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# A Byzantine Logician's "Image" within the Second Iconoclastic Controversy. Theodore the Studite

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## Abstract

The paper is devoted to the reconstruction of the "iconophilistic" logic theory built by Theodore the Studite in his pro-icon writings during the "scholastic" period of the Second Iconoclasm Christological controversy. We argue that Theodore the Studite invented the non-Aristotelian identity distinction and implemented the two types of identity (the identity of nature and the identity of hypostasis) within his Christological argumentation, demonstrating how the contradictory properties of the two natures of Christ should be accepted consistently. The main issue of the present paper is to discuss the examples of non-classical logical thinking undertaken by Theodore the Studite, which are devoted to the description of how the identity principle should work, why the icon principle is self-referential, and why the duality of the properties of Christ should be accepted by all Christians in order to be iconophiles and logically correct at the same time.

## Keywords

Byzantine theology – history of logic – Theodore the Studite

## 1 Introduction

Referring to Dionysius, Theodore the Studite asserts that “the truth is in likeness”<sup>1</sup> (τὸ ἀληθές ἐν τῷ ὁμοίωματι), and since every artificial image implies likeness (πᾶσα τοῖνον τεχνητὴ εἰκὼν ὁμοίωσις ἐστίν), the prototype in some way is contained in the image<sup>2</sup> (τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι), and the worshiper of the icon worships the one who is truly depicted on it<sup>3</sup> (ὥστε ὁ προσκυνῶν τὴν εἰκόνα, προσεκύνησε τὸν ὄνπερ ἐμφαίνει ἢ εἰκὼν ἀσφαλῶς). At the very beginning, Theodore the Studite introduces the concept of “identity through likeness” (ταὐτὸν τῇ ὁμοίωσει), asserting that “in terms of likeness, an image is identical to a prototype”<sup>4</sup> (ταὐτὸν γὰρ ἢ εἰκὼν τῷ ἀρχετύπῳ τῇ ὁμοίωσει), and makes the first iconophilistic conclusion that “the honor of the image passes to the prototype”<sup>5</sup> (διότι ἢ τῆς εἰκόνας τιμὴ ἐπὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον διαβαίνει). After that, Theodore the Studite distinguishes between a natural image and a mimetic one: “one is a natural image, and the other is an image obtained through imitation”<sup>6</sup> (ἄλλο δὲ φυσικὴ εἰκὼν καὶ ἄλλο μιμητικὴ). As a consequence of this distinction, he introduces two types of differences which will later form the basis of the distinction between two types of identities. The Father differs from the Son by the type of difference, which is called by Theodore the Studite “difference of hypostasis”, and not by the “difference of nature”<sup>7</sup> (ἢ μὲν οὐ φυσικὴν διαφορὰν ἔχουσα ... ἀλλ’ ὑποστατικὴν, ὡς ὁ Υἱὸς πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα). The image differs from its prototype by another kind of difference, which is called by Theodore the Studite “natural difference, but not the difference of hypostasis, as the image of Christ in relation to Christ himself”<sup>8</sup> (ἢ δὲ τὸ ἀνάπαλιν, φυσικὴν διαφορὰν ἔχουσα, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὑποστατικὴν, ὡς ἢ εἰκὼν τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸν Χριστόν), for “on the one hand, there is the nature of the image, and on the other hand, there is the nature of Christ; while the hypostasis is the same, i.e. that of Christ, even if it was only inscribed on the icon”<sup>9</sup> (ἄλλη μὲν γὰρ φύσις ὑλογραφίας καὶ ἕτεραι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὐκ ἄλλη δὲ ὑπόστασις, ἀλλὰ μία καὶ ἢ αὐτὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ κἀν τῇ εἰκόνι γεγραμμένη). According to these two types of differences, Theodore the Studite introduces

1 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem archimandritam de cultu sacrarum imaginum*, PG 99, 500B.

2 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

3 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

4 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

5 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

6 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501B.

7 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501B.

8 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501B.

