον τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου καὶ ὀσιωτάτου ἀρχιεπισκόπου τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίας Κελεστίνου) and ending with Bessoulas, a deacon from Carthage (Βεσσούλα διακόνου Καρθαγένης). It continues with verbatim transcription, with no authorial narrative other than the word 'said' (εἶπεν). One brief example (no. 36) is Memnon of Ephesus' intervention, noting that 16 days had already passed since the date set by the Imperial letter (Μέμνων ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Ἐφέσου εἶπεν· Ἀπὸ τῆς ὠρισμένης προθεσμίας ἐν τῷ εὐσεβεῖ καὶ θεοφιλεῖ γράμματι παρήλθον ἡμέραι δεκαέξι). Some third-person narrative is then employed to record the despatch and return of emissaries to Nestorius, requiring him to attend, and his refusal (nos. 39-42). The vast bulk of the text is however taken up with verbatim quotation of individual interventions, some 200 in all, with some individuals speaking more than once. Spoken interventions in Latin, and documents in Latin brought before the Council, are reproduced in Greek. For instance, a letter from Capreolus, bishop of Carthage, written in Latin, was read to the session by Petros, a presbyter from Alexandria, apparently first in Latin and then in Greek (..ἔγραφε πρὸς τὴν ἁγίαν ταύτην σύνοδον ἐπιστολήν, ἣν, εἰ κελεύσειεν ὑμῶν ἢ θεοσέβεια, ἀναγνώσομαι, ἀναγνώσομαι δὲ καὶ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν αὐτῆς). The text which then follows is the Greek translation (no. 61).

Apart from individual interventions, mass acclamations by the bishops are recorded, and orthodox texts relevant to the issues at stake (all in Greek) are also included. Finally, there come the written subscriptions of the participants giving their individual assent to the verdict of the session. The number subscribing has now risen to 197, each attesting in very similar, but not absolutely identical, style. In view of the local history which we will examine shortly, it is of interest that one of the bishops is Theophanios of Philadelphia: Θεοφάνιος ἐπίσκοπος πόλεως Φιλαδελφείας ὑπέγραψα ἀποφηνάμενος ἅμα τῇ ἀγίᾳ συνόδῳ (no. 62¹⁷⁵).

Such a record represents the full version of what contemporary recording was like; its value for everything from proper names to toponomy to the history of the Greek language should be obvious. It is sketched here, however, only to emphasise the anomalous character of the nonetheless priceless text which we owe to the Athens ms alone (except that there is also a Latin translation, somewhat abbreviated, from a separate ms tradition),¹² and which reveals some at least of what happened when Nestorius' emissaries arrived in Lydia.

¹² For the Latin translation see *ACO* I.3, nos. 27-42, pp. 128-33.

The manuscript in question is a codex of the 13th century, now in Athens, edited by Schwartz in *ACO* I.1.7. Like other similar manuscript collections relating to one or other of the Councils, it begins with a series of related texts, with no introduction or linking commentary (nos. 1-29). At no. 30 we come to the *Acta* proper ('Ἀρχὴ τῆς συνόδου), with the proceedings of June 22, and a series of documents (all paralleled in the main Vatican ms, and therefore not printed by Schwartz). There follows a further series of letters and documents, some of which are not represented in the Vatican ms, and are therefore printed (nos. 45, 48, 55-7, 62-72). These are normally equipped with brief headings, for instance no. 71: 'Part of a homily of bishop Theodoret, delivered in Chalcedon just before their departure', which would be helpful for readers who knew the (extremely complex) story already, but do not amount to anything resembling a coherent narrative.

It is at this point that the text, having recorded no proceedings since those of June 22, suddenly reverts (nos. 73-9) to recording proceedings on July 22 (months earlier than Theodoret's homily). This is the main text with which we will be concerned, and we will return to it later. There then follows (no. 80) an undated report or verdict (ῥος), emanating from the Council, and written in the first person plural, on the case of various heretical groups found in Pamphylia — 'Messalianitai or Euchitai or Enthouasiastai, or however the most foul heresy of the persons mentioned may be identified'. There is no narrative context, and it is impossible to determine when this issue was discussed. After that there comes another piece of local history, but this time in the form of proceedings at the Council, dated in the text to Aug. 31, 431 — far later than any other recorded proceedings, but still before the dismissal of the Council by Theodosius; so the date may be correct. These proceedings (no. 81) relate to the alleged abuse of the 'autocephalous' rights of the clergy of Cyprus to elect bishops without interference from Antioch. What distinguishes this text is that it is the only report of proceedings in the entire corpus of the Greek *Acta* of the Councils which quotes a complete document (a letter of the Magister Utriusque Militiae at Antioch to the Consularis of Cyprus) in its original Latin, with a Greek translation. As we will see, Latin also plays a significant part in the record of proceedings over heresy in Philadelphia. The report relating to Cyprus is in the form of a verbatim record of proceedings, but omits both a list of those present and the text of their *subscriptions*. The codex from Athens serves to illustrate just how dependent we are on the variable and erratic forms of original recording which lie behind the various mss.

Finally, before concluding with a long series of letters and petitions (*libelloi*), each with a brief heading (nos. 83-117), the ms incorporates (no. 82) the incomplete record of yet another episode of local ecclesiastical history. This is the text of the *libellos* presented to the Council by Euprepios, the bishop of Buze and Arkadiopolis, and Kyrillos, the bishop of Koilai, complaining of disturbances caused to established arrangements in the province of Europa by Phrtilas, bishop of Herakleia, and a follower of Nestorius. The synod's verdict is recorded in narrative form (ἡ ἀγία καὶ οἰκουμένη συνόδος εἶπεν), but there is no indication of date, list of participants, or text of proceedings or subscriptions. None the less, it is clear that there is a loose relationship between the various local issues concerned with Pamphylia, with Cyprus, with Europa, and with heresy in Philadelphia.

