A TRANSLATION & ANALYSIS
OF
'ABD AL-JABBĀR'S CRITIQUE
OF
TRINITARIAN AND CHRISTOLOGICAL
DOCTRINES
BY
ABDUL RASHID

Ph.D. Thesis
Presented in the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
Faculty of Art,
University of Edinburgh

September 1986
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transliteration, Textual Notes and Abbreviations.</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part one</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part two</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter I</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter II</strong></td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim and Christian views of Ul Meaning of Jawhar and Aqanim.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter III</strong></td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sifat in Islamic and Christian Theology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter IV</strong></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Comparative Analysis of 'Abd al-Jabbar 'Critique of Trinitarian Doctrines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter V</strong></td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theology of Incarnation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter VI</strong></td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Comparative Analysis of 'Abd al-Jabbar 'Critique of Christological Doctrines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Studies on 'Abd al-Jabbar and his work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bibliography</strong></td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DECLARATION

I declare that the following thesis is the result of my own research work and was composed entirely by myself.

A. RASHID
Abstract

The study is based on 'Abd al-Jabbār's understanding of Christian doctrine of God with special reference to his al-Mughnī, Vol. V.

It starts with an introduction containing a biographical account of 'Abd al-Jabbār and his works, a survey of Christian sects mentioned by 'Abd al-Jabbār in his al-Mughnī and Muslim Christian literature before 'Abd al-Jabbār which is available.


Part II is concerned with an exposition of 'Abd al-Jabbār's treatment of Trinitarian and Christological doctrine.

Chapter I presents a commentary on the Christian doctrine described by 'Abd al-Jabbār together with evidence about them from Christian and Muslim sources.

Chapter II is devoted to Muslim-Christian views about the meaning of two terms jawhar (substance) and aqānim (hypostasis) when describing the essence of God.

In Chapter III, there is a comparative study of sifāt (attributes of God) in the light of Christian and Muslim theology and how the use of the term sifāt affected the whole debate.

Chapter IV discusses and analyses 'Abd al-Jabbār's criticism of Trinitarian doctrines and his approach toward them in the light of Christian literature written in Arabic and Muslim sources.

Chapter V provides a description and explanation of union of incarnation as it was presented by early Church Fathers, the nature of that union and Christian heresies in the eastern church, such as Nestorians and Jacobites and finally an expression presented by Christian scholars who lived within a Muslim environment.

Chapter VI discusses 'Abd al-Jabbār's Critique of Christological Doctrine and their analysis in the light of Christian literature in Arabic and other Muslim sources.

The thesis finishes with a conclusion, summarising the result of the study.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. I.K.A. Howard, who first introduced me to 'Abd al-Jabbār and devoted his precious time generously. His knowledge and keen interest in this work make this thesis possible. I am also grateful to all members of teaching staff of this department for their guidance and assistance. My thanks also to Dr. M.F. al-Shayyāl who helped me to provide some books from Egypt.

I am also grateful to the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan for granting me a scholarship for higher education abroad.

I am indebted to Mr. Murād 'Ali Khan Niẓāmānī, former education attaché, embassy of Pakistan in London and Mr. Syed M. Salim, education officer in the embassy for their assistance in continuing this research.

I would also extend my thanks to Islamia University Bahouralpur authorities for providing facilities to pursue my studies.

I also owe great debt to all my friends here in UK and in Pakistan for their best wishes and moral support, especially Dr. Qibla Ayāz (Peshawar) who was kind enough to help me in settling down in Edinburgh.

My thanks are also due to all staff of University library in general and inter library loan section in particular. I owe a special debt to the departmental secretary Miss I. Crawford.

I am also grateful to Mr. Akhtar 'Ali who made arrangements of typing the thesis and Mrs. J. Porteous for typing the manuscript.

Finally, I must thank my wife and children who stayed with me for a long time who is waiting patiently back home.
Transliteration


Textual Notes

All Biblical quotations are from the revised standard version of the Bible, London 1952.

All Qur'anic quotations are from Egyptian standard version, and translation from, "The Koran interpreted" by A. J. Arberry (OUP) 1964.