9 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501B.

two types of identities: the identity of nature (ταὐτὸν τῆς φύσεως) and the identity of hypostasis<sup>10</sup> (ταὐτὸν τῆς ὑποστάσεως). Thus, it is necessary to distinguish between different types of identities in order to identify the worship of the Father and the Son, as well as to identify the worship of Christ and his icon. Since "there are one nature and one worship as a result of the nature identity in both the Father and the Son"<sup>11</sup> (ἕγουν τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Πατρὸς, ἡνίκα μία φύσις, μία καὶ προσκύνησις κατὰ τὸ ταὐτὸν τῆς φύσεως, οὐ τῆς ὑποστάσεως), and there is one worship in Christ and in the image of Christ, due to the fact that both Christ and his image refer to a single person. So obviously, being referred to as the same hypostasis, they are identified by the identity of hypostasis, although the nature of Christ and the nature of images are different<sup>12</sup> (ἕγουν τῆς εἰκόνας Χριστοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡνίκα μία ὑπόστασις Χριστοῦ, μία καὶ ἐνταῦθα προσκύνησις ἐστὶ, κατὰ τὸ ταὐτὸν δῆλον ὅτι τῆς μιᾶς ὑποστάσεως, οὐ τὸ ἕτεροῖον τῶν φύσεων Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς εἰκόνας).

## 2 On Identity Difference

This non-Aristotelian distinction between two types of identities allows Theodore the Studite to describe the formula of Hellenic polytheistic idolatry in the following way: "If we say that it is one and the same to worship the image and the prototype by both types of identity, i.e. by the identity of nature and by the identity of hypostasis, and do not admit the nature difference of image and prototype, regarding them as identical both in terms of the identity of hypostasis (ταὐτότητα τῆς ὑποστάσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and in terms of natural identity. If so, we will accept the Hellenic polytheism, which deifies matter, i.e. the wood used for depicting the image of Christ<sup>13</sup> (πᾶσαν ὕλην εἰς Χριστοῦ εἰκόνα χαρακτηριζομένην θεοποιούντες). By the same distinction of identities, Theodore the Studite answers the accusation of idolatry, i.e. the main argument of iconoclasts to accuse iconophiles. He asserts that, on the contrary, the iconoclasts are idolatrous while admitting that there exists not only the single worship of Christ but the two types of worship, since the icon is not identical to Christ, thus, worshipping the material nature of the icon.<sup>14</sup> This idolatry is the consequence of the confusion of identities, which the iconophiles are free of due to

<sup>10</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501C.

<sup>11</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501C.

<sup>12</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501C.

<sup>13</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501D.

<sup>14</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501D–504A.

his identity distinction. According to Theodore the Studite, the iconoclastic mistake lies in the fact that the iconoclasts are trying to discern the image (ἡ εἰκὼν) and the prototype (τὸ ἀρχέτυπον) by both types of difference, introducing two types of worship (the worship of God and the worship of matter), which supports the accusation in idolatry.

The describability of Christ is a consequence of his human nature, therefore, according to Theodore the Studite, there is no logical contradiction in the assertion that He is described and the icon depicts Christ himself, and not a man in general. Since an image is a relative notion in the sense of the category of relation distinguished by Aristotle, attributing this category to it makes it an independent element of this binary relation “image of Christ/Christ” and ascribes to it, in addition to the relative value, a very strong ontological status of something related to Christ. The ontological equality of the icon and the prototype in their veneration is also established on the basis of a complex logical argument in favor of the identity of veneration as a consequence of the Christ/image identity.

Thus, two logical questions, which must be somehow resolved, are set by iconophiles:

- on the one hand, it is necessary to accept the difference of image and prototype (disassociate them in the sense of the identity of nature, since they exist as independent entities in terms of the category of substance),
- on the other hand, it is necessary to accept their relation as being the category of relation<sup>15</sup> and at the same time as being the identity relation in the sense of the identity of hypostasis instead of the identity of nature.

To solve this task, Theodore the Studite makes a logically “devious” but quite legitimate decision in terms of non-classical logics. Instead of distinguishing between an image and a prototype, he distinguishes between types of identities:

- then, he is not an idolater because he sees the difference between the icon and its divine prototype, according to the first type of identity,
- at the same time, he is an iconolater since the veneration of the icon is included in the single veneration of Christ, for the icon and Christ satisfy the second type of identity.

The logical structure of the reasoning of the iconophile or “iconophilistic polysyllogism” could be schematically expressed as follows:

<sup>15</sup> Ch. Erisman, “Venerating Likeness: Byzantine Iconophile Thinkers on Aristotelian Relatives and their Simultaneity,” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 24/3 (2016), pp. 405-425.

icon or image  $\neq$  prototype (by the identity of nature),  
 therefore,  
 venerating icon  $\neq$  venerating the material nature of the image  
 (i.e.  $\neq$  deification of the matter),  
 therefore,  
 icon veneration  $\neq$  idolatry,  
 either  
 icon or image = prototype (by the identity of hypostasis),  
 therefore,  
 venerating icon = venerating prototype,  
 therefore,  
 icon veneration = worship of God.