The remarkably rich content of the Athens codex will now be clear, as should be the fact that it would have been (and most certainly still is) extremely difficult for its readers

to reassemble the events concerned in chronological order, or construct an intelligible narrative out of them. Equally clear will be the erratic, anomalous and variable recording-procedures which lie behind the scattered reports of proceedings included in this ms. Furthermore, our entire evidence for what happened in Philadelphia during the brief patriarchate of Nestorius is contained in those documents which, for whatever reason, were laid before the Council. It is clear that there is much that we can never know about the prevalence of various heresies in Philadelphia, about the representativeness of the statements of renunciation of heresy which were produced, about how and by whom they were produced, and about the motives of the presbyter Charisios, who presented a *libellos* and associated documents to the Council. None the less, both his narrative of what had occurred and, even more, the twenty-one separate statements of renunciation, coming from twenty-four individuals (since some are found attesting jointly), represent exceptionally vivid evidence for Christian groupings, for social structures and power-relations, for the inter-relations of Church and State, for nomenclature and self-designation, and above all for differing levels of literacy.

So far as the writer is aware, none of this material has ever been translated into English (though it did find a place, with some abbreviation, in the late A.-J. Festugière's truly heroic attempt to translate as much as possible of the records of Ephesus I and Chalcedon).¹³ Nor has any of the material ever (to his knowledge) been printed in the original Greek, other than in compilations of conciliar texts. The individual attestations of renunciation will therefore be described quite fully, with quotation of key phrases in Greek; and a few examples will be given in full, with a following translation.

Before that, however, we need to see how the record of these proceedings is presented in this ms (*ACO* I.1.7, nos. 73-9, pp. 84-106). It begins with a formal dating to July 22, 431, recording the consular year and the date by the Roman (and Egyptian) calendar, the occasion and place, and (to follow) the names of the participants:

Τοῖς μετὰ τὴν ὑπατεῖαν τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν Φλαυίου Θεοδοσίου τὸ γ' καὶ Φλαυίου Οὐαλεντιανοῦ τὸ τρίτον τῶν αἰωνίων αὐγούστων τῇ πρὸ δεκαμιάς Καλανδῶν Αὐγούστων, ἥτις ἐστὶ κατ' Αἰγυπτίους Ἐπιφὶ κή, συνόδου συγκροτηθείσης ἐν τῇ Ἐφεσίων μητροπόλει ἐκ θεσπίσματος τῶν θεοφιλεστάτων καὶ φιλοχρίστων βασιλέων καὶ καθεσθέντων ἐν τῷ ἐπισκοπεῖω τοῦ θεοσεβεστάτου ἐπισκόπου Μέμνονος τῶν θεοφιλεστάτων καὶ θεοσεβεστάτων ἐπισκόπων...

This was clearly part of the original text as recorded at the time. It is less clear whether the same is true of the preceding heading, which indicates that the two separate matters which we find being dealt with in the following pages — confirmation of the Nicene symbol and the *libellos* presented by Charisios — formed the subject-matter of the same session.

We then find, as normal, the names of the participants listed in the genitive, 157 in all, beginning with Cyril of Alexandria and ending with Bessoulas, the deacon from Carthage, and now also the two bishops and one presbyter who represented the Roman see (no. 73). The (partial and incomplete) formality of the record is confirmed by the subscriptions at the end (para. 79), which have mysteriously risen to 197. Consistently with this codex being the only ms in the entire fifth-century Greek conciliar *Acta* to

¹³ A.-J. Festugière, *Épêse et Chalcedoine: Actes des Conciles* (1982), 608-15.

quote a document in its original Latin (p. 117 above), these subscriptions are unique in incorporating six in Latin: the three representatives of the *sedes apostolica*, Bessoulas, and two bishops from the Adriatic coast: 'Senecion episcopus Scodrinae civitatis subscripsi' (79⁴⁹); and 'Felix episcopus civitatum Apolloniensium subscripsi' (79¹⁷²).

If we go back to the record of the session itself, it begins (74.1) in the normal style, with the presbyter, Petros of Alexandria, speaking (εἶπεν), the council replying (also, collectively, εἶπεν, 74.2), his reading of the text of the Nicene symbol, and then his proposing the reading of a selection of orthodox texts. Flavianus of Philippi then suggests (75.2) that after being read these should be entered in the record (Φλαβιανὸς ἐπίσκοπος Φιλίππων εἶπε· καὶ ταῦτα ἀναγνωσθέντα ἐμπερέσθω). Several pages of extracts from orthodox theological texts then follow (75.3-22).

At the end of these extracts, the text then turns to the issue of heresy in Philadelphia, but does so in a quite different narrative form. Verbatim quotation of spoken interventions does not resume, and instead there is a third-person account, in quite formal style, resuming the affirmation of the Nicene symbol which has already been recorded, and recounting the presentation of a *libellos* from Charisios (it should be noted that, paradoxically, in the language of the conciliar *Acta*, the transliterated Latin term *libellos* is used for a memorandum or petition internal to the Church, but is not used for written petitions to the Emperor). It will be worthwhile to set out and translate the first couple of sentences of this third-person summary (no. 76.1), which is also notable for revealing the only attested use of the exact Greek equivalent of the English expression 'out of the frying-pan into the fire'.¹⁴

Κατὰ θέσπισμα τῶν εὐσεβεστάτων καὶ φιλοχρίστων βασιλέων Θεοδοσίου καὶ Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ συναχθείσης ἐν τῇ Ἐφεσίῳ μητροπόλει ἐξ ἀπάσης ὡς ἔπος εἶπεν τῆς οἰκουμένης τῆς ἁγίας ταύτης συνόδου τῶν θεοσεβεστάτων ἐπισκόπων τῶν ἀπανταχοῦ ἁγίων ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ συνεδρευούσης ὀρίζουσης τε κρατεῖν καὶ βεβαίαν εἶναι τὴν πίστιν τὴν ἐκτεθεῖσαν διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων τῶν κατὰ καιροὺς ἐν τῇ Νικαέῳ πόλει συνειλεγμένων, ὄντων τὸν ἀριθμὸν τριακοσίων δέκα καὶ ὀκτώ, τυπούσης τε τὰ περὶ τούτου καθ' ὃν ἔδει τρόπον, Χαρισίος τις ὀνόματι πρεσβύτερος καὶ οἰκονόμος γεγωνὸς τῆς Φιλαδελφῶν πόλεως ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας ἐδίδαξεν ὅτι τινὲς τῶν ἀπὸ Λυδίας ὀρμωμένων αἰρετικῶν ἠθέλησαν τὴν μὲν ἑαυτῶν ἀφεῖναι πλάνην, ἐπιστρέψαι δὲ πρὸς τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας φῶς καὶ μυσταγωγηθῆναι τὰ τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας ὀρθά τε καὶ εὐσεβῆ δόγματα· εἶτα δέον αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν χειραγωγηθῆναι μειζῶνως ἠπάτηνται καὶ οἷον ἐκ βόθρου πεπτώκασιν εἰς χεῖρονα βόθρον.