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.I(S)</td>
<td>Supplement of Encyclopedia of Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.R.E</td>
<td>Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.D.C.T</td>
<td>A New Dictionary of Christian Theology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.W</td>
<td>Muslim World.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how 'Abd al-Jabbār was able to understand Trinitarian and Christological doctrines and to determine his general structure and methodology and his intellectual approach towards the refutation of a non-Islamic religion. It is a comparative study through the reference of Christian scholars, especially writing in Arabic to present their Christian doctrine. This means that an attempt is made to understand 'Abd al-Jabbār's section on Christianity, within framework of the general apologetic and polemical literature which was produced by both Christians and Muslims up to the time of 'Abd al-Jabbār, i.e., eleventh century and even later up to thirteenth century. This thesis will also be concerned with a comparison of his understanding of the Christian doctrine with the doctrine as generally presented by Christian scholars.

After this introduction which will also discuss 'Abd al-Jabbār's life and work and a summary of Christian doctrines and sects, and earlier Muslim-Christian discussions which 'Abd al-Jabbār dealt with, there will be an annotated translation of the section on Christianity in al-Mughni fi Abwāb al-'Adl wa al-Tawḥīd, vol. V which is devoted for non Islamic faiths.

Background of 'Abd al-Jabbār

Brief summary of his life


The Mu'tazilite usually refer to him as Qādī. As regards the details of al-Hamadān, most writers consider it as the region where 'Abd al-Jabbār was probably born. But Muṣṭafā al-Ṣādiq in the introduction to part XIV of al-Mughni, traces this name back to Hamdān, a Yemenī tribe.

Some of the biographers have added the title (lagab) al-Asad Ābādi⁴ to his name; this may be his birth place, but there are a number of variations.⁵

His biographers are not sure about his date of birth. The year of his death is given as 414, 415 and 416⁶/1023-5. It is stated that he had lived a long life of about ninety years, so one can conclude that his birth goes back to between 320 and 330/932-941.

After elementary studies in his home town, he went to Irāq, where he continued his theological studies first in Baṣra and later in Baghdad. He also visited Qazwīn to join the circles of famous traditionists there.⁷ In about 340/951, he went to Hamadān and Iṣfahān, where he became a follower of the theological school of the Ashʿarites and Shafīʿite in jurisprudence.⁸

Later he went to Baṣra, where he became influenced by the teaching of the Muʿtazilites and decided to join the Muʿtazilite circle.⁹ For a while he studied with famous Muʿtazilite scholar, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. ʿAyyāsh (d. 85⁶), the pupil and successor of Baṣrīan master Abū Ḥāshim al-Jubbālī (d. 320/932). Afterward he went to Baḥdād where he became a disciple of Abū ʿAbd-Allah al-Baṣrī (d. 369/969), another Abū Ḥāshim’s pupils and even stayed with him in his house.¹⁰ According to Ibn Murtadā, when asked his master Abū ʿAbd-Allah to teach him something about Ḥanafī law, his teacher suggested that he must stay as Shafīʿ and he himself as Ḥanafī.¹¹ In about 360/970 he left Baghdad to stay in Rāmhurmuz, a small town in southern Persia, where there seemed to be many Muʿtazilites. There he started to dictate his famous book of twenty volumes, i.e. al-Mughnī.

In the meantime (about 362/972-3) the Chief Minister of Buwayhid ruler, Şāhib b. ʿAbbād, (d.385/990) invited him to come to Rayy and gave him the opportunity of teaching Muʿtazilite theology and religious law. Şāhib b. ʿAbbād himself was a learned man and influenced by ʿAbd al-Jabbār’s ability and talent.

---

5. A. K. ʿUthmān, Qādi al-Qudāt, P.11.
7. A. K. ʿUthmān, Qādi al-Qudāt, PP.55-57.
10. Ibn Murtadā, Tabaqāt, P.112.
11. Ibid., P.111.
In about 365/975 Sāhib b. ‘Abbād appointed him to the office of Qādi al-Qudāt for Rayy. The holder of this post was chief of all judges in Rayy, Qazwin, Zanjān and Jurjān and Tabaristan.