There is another version of the "iconophilistic syllogism,"<sup>16</sup> according to Theodore the Studite, which clarifies the difficulties that arise when identifying two types of veneration (icon worship and Christ worship), and which is built on the assumption that the icon and its prototype are not identical:

icon  $\neq$  Christ (by the identity of nature)  
 icon = Christ (by the identity of hypostasis)  
 therefore,  
 venerating icon = venerating Christ (by the identity of veneration as a  
 consequence of the identity of hypostasis)

Such a consequence seems to be modal in the modern sense of propositional modal logics. The iconoclastic mistake or the "iconoclastic paralogism" is described by Theodore the Studite as follows:

image  $\neq$  prototype,  
 therefore,  
 venerating icon  $\neq$  venerating prototype,  
 therefore,  
 idolatry  $\neq$  worship of God,  
 therefore,  
 icon veneration = idolatry,  
 therefore,

16 On the other types of "iconophilistic syllogism", see O.Yu. Goncharko, D.N. Goncharko, "A Byzantine Logician's 'Image' within the Second Iconoclastic Controversy. Nikephoros of Constantinople," *Scr*, 13 (2017), pp. 291–308.

icon veneration ≠ worship of God.

In order to respond to such an accusation of idolatry, Theodore the Studite again draws on arguments involving different types of identities, arguing that the likeness itself is sacred, and in venerating the image, one also honors the prototype. The reverse is also true, and to not do the same is idolatry. This argument is similar to the mirror argument. According to the logic of iconophiles, the very relation of likeness (τὸ ὁμοίωμα) is sacred.<sup>17</sup> Sometimes it seems that the very “homogeneity principle” is the object of worship by icon-worshippers.

### 3 On Incarnation Dogma

The other way to justify the necessity to distinguish the two types of identity in order to identify two types of veneration is held by the idea of incarnation: “Thus, it is obvious that the veneration of the icon of Christ is based on what the Holy Fathers taught. If the veneration of the icon is destroyed, at the same time the *oikonomia* of Christ is destroyed; and if worship is not given to the icon, the worship of Christ vanishes also”<sup>18</sup> (Οὕτω τοιγαροῦν, ὡς ἐμέ γοῦν εἰδέναι, τῇ τῶν ἀγίων πατέρων διδασκαλίᾳ ἐπερειδόμενον, ἢ τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ Χριστοῦ προσκύνησις· ἣς ἀναιρουμένης ἀνήρηται δυνάμει καὶ ἡ Χριστοῦ οἰκονομία, καὶ ἣς μὴ προσκυνουμένης ἀνήρηται ὡσαύτως καὶ ἡ Χριστοῦ προσκύνησις). The very idea of the incarnation is connected with the “consistent contradiction” and is paraconsistent by itself.<sup>19</sup> Incompatible properties are combined into one real God-human personality of Christ. That is, properties of the divine nature and properties of the human nature are not only just logically independent different properties but directly contradictory pairs of properties: immortal/mortal, infinite/finite, perfect/imperfect, etc. In this respect, the idea of the image-prototype identity is a softer version of the incarnation dogma: the icon veneration is true, if and only if the image reflects the prototype regarding likeness. In other words, if the icon depicts the image of Christ, then in this sense, Christ himself is visibly present.

17 For more details, see Ch. Erismann, “Venerating Likeness: Byzantine Iconophile Thinkers on Aristotelian Relatives and their Simultaneity,” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 24/3 (2016), pp. 405-425; Ch. Erismann, “Theodore the Studite and Photius on the Humanity of Christ: A Neglected Byzantine Discussion on Universals in the Time of Iconoclasm,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 71 (2017), pp. 175-191.

18 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 505A.

19 For more details, see B. Lourié, “Theodore the Studite’s Christology against Its Logical Background,” *Studia Humana*, 8 (2019), pp. 99-113.

One of the key iconoclastic accusations is the accusation of the deification of something undivine. To this accusation Theodore the Studite responds as follows: "For those Hellenes before the incarnation believed that God can be imagined, although He was indescribable, the others (iconoclasts) after the incarnation obstinately insist that He cannot be described, although now He is describable by body"<sup>20</sup> (Οἱ μὲν γὰρ πρὸ σαρκώσεως θεὸν ἔδοξαν περιγράφειν ὄντα ἀπερίγραπτον· οἱ δὲ μετὰ σάρκωσιν φιλονεικοῦσι μὴ περιγράφειν περιγραπτὸν ὄντα σώματι). Theodore the Studite denotes two opposite but equally logically erroneous extreme strategies (pagan and iconoclastic): the depiction of the inconceivable (for the not-yet-incarnated) by ancient Hellenes and the non-depiction of the depictable (since the already-incarnated) by the iconoclasts. According to Theodore the Studite, the iconoclasts are Hellenes reversed, and only iconophiles chose the only logically correct strategy, for satisfying the laws of identity and contradiction, i.e. the depicting of the depictable and accepting the identity of the image and prototype. It should also be noted that the teachings of the iconophiles on the relationship between the image and what is depicted is somewhat reminiscent of the modern semiotic studies of the relationship between the signifier and the signified. It could be argued that the Second Iconoclastic Controversy could be regarded as a medieval prototype of this theory. It could be a separate interesting study to interpret the works of iconophiles in this respect.