By command of the most pious and Christ-loving Emperors Theodosius and Valentinianus, there having been brought together in the metropolis of the Ephesians, from the whole inhabited world so to speak, this holy synod of the most God-worshipping bishops of the holy churches everywhere, and it holding a session and having determined that the creed laid down through the Holy Spirit by the holy fathers who once met in the city of the

¹⁴ I refer to the last phrase quoted, οἷον ἐκ βόθρου πεπτώκασιν εἰς χεῖρονα βόθρον. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961), s.v. βόθρος, does not refer to this usage, nor does Liddell-Scott-Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*. I owe to the kindness of Prof. C.B.R. Pelling, the new Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, the information that he can find only two partial parallels for this usage: the Cynic Monimus, quoted in Stobaeus II.31.88, and [Athanasius], *Vita S. Syncreticae* 28.

Nicaeans, being 318 in number, should be valid and established, and having made decrees on related matters as appropriate, a certain Charisios by name, having been a *presbyteros* and *oikonomos* of the holy church of the city of the Philadelphians, reported that certain of the heretics deriving from Lydia had wished to abandon their error, to turn to the light of truth, and to be instructed in the correct and pious doctrines of the catholic church. But then, when they should have been led to the truth, they had instead been deceived, and had fallen, as it were, out of one pit into a worse one.

The text goes on to record that Charisios reported that two presbyters, Antonios and Iakobos, had come down from Constantinople carrying letters of recommendation from the presbyter Anastasios and Photios, associates of 'the heretic Nestorius'. But instead of introducing the repentant heretics to the orthodox faith as laid down at Nicaea, they had brought an exposition of doctrines which were themselves heretical, and to which they had induced the unfortunate (literally) to subscribe (καθυπογράψαι). To substantiate these claims, the text says, there has been attached (1) Charisios' *libellos*, (2) the text of the impious exposition of the doctrine of the Incarnation, and (3) the subscriptions of those deceived (no. 76, 1).

The full text of the *libellos* then follows, telling the same story in more detail, and in typically emotive and rhetorical style, with denunciation of Nestorius, and adding that Charisios himself had been excluded from the church by Nestorius' agents. Before concluding with his own affirmation of the Nicene creed, he asks for the text of the blasphemous exposition of doctrine, with the attached subscriptions of those deceived, to be read out before the synod (no. 76, 2-3).

Then there follows (no. 76, 4-11) the full text of the 'copy of the exposition of the distorted (Nestorian) symbol' (Ἰσον τῆς ἐκθέσεως τοῦ παραπλασθέντος συμβόλου),¹⁵ whose theological character the author is not qualified to analyse, but which surely deserves attention as potentially a key expression of 'Nestorian' doctrine. This section concludes with a brief paragraph (no. 76, 11) which seems to belong to it (rather than being an utterance of the opposite, Cyrillian, side at Ephesus). If so, it reflects the dogmatic certainties which characterised the brief dominance of Nestorius and his followers:

This is the teaching of the ecclesiastical doctrines, and if anyone thinks anything contrary to this, let him be anathema. If anyone does not accept the salvific repentance, let him be anathema. If anyone does not celebrate the holy day of Easter (*Pascha*) according to the decree of the holy and catholic Church, let him be anathema.

IV. Heresy in Philadelphia

It is only with the last of these three anathemas that the reader grasps the nature of one at least of the heresies which flourished at Philadelphia, namely the long-established group, attested since the second century, which was reported to believe that Easter should be celebrated on a date determined by the Jewish calendar, and hence on a day equivalent to 14th Nisan, rather than on the following Sunday. This summary of their beliefs is, needless to say, greatly over-simplified, and masks a host of calendrical and liturgical ques-

¹⁵ It should be noted that neither ἴσον, in the sense of 'copy', nor παραπλάζω, meaning 'distort', can be found in Lampe (previous note).

tions, as well as divisions of opinion within the sect itself.¹⁶ The principle, however, was established and familiar, and of the repentant persons who renounce heresy in the subscriptions which follow, nine describe themselves as *τεσσαρεσκαιδεκατίτης*, while two others, while not using the term explicitly of themselves, anathematise 'every heresy, especially that of the *tessareskaidekatitai*'. Two other terms for heresies also appear, however, but it is clear that they both allude to the same group: 'Novatian' (*Νοβατιανός*) and 'Katharos' ('pure'). This three-way conjunction is not an accident. Stephen Mitchell's fine chapter (17.ix) in *Anatolia II* on 'The Novatian Church in Asia Minor' is perfectly constructed to set the scene, while acknowledging its debt to an article by T.E. Gregory.¹⁷ This heresy owed its origin to the rigorist attitude of a Roman presbyter, Novatus or Novatianus, in the mid-third century, who had advocated the imposition of stern conditions on those who had lapsed in persecution, and then asked for readmission to the Church. In doctrine, it was hard to find anything which distinguished them from the Church as a whole; but they were marked by a more than normally demanding requirement of personal observance and abstinence. Basil speaks of the 'Katharoi' in *Letter* 188, and Epiphanius in *Panarion* 59 notes that the Novatians were also called 'Katharoi'; in connection with the forms of heresy that emerge in Philadelphia it is relevant that Socrates indicates in several different passages of his *Ecclesiastical History* that the Novatians, or some of them, had on occasion adopted the position of the *Tessareskaidekatitai* on Easter. In *HE* IV.28, speaking of the middle of the second half of the fourth century, he goes back to describe the origins of the Novatian heresy, and reports that at that time some obscure Novatian bishops in Phrygia began to celebrate Easter on the date of Passover, producing a schism in the sect. Under Theodosius I, in Constantinople itself, the same schism was repeated, owing to the preaching of a converted Jew, Sabbatius, who held the rank of presbyter. However, a Novatian synod held at Helenopolis ruled that the dates should be regarded as a matter of choice (*HE* V.21). The significance of the issue, in the eyes of orthodox fifth-century Christians, is clearly indicated by the very long and learned chapter (V.22) which Socrates then devotes to Easter, Passover and the practices of the *Tessareskaidekatitai*, going back to second-century disputes. In the course of it he notes that, like the Novatians, the *Tessareskaidekatitai* in Asia exclude from communion those who sin after baptism (that is, they leave no room for repentance). In the case of the date of Easter, however, Socrates later notes, the earlier agreement to differ did not hold, and subsequently Sabbatius seceded from the Novatian sect on this issue, going so far as to curse those who did not follow the date of Passover; a riot followed, in which there were many deaths (VII.5).