It seems that ‘Abd al-Jabbār held the post of Qādi al-Qudāt until the death of Sāhib b. ‘Abbād. In 385/990, ‘Abd al-Jabbār was asked to leave the post by anti-Mu’tazilite authorities who come to power. He spent the rest of his life concentrating on studies and teaching until his death in Rayy in 414, 415 or 416/1023-25.12

During ‘Abd al-Jabbār’s lifetime, the central and eastern parts of Islamic world were theoretically under ’Abbasid rule, while in fact the Buwayhid regime was controlled large areas of the Islamic state.

No doubt the period in which ‘Abd al-Jabbār lived can be characterised by outstanding scientific, scholarly and literary achievements. The encyclopedic epistles of Ikhwān al-Ṣafā were written in tenth century as Ibn Nadīm arranged his bibliography of the knowledge in Baghdad about 988 AD. It was the time of famous essayist Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawhīdī (d. 1023), the historian philosopher Miskawayh (d. 1030), the scientist Ibn al-Haytham (d. 1035) and al-Bīrūnī (d. 1050). Along with that we see in this period Abū Ishāq al-Isfārā’īnī (d.1027) as head of Ashʿarite school and Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 1022) as head of Shiʿites. There was also political writings of al-Māwardī (d. 1058) theological work of al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013) and Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 1037).

‘Abd al-Jabbār himself was famous throughout the Islamic state as the leader of the Muʿtazilites in his lifetime, and has been credited by his amazing and original productivity.

Watt expressed his view about him and said, "Even in the period of the decline of the Muʿtazilites there were still some first class mind among them notably the Qādi ‘Abd al-Jabbār."13

During his lifetime ‘Abd al-Jabbār composed numerous writings. He was very active intellectually, and his work virtually covered most of the different kinds

of Islamic sciences. Ibn Murtadā records al-Ḥākim as saying that he had heard that the work composed by ʿAbd al-Jabbār came to a total of 400,000 sheets of paper.\(^{14}\) A. K. ʿUthmān has described the list of his works to be sixty nine.\(^{15}\)

The list of his works reflects the fact that ʿAbd al-Jabbār was very well known during his lifetime through the Islamic world. His works contained answers to many questions which were sent from many places in Persia, Iraq and even Egypt.\(^{16}\)

Of the numerous books mentioned by al-Ḥākim, twelve are directly concerned with the subject of speculative theology (kalām), among them the famous work of al-Mughnī, al-Muḥīf and Sharḥ al-Ūsūl al-Khamsa are remarkable. He also wrote many books in which he argued against other sects like the refutation of al-Lumʿ, and the refutation of Imāma.\(^{17}\)

In his famous and important work, al-Mughnī fī Abwāb al-Tawḥīd wa al-ʿAdl, ʿAbd al-Jabbār has presented the doctrine of the Muʿtazilites in great detail. When it was first discovered and published, it created an enthusiasm among the Islamists of this century. The importance of the work does not lie in the great amount of information it contains about the Muʿtazilite ideas, but also it is an attempt to present their doctrine in a comprehensive manner. In his Sharḥ al-ūsūl al-Khamsa, he has discussed five famous principles of Muʿtazilites in detail.

We are not sure that ʿAbd al-Jabbār was able to write a separate and detailed book about the refutation of Christianity. Hajjī Khalīfa, while describing the books written about the refutation of Christianity, reported that there was a book by ʿAbd al-Jabbār.\(^{18}\) It seems that Hajjī Khalīfa was confused. As a matter of fact, there is a chapter about the Christians in his three books. In the same way A. K. ʿUthmān mentioned such book in the list of ʿAbd al-Jabbār, through the reference of Hajjī Khalīfa and Ibn Taymiyya. That is

\(^{14}\) Ibn Murtadā, Ṭabaqāt, P.113.
\(^{15}\) A. K. ʿUthmān, Qādī al-Qudāt, PP.57-72.
\(^{16}\) The treatises like al-Khawārizmiyyāt, al-Ṭarmiyyāt, al-Asḥāriyyāt, al-Qāshāniyyāt, al-Kūfīyyāt and al-ʿĀṣirīyyāt do indicate that those were written as answer in response to the enquiries sent from these cities. All these are listed by A. K. ʿUthmān in his Qādī al-Qudāt, PP.66-69.
\(^{17}\) A. K. ʿUthmān, Qādī al-Qudāt, P.71.
totally wrong.\textsuperscript{19}

In the volume V of \textit{al-Mughni}, he refutes the doctrines of the opponents who do not accept the Unity of God, with special reference to non-monothestic religions.