Theodore the Studite believes that his argument is a logical proof based on a comparison: "We are going to prove what we are looking for by using a comparison"<sup>21</sup> (θεῖξομεν ἐκ παραλλήλου τὸ ζητούμενον). The main axiom of the iconophile is the hypostasis identity axiom, without the assumption of which, all the iconophilistic logic collapses: "And everywhere in Christ, there exist His image by nature. For, where the prototype exists, there, obviously, the image relating to it is also present. For the prototype and the image are presented in each other and are connected to each other"<sup>22</sup> (καὶ πανταχοῦ ἡ εἰκὼν ἐν Χριστῷ φυσικῶς πάρεστιν. Ὅπου γὰρ τὸ πρωτότυπον, ἐκεῖ κατὰ σχέσιν δηλονότι καὶ τὸ παράγωγον. Πρὸς τι γὰρ ταῦτα, καὶ ἀλλήλοις συνεισφερόμενα). For "the image and its prototype are the same with respect to the likeness"<sup>23</sup> (τύπος γὰρ καὶ εἰκὼν ταῦτόν εἰς ἐμφέρειαν).

20 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos capita septem*, PG 99, 489B.

21 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 489CD.

22 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 492CD.

23 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 493D.

#### 4 On Icon Autology

Theodore the Studite involves various logical themes and techniques to construct his theory and his arguments as well as to refute those of his opponents. The concept of self-reference applied to describe how the icon principle should work is also relevant in some respect to this discussion on the difference of identity. It also should be noted that the idea of incarnation and the idea of the identity of hypostasis are structurally similar to each other being at the same time the different expressions of the same idea of the identity of what is not identical. God's incarnation is the incorporation of the divine nature into a human being, i.e. something infinite and unimaginable into the finite image of Christ. This makes Christ himself be the idea of the icon *per se*, and therefore his icon to be the icon of the icon, transforming it into an autological concept, able to be applied to itself. So, the icon describing Christ describes itself as a principle of incarnation. That is why venerating Christ is equal to venerating icon.

It is interesting that in the context of the conversation on the *oikonomia* of incarnation idea, Theodore the Studite tries to refute the logical iconoclastic accusation in idolatry based on the following identity:

to worship icon = to deify icon<sup>24</sup>.

First, Theodore the Studite introduces definitions showing that the concepts used by iconoclasts (for example, the concept of «deifying») are logically contradictory: “If we speak on the basis of the word composition, to deify someone means to consider someone who is not God to be God”<sup>25</sup> (Θεοποιεῖν ἔστιν, ἵνα ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς τοῦ ῥήματος συνθέσεως εἴπωμεν, τὸ, ὅπερ οὐ Θεός, ὡς Θεὸν κείσθαι τε καὶ λατρεύεσθαι ὑπὸ τινος). Further, he shows the meaning of the word “deify” and the context of its common usage as applied to the creatures or something created:

to deify icon =<sub>df</sub> to consider something depicted, which is not God, to be God.<sup>26</sup>

After that, he concludes that there is no need to deify Christ, who is already divine by nature, and not created like other creatures. Due to this fact, it is not

<sup>24</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 485C.

<sup>25</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 485C.

<sup>26</sup> Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 488B.



correct to use the word "deification" regarding icon: "Therefore, it does not mean that those, who worship the image of Christ and inscribe his image, deify the icons... For we do not say that we have God created but say we have God incarnate"<sup>27</sup> (οὐ θεοποιεῖσθαι ἐστὶν εἰκόνας, τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ Χριστοῦ γράφουσι καὶ προσκυνοῦσιν... οὐ γὰρ θεὸν ποιητὸν ἔχειν λέγομεν, ἀλλὰ θεὸν σαρκωθέντα). Thus, the icon is the embodiment of the prototype and not the creation of the prototype. Christ being incarnated could be regarded as Creator's icon, while the icon of Christ is a second-order concept, i.e. the icon of the icon. In other words, the icon principle is established by God's incarnation and is the consequence of the incarnation principle. On the other hand, Christ being embodied is automatically described. In other words, the property of describability is a logical consequence of the property of being incarnated.