Divisions among the Novatians over the date of Easter are reflected also in a letter of Theodosius II, not at all easy to interpret in detail, addressed to the Praetorian Prefect of Oriens, Anthemius, in 413 (*Cod. Theod.* XVI.6.6). What is clear is at least that the Emperor refers to a breakaway group among the Novatians, who called themselves 'Proto-

¹⁶ For the essentials see F.E. Brightman, 'The Quartodeciman Question', *JThSt* 15 (1924), 254; B. Lohse, *Das Passafest der Quartadecimaner* (1953); A. Strobel, *Texte zur Geschichte des frühchristlichen Osterkalendas* (1984); R. Cantalamessa, *Easter in the Early Church: an Anthology of Jewish and Early Christian Texts* (1993).

¹⁷ See T.E. Gregory, 'Novatianism: A Rigorist Sect in the Christian Roman Empire', *Byzantine Studies* 2 (1975), 1.

paschitae'. But he then goes on to speak of the observation of Easter on the wrong date by (it seems) the Novatians in general, or at least some Novatians. Both this question, therefore, and a rigorist attitude to the possibility of repentance for sins committed after baptism, made a link between the two groups. The latter point is specifically asserted by Theodoret in his *Haereticarum Fabularum Compendium* (III.4). Speaking of the *Tessaeskaidekatitai*, he says that they are in agreement with the followers of Novatus, for both reject any notion of repentance.

None of this evidence implies that there would necessarily have been any cross-over in membership between the two groups, though it perhaps tends to make it understandable that both should have been represented in the same city and its territory. But when we read the attestations of renunciation of heresy by members of both, we are left entirely in the dark as to whether these were in fact the only heresies represented in Philadelphia, or whether members of other heretical groups had also conformed when Nestorius' emissaries arrived, but their attestations were not included in the documents attached to Charisios' *libellos*; or indeed why it is this quite small group, drawn from just two heretical sects, which is represented in the dossier which Charisios presented. It is of course also possible that many members of heretical groups, whether Novatians, *Tessaeskaidekatitai* or others, refused to conform to the pressure brought by the Nestorians. As we saw earlier (p. 114), Socrates records, while declining to give details, incidents of actual bloodshed at Miletus, and at Sardis, which lies only some 45 km from Philadelphia, along the foothills of Mt Tmolus. Equally, there had been violence in Constantinople, recorded also in the strongly-worded petition addressed to Theodosius by Basileios and other monks, and preserved in the *Acta* of the Council (*ACO* I.1.5, no. 143, pp. 7-10). So it might also have been that the campaign to impose what could briefly be represented as orthodox belief in Philadelphia had met with resistance, and had not yielded a long list of penitents. In short, the context from which the dossier emerged must be a matter of speculation, and we may be further intrigued by the fact that three of the repentant heretics (nos. 30-2, see below) mention Charisios himself as someone to whom they had appealed, along with bishop Theophanios, which does not seem to square with Charisios' claim in his *libellos* (p. 120 above) that the Nestorians had excluded him.

The role of Theophanios is also mysterious. In the recorded proceedings of the Council he is not listed among those present at the main meeting of the Cyrillian side on June 22, when Nestorius was deposed and excommunicated (*ACO* I.1.2, para. 33, pp. 3-7), and he is not recorded among those who spoke. But, as we saw above (p. 116), he is listed among those who subscribed the decisions of that day. Later, his public alignment seems to have changed. Although he is not named among the 'Easterners' ('Anatoliki'), led by Iohannes of Antioch, who subscribed the deposition of Cyril and Memnon on June 26 (*ACO* I.1.5, para. 151.16, pp. 123-4), he does appear among the 53 members of this group who subscribed a letter to the church of Hierapolis, Eufraatesia, at a subsequent meeting of uncertain date, probably late June or early July. The (abbreviated) proceedings of this meeting survive only in Latin translation (*ACO* I.4, no. 95, p. 45: 'Theofanios episcopus Philadelphiae'). It was as a result of this switch, we must presume, that he is listed among the 33 supporters of Iohannes whose deposition was declared by the Cyrillian side on July 17 (*ACO* I.1.3, no. 90, pp. 24-5), and is mentioned in the letter to the churches announcing their decision (*ACO* I.1.3, no. 91, pp. 26-7). We last hear of Theophanios, it seems, in a letter of Theodoret (*Epp.* IV, 6) written in 432 to Candidianus,

and expressing concern over threats to his position. More immediately relevant is the fact that by the time of the meeting on July 22 at which Charisios presented his *libellos* and the attached documents, Theophanios had already suffered an act of deposition by the Cyrillian side. The irony of the position of those in Philadelphia who had dutifully conformed, only now to find themselves having 'fallen from one pit into a worse one', is emphasised all the more strongly.

V. The Subscriptions

We can only speculate about how the contested relations between different Christian groups which marked the brief period of Nestorian dominance worked out in Philadelphia, and therefore cannot know whether the attestations of abandonment of heresy which Charisios presented had or had not been selected from a larger group. But they still represent a priceless collection – though in no way a statistical sample – of personal testimonies from inland Asia Minor in the earlier fifth century, an area which otherwise yields relatively little evidence for social history in this period.

The testimonies will be presented in their manuscript order, keeping the numbering as in Schwartz's edition (*ACO* I.1.7, no. 76, nos. 12-31, pp. 100-5). As mentioned earlier (p. 118), they seem never to have been printed except in the context of the conciliar *Acta*, and never to have been translated into any modern language except French, by the great A.-J. Festugière. So the presentation will be relatively full, and some examples, of varying types, will be reproduced in full, and translated. As will be immediately apparent, these documents are very close in character to ones which, by their nature, are normally found only on Egyptian papyri (or, in the Near East, on papyri or on occasion on parchments).¹⁸ The relationship is perhaps particularly close as regards the indications, in varying forms, of the degree of literacy possessed by the person attesting.