It is noteworthy that while criticising and analysing different religions and their doctrines, he paid much attention toward Christianity. The longest chapter is about the Christian doctrine. The annotated translation of this section on Christianity is main part of this thesis. By including Christianity as a non-monothestic religion, he shows that he regards the Trinity as polythism.

2. In his \textit{Sharh al-Uṣūl al-Khamsa}, while discussing the \textit{tawḥiḍ} (Unity of God), he has endeavoured to refute what the Christians believe with regard to the Trinity and Union of Christ in the Godhead in a very much shorter discussion than the one in \textit{al-Mughni}.\textsuperscript{20}

3. \textit{Al-Majmū‘ ĥ al-Muhīt bi-al-Taklīf}, also contains a very small section about Christianity. Its contents and arguments are very similar to above mentioned books.\textsuperscript{21}

4. Finally, \textit{Tathbit Dalā'il Nubuwa Sayyidīnā Muḥammad}, in two volumes is quite different in style and arguments. Contrary to his three above mentioned books, \textit{Tathbit}'s sources seem to be scriptural and Apocryphal Gospels. These have been subject to much study and debate among modern Western scholars notably Stern and Pines.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Christian Doctrines and Sects}

In his \textit{al-Mughni} Vol. V, while discussing the Christians, 'Abd al-Jabbār seems to have been concerned with the doctrines of three main sects of the oriental Christianity. He specifically mentions them by names as the Melkites,

\begin{itemize}
  \item For further study see the Appendix.
\end{itemize}
Nestorians and Jacobites. He does, however, also refer to the Maronites on occasions. In addition to that, he described a doctrine of an obscure Christian sect which he named Walyāniyya, which have been identified as the Julianists.

Consequently, in his al-Mughni, Vol. V, these five sects are described. On the other hand, he mentioned only two sects in his Sharḥ, i.e., the Nestorians and Jacobites, and he criticised the Christians in his al-Majmü' fi al-Muhīṭ, without naming any sect. As far as his Tathbīt is concerned, he mentioned only the three famous sects i.e., Melkites, Nestorians and Jacobites, where he called them al-Tawā'lif al-thalātha three groups. He also claimed in his Tathbīt that Rome is the origin of these Christian sects. First the Jacobites separated and after them the Nestorians.

'Abd al-Jabbār's reporting is incorrect, because according to the history of Church, Nestorians was declared heretic in 431 AD, while the Jacobites were separated from the orthodox in 451 AD.

The main problem referred to by 'Abd al-Jabbār in his discussion, is the Christian doctrine of God, i.e. Trinity, divinity and the nature of Christ. In order to understand his criticism and arguments, it will be necessary to present some idea of Christian doctrines with the reference of oriental sects on the subject within the area concerned.

The fourth and fifth centuries were famous for prolonged controversies, mainly in the eastern churches. These were, how the Son of God was Himself God (the doctrine of Trinity) and how Christ was both man and God (the doctrine of person of Christ).

Numerous councils of bishops were held as in Nicaea (325) Constantinople (381) Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). Their decisions were rejected in some parts of eastern Christianity. Concerning these councils, technical terms without biblical origins were made key words in authoritative statements of belief.

27. Ibid., P.164.
Their use, sometimes led the Latin-speaking west and Greek-speaking east to misunderstandings and misrepresenting one another. Consequently these disputes contributed to major discussion in the Christian world.