It is also interesting that the "likeness (ἐμφερεία) argument" plays an important role in the justification of icon-worship: "An artificially created image of Christ could be called [icon], only if it bears the properties of a bodily appearance or image and other external signs"<sup>28</sup> (ἡ δὲ τοῦ ἐνσωμάτου εἴδους ἦτοι μορφῆς φέρουσα τὰ ιδιώματα, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τῶν ἕξω γνώριμα, μόνῃ τεχνητῇ εἰκῶν Χριστοῦ καὶ ἔστι καὶ λέγεται). Since the likeness implies the similarity of image and prototype, the category of visibility is a decisive one, while establishing the very possibility of likeness, which is something ontologically independent both of the image and the prototype: "Images of prototypes printed on the artworked [surface], do not participate in the nature of prototypes but they show, as in a mirror, the likeness, which is set somewhere between the prototypes and their imprints"<sup>29</sup> (ἀμέτοχα γὰρ τῆς φύσεως εἶεν ἂν τὰ ἐκμαγεῖα τῶν ἀρχετύπων ἐν τοῖς τεχνητοῖς μόνῃ ἐπιδεικνύμενα ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ τὴν ἐμφερείαν τῶν ὠνέπερ εἰσὶν ἀπομόργματα). In this sense, the image itself is independent of its natural prototype, divine or created. Due to its similarity to the prototype, the image acquires both a new ontological and logical status not only to concern the appearance of something but also to provide the second type of identity (identity of hypostasis). In the light of the concept of likeness, Theodore the Studite actually defines a new type of identity invented by him: "As proclaimed by Basil the Great, the similarity of the image and the prototype is not the similarity of two hypostases, but one. Despite the difference of nature, the prototype and the image are one and the same"<sup>30</sup> (μὴ δυοῦποστάτου οὐσης εἰκόνοσ καὶ τοῦ πρω-

27 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 488D.

28 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 496B.

29 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 488D–489A.

30 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 489A.

τοτύπου ἐμφερείας, ἀλλὰ μονοῦποστάτου. Παρὰ γὰρ τὸ διάφορον τῆς οὐσίας, ἐν καὶ ταῦτὸν τὸ ἀρχέτυπον καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν).

In this passage, it is interesting that the identity of hypostasis here is defined by the relation of image and prototype. This, in a certain sense, is a circular definition because the identity of hypostasis in its difference from the identity of nature implies the likeness as a relation of image and prototype. However, despite this circular definition, an interesting question is why, in creating the principle of identification based on likeness, iconophiles interpret likeness properties as logical ones. Being the worshipers of the autological icon principle, which establishes itself in a self-referential manner, iconophiles are the worshipers of logical argumentation more than the theological necessity to worship icons. It seems that the most terrible accusation during the Second Iconoclasm was not the accusation of idolatry but the accusation of logical inconsistency.

The autological icon principle is discussed by other iconophiles of the Second Iconoclastic Controversy. For example, one can find some relevant passages in the treatises by patriarch Nikephoros of Constantinople, who also argues that Christ is an icon himself: “So, if the words of the holy fathers are true, and they are definitely true, because everything has been fulfilled at the appropriate time, then they will not be abolished and will not lose their power because they have support and confirmation in the Gospel. The Lord came to fulfill the law and the prophets, and announced that nothing of them would disappear until everything would have been fulfilled (Mt. 5.17), performing more of a self-creator (αὐτουργός) than a teacher in this performance”<sup>31</sup> (Εἰ οὖν ἀληθεῖς οἱ τῶν ἁγίων λόγοι, ὡσπερ οὖν εἰσιν ἀληθεῖς, καιροῖς τοῖς καθήκουσι τὸ οἰκεῖον ἕκαστοι πέρας δεξάμενοι, οὐ διαπεσοῦνται οὔτε διαβρῦσονται, τὸ ἀσφαλές καὶ ἀδιάπτωτον παρὰ τῶν εὐαγγελικῶν φωνῶν προσκτησάμενοι, ἦκε γὰρ πληρώσω νόμον καὶ προφήτας ὁ Κύριος, ὧν μηδὲν παρελεύσεσθαι ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται ἐκήρυσσεν, αὐτουργός μᾶλλον ἢ διδάσκαλος πρὸς τὴν τούτων τελείωσιν ἐκφαινόμενος). Being such a self-creator (αὐτουργός), Christ is his icon himself, i.e. the icon of the icons (εἰκόνων εἰκὼν). The icon principle is autological, and if not, then the icon will not differ from the idol. The iconoclasts are idolaters, according to Nikephoros, because they understand the Gospel too literally, considering an image according to the Aristotelian identity principle, which guarantees consistency and non-paradoxical thinking. Including the paradoxical, by virtue of self-reference, element in theology and interpreting Christ as the icon of the icons, the iconophiles adhere to a different logic based on self-referential