This aspect, which is of considerable interest (even if these texts did not achieve a mention in William Harris' major and challenging book on literacy),¹⁹ deserves some emphasis before the texts are presented. Formally speaking, each individual either writes 'I have subscribed' (ὕπέγραψα), normally adding 'with my own hand' (χειρὶ ἐμῇ), or gives some explanation as to why he could not (all the individuals concerned are male); in the latter case he adds an indication of who had written the subscription for him. That leaves entirely open the question of who 'wrote' the main text of the attestation, in either sense: who formulated the wording, and who physically wrote out the copy used for subscription. It should be observed for a start, at any rate, that the wording of the different attestations, though inevitably very similar, is not identical.

Secondly, it is not immediately clear whether the subscription of each person's written attestation (since there is nothing to suggest any oral statement on each individual's part) took place in some public, ritual context. The frequent references to the 'reading over' of the text to the intended signatory, or 'subscriber', might suggest both that the text in question had been composed (and copied out) by someone else, and that the pro-

¹⁸ For the documentation from the Near East preserved on perishable materials see W.E.H. Cockle, H.M. Cotton and F.G.B. Millar, 'The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: a Survey', *JRS* 85 (1995), 214.

¹⁹ W.V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (1989), esp. ch. 8, 'Literacy in Late Antiquity'.

cedure of reading over had been public and formalised. The allusion in no. 32 to the fact that the person concerned, 'being present, had said that he was illiterate', also suggests that the context had been some form of public occasion.

So far, the question has related to the capacity to write (and, strictly speaking, to no more than the capacity to write the required one-sentence subscription). The capacity to read must also be relevant. Should we conclude that there is a clear distinction in this respect between those who simply write 'I have subscribed' and those (p. 129 below) who report that the exposition (*ekthesis*) had been read aloud to them? A variant formula appears in no. 28: 'having heard the *ekthesis*, I have subscribed with my own hand.'

The other aspects of identity and self-representation will be noted in connection with each case.

- 12 Βούδιος Ἰουνικοῦ Φιλαδελφεύς, τεσσαρεσκαίδεκατίτης, ἐπιγνοὺς τὴν ἀληθῆ πίστιν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας καὶ παρακαλέσας τὸν ἀγιώτατον ἐπίσκοπον Θεοφάνιον προσῆλθον τῇ ἀγιωτάτῃ καὶ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἀναθεματίζω πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τὴν τῶν τεσσαρεσκαίδεκατιτῶν, εἰς ἣν τὸ πρότερον ἐπλανώμην, καὶ συντίθεμαι τῇ προγεγραμμένῃ ἐκθέσει τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως, ἀναθεματίζων καὶ τοὺς μὴ ποιοῦντας τὴν ἀγίαν ἡμέραν τοῦ πάσχα καθὼς ἡ ἀγία καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολικὴ ἐκκλησία ποιεῖ, ἐξομνύμενος τὴν ἀγίαν καὶ ὁμοούσιον τριάδα καὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν καὶ νίκην τῶν δεσποτῶν τῆς οἰκουμένης Φλαυίου Θεοδοσίου καὶ Φλαυίου Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ τῶν αἰώνιων Αὐγούστων, εἰ δέ τι τούτων παρασαλεύσω ποτέ, ὑποκείσθαι με τῇ τῶν νόμων αὐστηρίᾳ. καὶ ὑπαναγνωσθείσης μοι τῆς ἐκθέσεως ὑπέγραψα διὰ Ἡσυχίου Φιλαδελφέως βουλευτοῦ διὰ τὸ γράμματά με μὴ εἰδέναι.

I, Boudios son of Iounikos, Philadelphian, a *Tessareskaidekatitēs*, having acknowledged the true belief of orthodoxy, and having entreated the most holy bishop Theophanios, have approached the most holy and catholic church, and anathematise every heresy, and especially that of the *Tessareskaidekatitai*, into which I formerly wandered in error, and assent to the afore-written exposition of the orthodox faith, anathematising also those who do not celebrate the holy day of Easter as the holy catholic and apostolic church does, swearing by the holy and consubstantial Trinity and by the piety and victory of the masters of the *oikoumenē*, Flavius Theodosius and Flavius Valentinianus, the eternal Augusti, that, if I ever contravene any of these, I am subject to the rigour of the laws. After the exposition has been read aloud to me, I have subscribed through Hesychios, Philadelphian, city-councillor, because I am illiterate.

- 13 Hesychios son of Kerdanepios, Philadelphian, city-councillor (the same person as in 12), *Tessareskaidekatitēs*. The same attestation, subscribed in his own hand (καὶ ὑπέγραψα χειρὶ ἐμῇ). No reference to the *ekthesis* being read aloud to him. In an invaluable article which also treats the other toponyms in this dossier (and draws attention to the value of this material), Denis Feissel notes an inscription from Philadelphia mentioning a group named Κερδανεπτοί/αί, and suggests that the correct name might be 'Kerdanettios'.²⁰

²⁰ D. Feissel, 'Kerdanetta: une localité de Lydie d'après l'épigraphie et les Actes conciliaires', *Tyche* 11 (1996), whence *BE* 1999, no. 473. I owe this reference to Stephen Mitchell.