As far as the orthodox doctrine is concerned, they believed that the incarnate Christ was a single person at once God and man. The doctrine of the deity of Christ and his human nature were unknown to the earlier generations of the Christians, but in their simple faith they never had to meet these philosophical and theological difficulties.

It can be said, that Arius (d. 336) first of all claimed that the Father alone was really God while the Son was essentially different from his father. He did not possess by nature or right any of the divine qualities of immortality, sovereignty, perfect wisdom, goodness and purity. The Father produced him as a creature. Nevertheless he did not share in the being of God, the Father and did not know Him perfectly. 29 Nor can he be called the true and natural Son of God, at best, he is the adopted Son. 30

The Nicene Creed was the first dogmatic definition of the Christian Church and through the ages has served as a sign of the orthodoxy. It was held to defend true faith against Arianism. In it, Arius was condemned by his own word. The Council produced its own creed, that is a Trinitarian statement stressing the consubstantiality of the Son (that is the Son and the Father are one and the same in substance), his incarnation, redeeming death and Resurrection. 31 It was decided that the Son was no less divine than the Father.

On the other hand, Apollinarius (d. 390) denied the human soul in Christ. The principle thesis of his doctrine arose as a result of his anti Arian polemic. However in attempting to defend the divinity of the Word, he actually accepted the Arian postulate minimizing the human nature in Christ. 32 He maintained this by the same argument as were afterwards used by the Monophysites.

This heresy was condemned in east and west and conclusively at the Council of Constantinople in 381, through the argument that if God in Christ had not laid

31. Ibid., P.437.
hold of full humanity, then man was not saved. Appollinarius had made the incarnation seem like a mere appearance of God and Christ's humanity was not real.

The theology of the early Christian Church of Antioch was considered as opposed to that of Alexandria, because it emphasized the humanity of Christ. Consequently it clashed with the Alexandrian tendency to stress the divine nature of the incarnate Christ. Nestorius was one of the representatives of Antiochene theology.

Nestorians

Nestorius is claimed to be the founder of the Nestorians. He was a famous preacher at Antioch, before being made bishop of Constantinople by Theodorius II in 428. Nestorius introduced a new theological debate by preaching against the title "Theotokos" or mother of God, given to virgin Mary, claiming she would be called rather mother of Christ. He argued that Mary was a woman, and it was impossible that God should be born of woman.

On the other hand, he did not deny the deity of Christ and never spoke of "two Sons" nor he considered Christ simply as a man. But he defined a nature in the sense of ousia or substance, and distinguished precisely between the human nature and the divine nature, applying in his Christology the distinction between nature (ousia) and person (hypostasis). Nestorius refused to attribute to the divine nature the human acts and suffering of Christ.

While distinguishing between the natures, Nestorius still affirmed their union. He would not consent to speak of two sons, but he spoke of a conjunction, a voluntary union.

However, Nestorius was unable to reduce the two to the unique and clearly undifferentiated one Jesus Christ of the Gospel. In 431 AD, Collestine, bishop of Rome, held a synod in that city and Nestorius was declared a heretic. It can be called heresy in terms of the denial of what is called in theology the Hypostatic Union.

34. Ibid., Vol. X, P.348.
After his exile in 431, he wrote his apology which surmises in Syriac under the title "The Barzar of Heraclides". It was translated and published in 1910 by Bedjan. Some modern historians such as A. Harnack, F. Loofs, Bethune-Baker asserted that he was not necessarily a Nestorian. 36

Bethune-Baker who has studied his book thoroughly, declared that 'two persons' was not the teaching of Nestorius. In rejecting the theory he said, "Though he persistently maintains that there are two substances, in the one Christ, who is the one Son and Word of God." 37

He also argued and justified that the charge might equally fairly be brought against all who believe that Christ was in two natures. 38

In other words one can say that Nestorius did not think of two distinct persons joined together, but of a single person who combined in himself the two distinct things (substances) Godhead and manhood with their characteristics (natures) complete and intact though united in him. 39

However, whether or not the doctrine originated with Nestorius, it clearly became the doctrine of those who were called Nestorians, and they believed that they were following his doctrine.