31 Nicephorus CP. Patriarcha, *Apologeticus duplex pro sacris imaginibus*, PG 100, 684CD.

notions with all the paradoxical consequences implied by it, i.e. "the image of Christ is equal and unequal to Christ", "the two natures of Christ are separated and inseparable at the same time," etc.<sup>32</sup>

## 5 On Nature Properties

In addition to purely theological questions, Theodore the Studite frequently makes meta-theoretical statements on how the logic should work in general, or how we use the concepts, or what are the logical properties of propositions, conclusions and notions: "This objection is given due to the ignorance of the meaning of homonymous expressions (τῶν ὁμωνύμων), or due to the unwillingness to understand the correct reasoning. For the word "being worshiped" (σεπτόν) is a homonym, i.e. an expression meaning simultaneously different things, which could be regarded according to the different meanings. And neither of them is false, due to the meaning change of the word in both cases. In the same way, and in relation to what is worshiped, the same expression is used in a dual meaning: in some cases in relation to the indescribable, in other cases in relation to the described"<sup>33</sup> (Παρά τὸ μὴν εἰδέναι τὴν τῶν ὁμωνύμων δύναμιν, ἡγουν παρά τὸ μὴ βουληθῆναι συνιέναι τοῦ ἀγαθύναι, ἢ πρότασις αὕτη. Τὸ γὰρ τοι σεπτόν, ὁμώνυμος φωνὴ ἐστὶν εἰς διάφορα σημαίνόμενα θεωρουμένη· καὶ οὐδέτερον ψεῦδος, διὰ τὴν ἐν ἀμφοτέροις μετάληψιν. Οὕτω τοίνυν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ σεπτοῦ ὁμώνυμος ἢ φωνὴ διχῶς νοουμένη, πῆ μὲν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀπεριγράπτου, πῆ δὲ ἐπὶ περιγεγραμμένου).

Here is another example of his meta-theoretical remarks: "For one is the doctrine of theology, and the other is the doctrine of *oikonomia*, in which it is not possible to represent one and the same definitions. Divine Cyril indifferently uses the word "hypostasis": sometimes he accepts the meaning of nature sometimes the meaning of hypostasis because the word has a dual meaning"<sup>34</sup> (Οὐ μὴν περὶ οἰκονομίας προὔκειτο λέγειν. Ἄλλος γὰρ λόγος Θεολογίας, καὶ ἕτερος οἰκονομίας, ἐν οἷς οὐ τὰ ταῦτα ἔστι δογματίζειν. Ἀμέλει καὶ ὁ θεῖος Κύριλλος τὴν ὑπόστασιν, πῆ μὲν ἀντὶ τῆς φύσεως, πῆ δὲ ἀντὶ τῆς ὑποστάσεως λαμβάνει, κατὰ τὸ δὶλῆμματον εἶναι τὴν φωνήν).

Essential attention is paid by Theodore the Studite to the interpretation of Aristotelian logic in the light of its "correct" understanding: "If you confess

32 On autology in Byzantine theology, see O.Yu. Goncharko, Yu.M. Romanenko, "A Brief History of Self-Reference Notion Implementation in Byzantium: Did the Byzantine Theologians and Scholars Formulate the Russell's Paradox?", *Scrinium*, 12 (2016), pp. 244–260.

33 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 496D.