- 14 Rousphinos δὶς Φιλαδελφεύς (meaning son of another Rousphinos, and Philadelphian),²¹ *Tessareskaidekatitēs*. Attests with his whole household (μετὰ παντὸς τοῦ οἴκου μου), also recorded as subject to legal penalty. A developed formula of reading aloud and subscription (ὑπαναγνωσθείσης μοι τῆς ἐκθέσεως καὶ ἀρεσάσης, ὑπέγραψα τῇ οἰκείᾳ ἑμαυτοῦ γνώμῃ καὶ προαιρέσει).
- 15 Eugenios δὶς Φιλαδελφεύς, *Tessareskaidekatitēs*. Almost the same wording as no. 14, also with references to his *oikos*. Similar formula of subscription as in 14, but adding χειρὶ ἐμῇ.
- 16 Phaustinos λαϊκὸς δὶς Φιλαδελφεύς, *Tessareskaidekatitēs*. Almost the same wording as no. 12. Developed formula of subscription (ὑπαναγνωσθείσης μοι τῆς ἐκθέσεως, προσελθὼν μετὰ παντὸς τοῦ οἴκου μου τῇ εὐσεβεί ταύτῃ πίστει ὑπέγραψα χειρὶ ἐμῇ).
- 17 Damalios and Alexandros, no statement of citizenship, χεῖρα χρησάμενοι παρὰ Εὐτροπίου υἱοῦ Θεοδώρου τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου διακόνου (that is, for the subscription itself, since the reading aloud to them of the *ekthesis* is mentioned). No formal self-identification as heretics, but acknowledgement in the text of having erred as *Tessareskaidekatitai*. Abbreviated wording recording reading aloud, the oath and their subscription. Note the clerical status of *diakonos* enjoyed by Theodoros, the father of the man who subscribed for them, which goes along with other minor church offices mentioned later (24; 29-32).
- 18 Phlaurios Nymphidianos δὶς Φιλαδελφεύς, σχολαστικός. Brief statement of rejection of the customs of the *Tessareskaidekatitai*, and attestation of orthodoxy. No explicit reference to subscription.
- 19 Polychronios son of Tatianos, Philadelphian, χεῖρα χρησάμενος παρὰ Φλαυίου Ἰουχίου Κερδανεπίου Φιλαδελφῆος βουλευτοῦ διὰ τὸ βραδέως με γράφειν. Reading-out of *ekthesis*, oath, and imprecise formula relating to procedure for assent (συμφωνεῖ μοι πάντα τὰ προγεγραμμένα). The ‘things written above’ will again, presumably, be his personal attestation, rather than the Nestorian *ekthesis* itself. The city-councillor is the same man as in 12 and 13. But this attestation is chiefly noteworthy as the only appearance in the dossier (and the only appearance outside Egypt?) of the category of person who is βραδέως γράφων, who can in fact write, but slowly, a status elegantly explored several decades ago by the late H.C. Youtie.²² In fact the formulae used here touch in another respect on terminology which we find in use in documentary evidence preserved on perishable materials. For, as Hannah Cotton has shown, to speak of ‘using the hand of x’ implies something more than mere assistance with writing, namely acting as a legal representative, for which the term χειροχρήστης comes into use as a technical term, attested for the first time in a papyrus from the Judaean Desert dating to 127.²³

²¹ I must confess to having originally been baffled by what is meant by δὶς Φιλαδελφεύς (a Philadelphian citizen on both the father’s and the mother’s side?). But I am assured by Stephen Mitchell by letter that δὶς goes with the preceding personal name, and has the meaning indicated above.

²² See H.C. Youtie, ‘Βραδέως γράφων: Between Literacy and Illiteracy’, *Gr., Rom. and Byz. Stud.* 12 (1971), 239.

²³ See H.M. Cotton, ‘Subscriptions and Signatures in the Papyri from the Judaean Desert: the ΧΕΙΡΟΧΡΗΣΤΗΣ’, *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 25 (1996), 29, and in H.M. Cotton and

- 20 Eusthathios son of Markellos, Philadelphian, goldsmith (χρυσοχόος) — along with 18, the only one to mention a secular occupation. *Tessareskaidekatitēs*. Standard formula of attestation and of subscription in his own hand (ὑπέγραψα χειρὶ ἐμῇ), with no reference to the reading-out of the *ekthesis*.
- 21 Eutybios δις Φιλαδελφεύς. No self-identification as heretic. Normal formula, slightly abbreviated, and note of subscription with his own hand. No reference to reading-out.
- 22 Stratonikos son of Ammonios, *Tessareskaidekatitēs*. Normal formula, slightly abbreviated. Expanded statement relating to subscription by third party, owing to illiteracy (ὑπέγραψα διὰ τοῦ ἐγγόνου μου Ἀλέξανδρου διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶδέναι με γράμματα).
- 23 Θεοδώρητος καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ Φιλάδελφος ὑπογράψαντες δι' ἐνὸς ἡμῶν τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου, ἐπιγνόντες τὴν ὀρθοδοξίαν καὶ παρακαλέσαντες τὸν ἀγιώτατον ἐπίσκοπον Θεοφάνιον, προσήλθομεν τῇ ἀγίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ καθολικῇ καὶ ἀποστολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῶν ὀρθοδόξων καὶ ἀναθεματίζομεν πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν, ἔξαιρέτως δὲ τὴν τῶν λεγομένων Καθαρῶν καὶ τοὺς μὴ ποιοῦντας τὴν ἀγίαν ἡμέραν τοῦ πάσχα καθὼς οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι καὶ ἐξωμοσάμεθα τὴν ἀγίαν τριάδα καὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν καὶ νίκην τῶν δεσποτῶν τῆς οἰκουμένης Φλαυίου Θεοδοσίου καὶ Φλαυίου Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ τῶν αἰωνίων Ἀγγούστων, εἰ παρασαλεύσομέν τι τῶν προγεγραμμένων, ὑποκεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς τῇ τῶν νόμων αὐστηρίᾳ. καὶ ὑπαναγνωσθείσης ἡμῖν τῆς ἐκθέσεως ταύτης, ὑπεγράψαμεν.

We, Theodoretos and Alexandros and Philadelphos, having subscribed through one of us, Alexandros, having acknowledged the orthodoxy and entreated the most holy bishop Theophanios, have approached the holy (of God) catholic and apostolic church of the orthodox, and we anathematise every heresy, and especially that of the so-called *Katharoi* and those not celebrating the holy day of Easter as the orthodox do, and we have sworn by the holy Trinity and by the piety and victory of the masters of the *oikoumenē*, Flavius Theodosius and Flavius Valentinianus the eternal Augusti, that if we contravene any of the afore-written, we are subject to the rigour of the laws. This *ekthesis* having been read out aloud to us, we have subscribed.

This is the first of a series of attestations which introduce new elements into the social and religious identities revealed, in this case the *Katharoi*, whom we can take to be identical with the Novatians who appear by name later (nos. 26-7). It is perhaps implied, but is not unambiguously stated, that the three men had been *Katharoi* or Novatians themselves.

There is again a problem in the references to 'this *ekthesis*' which had been read out to them. Was what was read out, and then subscribed, the exposition (*ekthesis*) of the (Nestorian) creed itself, or the attestation in the name of each person, or group of persons? If the former, the inhabitants of Philadelphia were either equipped with a very high level of doctrinal discrimination or (as one must suspect) were under pressure to subscribe something whose dogmatic features must have been wholly obscure to them (as they would be, on first reading at least, to most modern students, who in any case do

not encounter the text by hearing it read aloud). Most probably, *ekthesis* in this context means the individual attestation in their name.

- 24 Marinos son of Euethios, no identification of citizenship, *χειρα χρησάμενος παρά Νεωτερίου ἀναγνώστου τῶν ὀρθοδόξων*. Abbreviated version of normal attestation, ending *καὶ ὑπέγραψα*. Does this mean that he wrote the one-word subscription with his own hand, but that the *anagnōstēs* wrote the rest of the text, or that the *anagnōstēs* wrote both?
- 25 Padikios, Philadelphian, *ὑπέγραψα χειρὶ ἐμῇ*. Abbreviated version of the standard attestation, referring to the *Tessareskaidekatitai*, and with a repetition of the statement of subscription, placed at the end as normal: *ὑπαναγνωσθείσης μοι τῆς ἐκθέσεως, ὑπέγραψα χειρὶ ἐμῇ*.
- 26 Κυριακὸς Φιλαδελφεύς, τῆς τῶν Ναυατιανῶν αἰρέσεως, ἐπιγνὸς τὴν ὀρθοδοξίαν καὶ παρακαλέσας τὸν ἀγιώτατον ἐπίσκοπον Θεοφάνιον, προσῆλθον τῇ ἀγία τοῦ θεοῦ καθολικῆ τῶν ὀρθοδόξων ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἀναθεματίζω πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τὴν τῶν Καθαρῶν, καὶ ἐξωμοσάμην τὸν σεβάσιμον ὄρκον, εἰ παρασαλεύσω τι τῶν προγεγραμμένων, ὑποκεῖσθαι με τῇ τῶν νόμων αὐστηρίᾳ. καὶ ὑπαναγνωσθείσης μοι τῆς ἐκθέσεως ταύτης, ὑπέγραψα διὰ Εὐσεβίου τοῦ Καλλιπίου Σύρου.

I, Kyriakos, Philadelphian, of the heresy of the Novatians, having acknowledged the orthodoxy and having beseeched the most holy bishop Theophanios, have approached the holy catholic church of God of the orthodox, and anathematise every heresy, and especially that of the Katharoi, and have sworn the august oath that, if I contravene any of the above-written, I am subject to the rigour of the law. After this *ekthesis* has been read aloud to me, I have subscribed through Eusebios son of Kalliopios, a Syrian.

This is the first of two attestations (followed by no. 28) in which the writer explicitly records being one of the Novatians, in this case apparently equating this term with ‘Katharoi’ (already referred to in no. 23). The formula of renunciation is sharply abbreviated, and the oath covered essentially by allusion. The person who subscribed for him is the only one named in the dossier as coming from a distant region – not surprising, given Philadelphia’s status as a modest inland city.

- 27 Euxenios, Philadelphian, a Novatian, attests in very abbreviated form, and indicates that he has subscribed with his own hand.
- 28 Diomedes, οἰκῶν ἐν κώμῃ Κακκαβα, follows a developed and more rhetorical version of the standard formula, confirming that whatever the formal procedure had been, it had not been that of inducing all the repentant heretics to subscribe an identical document. He too, having heard the *ekthesis*, signed with his own hand.
- 29 Ioulianos δις Φιλαδελφεύς again uses an abbreviated formula, and concludes by indicating that ‘having been satisfied’ (with the reading of the *ekthesis*) he has subscribed through the agency of a Reader in the church (*ἀρεσθείς ὑπέγραψα διὰ Μαρτυρίου ἀναγνώστου*).

The last three persons to subscribe identify themselves (as does no. 28) by their belonging to villages or settlements, all presumably in the territory of Philadelphia, and

introduce two new names of local ecclesiastical figures into the formula of renunciation, Iakobos, a *chōrepiskopos*, and the *presbyteros* and *oikonomos*, Charisios, himself. As indicated above, it is idle to speculate. But it is clear that Charisios' own role in the declarations of orthodoxy made to emissaries of Nestorius had not been solely that of a detached observer. One might wonder why he did not suppress these three testimonies, or at least fail to include them.

- 30 Εὐτύχιος χωρίου Αὐλακος, ἔξαρχος τῆς τῶν τεσσαρεσκαίδεκατιτῶν αἰρέσεως, ἐπιγνούς τὴν ἀληθῆ πίστιν τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας καὶ παρακάλεσας τὸν ἀγιώτατον ἐπίσκοπον Θεοφάνιον καὶ τὸν εὐλαβέστατον χωρεπίσκοπον Ἰάκωβον καὶ τὸν εὐλαβέστατον πρεσβύτερον καὶ οἰκονόμον Χαρίσιον. The normal formula follows, concluding with the attestation that he has subscribed with his own hand. The 'chōrion Aulax' may simply be a place-name, or may indicate an estate as an economic unit. 'Exarchos' has a variety of meanings, as set out in Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, but none of those listed comes very close to the apparent meaning here, that of a leader (lay or clerical?) of a local heretical group. The problems of defining the role of a *chōrepiskopos* in relation to that of the bishop of the relevant city are familiar, and this text, like the two which follow, does no more than indicate a rural perspective, and a hierarchy from bishop to *chōrepiskopos* to *presbyteros*.
- 31 Πατρῆκιος δευτερόπρεσβυς κόμης Παραδιοξύλου, χεῖρα χρησάμενος παρὰ Μαξίμου τοῦ συμπρεσβυτέρου διὰ τὸ ἐμὲ γράμματα μὴ εἶδέναι, also names Theophanios, Iakobos and Charisios, and, alone of all those who attest, fails to include any reference to his having subscribed. Here too we encounter further complications as regards the structure of office-holding in the Church. The term δευτερόπρεσβυς does not appear in Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, just as the terminology of minor offices in the Church, attested for instance in inscriptions or papyri, and especially in the mosaic inscriptions of churches in Syria,²⁴ makes very little appearance in standard works on the organisation of the Church.
- 32 Ζήνων Χωρίου Σαγαρίου Πυθᾶ, belonging to the *Tessareskaidekatitai*, also mentions Theophanios, the *chōrepiskopos* Iakobos and the *presbuteros* and *oikonomos* Charisios, and uses a standard but slightly expanded formula of renunciation. The formula relating to the fact that someone else subscribed for him is fuller than normal, and of some significance: τὴν δὲ χεῖρα ἔχρησα ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ Φλαύιος Παλλάδιος διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν παρόντα λέγειν γράμματα μὴ εἶδέναι – 'I Phlaurios Palladios have used my hand on his behalf, since he being present stated that he was illiterate'. As suggested above (p. 124), the indication that Zenon, being present, declared himself illiterate, implies that the attestations of renunciation of heresy took place in some formal public setting. Zenon comes from a village or estate (*chōrion*), which evidently belongs to someone called Sagarios son of Pythas (Feissel, *op.cit.* in n. 20, p. 108, n. 12).