34 Theodorus Studita, *Adversus Iconomachos*, PG 99, 496D–497A.

Christ in the divine nature and the human one, and do not hesitate about it, what prevents you from saying that He is describable in one sense and indescribable in the other, being knowledgeable in each property of two different natures?"<sup>35</sup> (Εἰ ἐν θεότητι καὶ ἀνθρωπότητι ὁ Χριστὸς ὑμῖν ὡμολόγηται, καὶ οὐ σκάζετε περὶ τούτου τί προσίστασθε λέγειν, αὐτὸν τῇ μὲν περιγράφεσθαι, τῇ δὲ μὴ περιγράφεσθαι; ἑκατέρας φύσεως τῇ ἰδιότητι γνωρίζομενον). In other words, according to Theodore the Studite, it is not Aristotle who prohibits the iconoclasts from worshipping icons, but their misunderstanding of him. For the Aristotelian contradiction principle prohibits contradictory properties to be applied to a single thing in one and the same respect. That is why iconophiles introducing different relations, according to the identity of nature and the identity of hypostasis, make it possible to avoid contradiction in the incompatible properties of Christ. In different respects, Christ is describable and indescribable, finite and infinite, complex and simple, mortal and immortal, all at the same time: "According to the divine nature, He is not a subject to be described, and He is not a subject to be visible and perceived. According to human nature, He is a man, who could be described, visible and defined"<sup>36</sup> (ἦ μὲν Θεὸς ἐστὶ, περιγραφῆς ὑπεραλλόμενον, ὥσπερ θεὰς καὶ καταλήψεως; ἦ δὲ ἀνθρώπος ἐστὶ, περιγραφῆ ὑποπίπτοντα, ὥσπερ θεὰ καὶ ποιότητι). Since different relations are taken, the Aristotelian contradiction principle is not violated, in spite of the fact that the properties of indescribability and descriptiveness contradict each other. Due to the fact that Theodore the Studite distinguished the two types of identities, he could assert the simultaneous presence of contradictory properties in Jesus Christ: "Therefore, neither descriptivity is indescribability, nor indescribability is descriptivity. For, by the natural opposition, one is separated from the other as much as possible"<sup>37</sup> (Τοίνυν οὔτε ἡ περιγραφὴ ἀγραφία· οὔτε ἡ ἀγραφία περιγραφή. Διείργεται γὰρ τοῦδε τόδε ἐναντιότητι φυσικῇ ὅτι μάλιστα). At the same time, Theodore the Studite is fully aware that, going against Aristotle, he must still satisfy the Aristotelian rules, which he constantly repeats to himself: "Affirmations are opposed to negations, and they are neither thought nor called the same, and being described is an affirmation, and being indescribable is negation"<sup>38</sup> (αἱ καταφάσεις ταῖς ἀποφάσει ἡναντίωνται, καὶ οὐ ταῦτὸν ἀμφοτέραι, οὔτε νενόηται, οὔτε ὀνομάζονται· κατάφασις δὲ τὸ περιγράφεσθαι· ἀπόφασις δὲ τὸ μὴ περιγράφεσθαι). It is tempting to think that, according to

35 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones Iconomachis propositae*, PG 99, 481AB.

36 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 481B.

37 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 481C.

38 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 481D.

Theodore the Studite, Jesus is a paraconsistent object,<sup>39</sup> but it seems that He nevertheless is consistent, according to Theodore the Studite, if we only indicate one of the two distinguished natures: "Christ consists of two natures, Divine and human"<sup>40</sup> (ὁ Χριστὸς ... ἔχει τὰ ἰδιώματα τῶν φύσεων), "These properties include opposites to each other but are not mixed"<sup>41</sup> (ἐξ ὧν καὶ ἔνεστιν ἀντιδιαστελλόμενα πρὸς ἄλληλα, καὶ οὐκ εἰς ἓν κεκραμένα). The duality of properties is only a consequence of the duality of natures, that is why the duality of properties is no longer a contradiction, according to Theodore the Studite: "According to the duality of natures, the properties are also dual, among which descriptiveness, as well as indescribability, are conceived"<sup>42</sup> (ἀκολούθως τῇ διπλῇ τῶν οὐσιῶν διττά καὶ αὐτὰ ὑπάρχοντα· ἀφ' ὧν καὶ νενόηται καὶ ὠνόμασται περιγραπτὸς τε καὶ ἀπερίγραπτος).

The main issue of this argumentation is, therefore, the issue of the duality of natures but not the question of the duality of properties. The duality of natures is really a very sophisticated logical puzzle, to which Theodore the Studite cannot give a definite answer. For nature is a consequence of being referred to as a certain species and genus. However, in the case of Christ, we have an individual, who belongs to the two incompatible genera, i.e. god and man. That is why it is a very remarkable attempt undertaken by Theodore the Studite to explain in terms of the general concept of duality (τὸ δυϊκόν) the concrete duality of the natures in Christ. It resembles the wave–particle duality in quantum mechanics, for contradictory properties do not absorb each other, but complement in some way: "The mixture of indescribable and describable does not result in the indescribable alone, just as the mixture of the divine and the human natures does not result in God alone. For natures, although connected in one incarnated hypostasis, did not come to change from one to another and, of course, did not change their own names, but even after being united, they retain a dualism both in reality and in their names"<sup>43</sup> (Ἐξ ἀπεριγράπτου καὶ περιγραπτοῦ, οὐκ ἀπερίγραπτον μόνον, ὧ οὗτοι· ὡς οὐδὲ ἐκ θεότητος καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος Θεὸς μόνος. Εἰ γὰρ αἱ φύσεις αἱ ἐνωθεῖσαι καθ' ὑπόστασιν, τὴν εἰς ἀλλήλας μεταβολὴν οὐ προσήκαντο· οὔτε μὴν τὰς οικείας προσηγορίας ἡμίψαντο· σώζουσι δὲ τὸ δυϊκόν καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἐνωσιν ἐν μοναδικῷ προσώπῳ, καὶ τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν).