VI. Identity, Status and Literacy

The nomenclature visible in the attestations (thirty-one individuals in all, either attesting, or subscribing for the persons concerned), or being alluded to, shows very great

²⁴ See P. Donceel-Voûte, *Les pavements des églises byzantines de Syrie et du Liban: décor, archéologie et liturgie* (1988), *passim*.

variability of form, with patronymics sometimes mentioned and sometimes not, some having two names, like Phlaurios Palladios, and some only one, and five names out of thirty-one in all being Latin ones in Greek transcription, with two 'Flavii' and two fathers with transliterated Latin names. From a modest provincial city this might be about what one would expect; the history of personal names would gain more from a study of the many hundreds of names of bishops and clergy which appear in *ACO*. The social level involved is probably modest. Only one city-councillor (*bouleutēs*) appears, Hesybios son of Kerdanepios, who subscribes in his own hand (13) and does so also on behalf of two others (12 and 19). In all six men declare themselves to be illiterate, including a *deuteropresbus* (31), and one admits to 'writing slowly' (19). On the face of it, even granted that we are confronted with a very small sample, composed, as we have seen (p. 123 above) on principles which are obscure, this is still very suggestive, implying that literacy, in the limited sense required, was normal, and was certainly not uncommon, in the city population. Even among the four men who come from rural settings, two (28 and 30) subscribe with their own hands, while two (31 and 32) need others to write for them.

As indicated above (p. 124), it remains obscure who composed the wording (which is not uniform) of the substance of the attestations, and who wrote out the copy in each case. What is absolutely clear at least is that — because there were witnesses or because the individuals might have difficulty in reading? — the text was read out aloud in each case before being subscribed. This is not, it should be said, made explicit in every instance, but it is in ten of them (12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23, 25, 26, 28). We cannot know to what degree, if at all, the variations in the text of the attestations subscribed reflected choices made by the individuals (or even, in the case of the fully literate, composition by the individual).

By the nature of the record, therefore, the literacy which is formally demonstrated is only that of having written, in each case, a single-sentence subscription, either explicitly 'in my hand' (13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 30) or without that indication, but with no reference to a third party (14, 23, 24). Even if we adopt a minimalist position, that nothing is proved beyond the ability to write a very short sentence, literacy in this modest sense can be seen to be not unusual at Philadelphia. This evidence tends quite clearly to suggest, though of course cannot prove, that pessimistic assumptions about levels of literacy in the cities of the Christianised Greek East need some reconsideration.

As Andrew Jacobs suggests to me, a major question also arises about the self-designations which the repentant heretics dutifully attach to themselves (or allow to be attached to themselves) in making their statements of renunciation. As is well-known, such evidence as we have on the identity, nomenclature and beliefs — and indeed the very existence — of the long lists of groups designated as heretical depends almost entirely on attributions by writers (or Emperors) who represented themselves as orthodox. It seems to be almost entirely a matter of speculation as to whether any of these groups used the relevant designation of themselves: the clearest case is perhaps the 'synagōgē of the Markiōnistai' known from a well-known inscription deriving from a village to the south of Damascus in the early fourth century.²⁵ The evidence from Philadelphia may genuinely reflect group self-designations in use before Nestorius' emissaries arrived: *Tessareskaidekatitai*, *Katharoi*, *Nauatianoī* — and of these *Katharoi*

²⁵ *OGIS*, no. 608.

is surely the most likely to have been a designation which was claimed as well as attributed. But a systematic doubt must remain as to whether these terms had not been put into their mouths by the briefly dominant representatives of 'orthodoxy'. They were not to know that two decades later at Ephesus II and Chalcedon 'Nestorianos' would be a derogatory term used to designate those who followed the doctrines of a supposed heretic.²⁶

VII. Conclusion

Whoever composed the third-person narrative, or summary, of this session of the Cyrillian side of the Council of Ephesus was presuming on decisions which had not yet been taken when he described the repentant heretics of Philadelphia as having 'fallen out of one pit into a worse pit' (p. 119 above). For it was still entirely unclear whether Theodosius would support the Cyrillian or the Nestorian side. None the less, the confidence shown was in the end to be justified, and from the autumn of 431 onwards the Emperor gave consistent support to the Cyrillian position, even if also advocating compromise and reconciliation. We happen to be able to follow subsequent events in detail as they unfolded in one area, the secular diocese of Oriens.²⁷ But there is no such information to illuminate for us what happened over the next few years to the former heretics in Philadelphia, who had responded to pressure from the briefly dominant centre, only to find that that centre was itself tainted by what the newly dominant forces in the Church regarded as heresy, and that the Bishop of Constantinople who had sent emissaries to induce in them correct belief had himself been deposed, and would later be exiled. Among the many vivid and intriguing 'local histories' which the *Acta* of the Councils reveal, this one would be particularly attractive to follow further, if only we could.

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²⁶ See e.g. *ACO* II.1.1, p. 93: ὁ λέγων δύο φύσεις Νεστοριανός ἐστίν. Cf. II.1.3, p. 9 [368]; p. 25 [384].

²⁷ The course of events in Oriens is vividly illuminated by the contemporary history, under the title *Tragoedia*, written by Nestorius' associate, and later fellow-exile, the *comes* Irenaeus, based throughout on priceless contemporary documents, and known to us only through the sixth-century Latin version in the *Synodicum* of Rusticus: see *ACO* I.4, nos. 80-294, pp. 25-225.