39 For more details, see B. Lourié, "Theodore the Studite and "Hypostasis" as a Paraconsistent Notion," forthcoming.

40 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 481D.

41 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 481D.

42 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 481D.

43 Theodorus Studita, *Quaestiones*, PG 99, 484A.

## 6 Conclusions

The ‘iconophilistic’ truth condition seems to be as follows: “the truth is in likeness”<sup>44</sup> (τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐν τῷ ὁμοιώματι), and it was applied to find out the truth status of icon veneration: “everyone who worships icon worships the one whom the icon truly represents”<sup>45</sup> (ὥστε ὁ προσκυνῶν τὴν εἰκόνα, προσεκύνησε τὸν ὄνπερ ἐμφαίνει ἢ εἰκὼν ἀσφαλῶς). For “regarding the likeness, an image is identical to the prototype”<sup>46</sup> (ταὐτὸν γὰρ ἢ εἰκὼν τῷ ἀρχετύπῳ τῇ ὁμοιώσει). Saint Basil’s example of the denotation of such a type is relevant to this truth condition: “the image of the emperor is called the emperor, however not two emperors”<sup>47</sup> (βασιλεὺς λέγεται καὶ ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως εἰκὼν καὶ οὐ δύο βασιεῖς). So the “name” or “image” coincides with its denotation. Such interesting non-classical grounds to form logic in the ninth century resemble how the modern non-classical logics were built in the twentieth century: “From a modern point of view, we would prefer to call ‘logic’ anything where there are some procedures of inference, regardless of their particular rules. If the inference is convincing for – or, at least, understandable to, – at least, somebody, we can reasonably conclude that the rules of this inference exist. In our modern sense, they also form a logic”.<sup>48</sup> Such a paraconsistent tradition of thinking lived and developed until the end of the Byzantine era, and was resurrected as the Russian logical and theological tradition which evolved within the partly Neoplatonic (i.e. para-Aristotelian) logical thought and theology.<sup>49</sup> Being non-classical

44 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 500B.

45 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

46 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

47 Theodorus Studita, *Epistola ad Platonem*, PG 99, 501A.

48 B. Lourié, “Theodore the Studite and “Hypostasis” as a Paraconsistent Notion,” forthcoming.

49 On the following examples of Russian logical and Neoplatonic writings with obviously Byzantine origins, see: М. Семеновский, *Братья Лихуды* [M. Sementsovsky, *Brothers Leichoudes*], St. Petersburg, 1899]; Л.Г. Тоноян, “‘Логика’ Макария Пётровича: особенности логического текста” [L.G. Tonoyan, “‘Logic’ of Makariy Petrovich: Features of the Logical Text,”] in: *Философский текст в современной текстовой культуре*, ed. O.V. Zarapin, 2018, pp. 185–188. М.В. Семиколенных, О.Ю. Гончарко, “Специфика преподавания риторики в Горном кадетском корпусе XVIII века: хрия как риторический прием в ‘Опыте риторики’ И.С.Рижского, [Teaching Rhetorics in the Eighteenth century Russia: Chreia as a Rhetorical Tool in ‘Rhetoric Practice’ of I.S. Rizhsky],” *Современные образовательные технологии в подготовке специалистов для минерально-сырьевого комплекса*, 2 (2018), pp. 155–161; Д. Шукина, Н. Егоренкова, “‘Риторическая практика’ И.С. Рижского (1796) в Горном университете: история и современность” [D. Shchukina, N. Egorenkova, “‘Rhetoric practice’ by I.S. Rizhsky (1796) at the Mining University: History and Contemporaneity],” *Journal of Mining Institute*, 225 (2017), pp. 376–384; И.И. Чернаткин, Л.Г. Тоноян, “Платоновские идеи в работе

in its main presuppositions and premises, it determined the ways the Eastern Christian logic and theology developed independently, based on the Greek Medieval logical tradition.

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