It can be concluded that opinions are divided, as to what the doctrine of Nestorius really was and how far it was heretical. But one must not overlook the fact, that he repeatedly affirmed the oneness of Christ, though he preferred to speak of conjunction rather than of union.

Melkites:

'Abd al-Jabbār described them as Malakiyya, 40 member of the religion of the king, and sometimes as al-Malkā'iyya. Al-Shahristānī also mentioned them as Malkā'iyya which is incorrect. Whereas the normal form is Malakiyya or Milkiyya, from which "Melchite" is derived. 41

36. Ibid., P.31o.
37. Bethune-Baker, Nestorians and his teaching, P.83.
38. Ibid., P.84.
39. Ibid., P.87.
41. Watt, A Muslim account of Christian doctrine, Hamdard Islamicus, Vol. VI, P.67. 9
According to some scholars, the word Melchite comes from Syriac malaka or Arabic malik, both meaning king or emperor. The term was applied to the Christian of Syria and Egypt who rejected Monophysitism and Nestorianism and accepted the decision of Ephesus and Chalcedon. The term applied also to Arabic speaking Catholic of the Byzantine rite in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. It was adopted by the Jacobites as the ordinary name for the Orthodox.

The Council of Chalcedon represented a culmination in the history of the dogma of the incarnation, because a formula of faith was prepared and approved. The Council defined one Christ, perfect God and man, consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with man, one sole being in two natures without division or separation and without confusion or change. The union does not suppress the difference in natures, however, their properties remain untouched and they joined together in one person or hypostasis.

Jacobites:

The Jacobites are the representatives of monophysitism in the Syrian church. The Monophysites separated from the orthodox eastern church upon the condemnation of the Eutychian heresy in the year 451 by the Council of Chalcedon. Eutyches maintained that the union of Christ's divine and human nature in the incarnation resulted in the ultimate extinction of the latter, so that the glorified saviour is wholly and only Divine, while the Monophysites held that the two natures were so united, that although the 'one Christ' was partly human and partly divine, His two natures became by their union only one nature. According to them Christ's divinity absorbed the humanity. The leaders of theological thought among the Monophysites were as Aelurus, Peter Mongus, Peter the Fuller and Jacob Baradeus. The title Jacobites, which appears after 575 AD comes from the Jacob Baradeus who organized his group within the Monophysite Church.

Jacob Baradeus (d. 587) was brought up in a monastery, where he was educated in Monophysite theology and Greek and Syriac literature. Although he was offered a life of luxury as a helper of Empress Theodores, he preferred to retire.
to a monastery near the city where he remained for fifteen years living the life of a complete recluse. Later on he changed his way of life and travelled on foot through Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia, as far as Persia.48

As a matter of fact in the 5th century at the request of the Arab tribe of Banū Ghassān, two Monophysite bishops were consecrated specifically for the Christian Arabs. One of them was Jacob Baradeus. He reorganised and extended the Monophysite Church of Syria, which was in fact decreasing in numbers due to strong opposition from the Byzantine emperors. It was because of his efforts that the Syrian Monophysites became known as Jacobites.49

Jacob Baradeus was a greatest propagator of its distinctive principles in Syria and Egypt.

He spent the rest of his life secretly organising the Monophysites in Syria. He died in 578 AD and after his death the Monophysites were driven from Antioch.

As a matter of fact, Jacobites are not only the representatives of the Monophysites, because Monophysites later on consolidated themselves in three great Churches.

1. The Copts and Abyssinians.
2. The Syrian Jacobites.
3. The Armenians.

They believed in the doctrine that in the person of incarnate Christ, there was but a single nature, i.e., divine nature, as against the orthodox teaching of two natures, divine and human, after the incarnation.

The Jacobites strongly believed in the absorption of the humanity of Christ in his divine nature. They think, that in the incarnation, from two natures there resulted one. They have explained it by an example:

Glass is made of sand, but the whole is only glass, no longer sand, thus the divine nature has absorbed the humanity so that the two are one.

'Abd al-Jabbār while discussing the doctrines of the Christian sects, is not precise about the Christian sects, especially when we examine his long discussion in his al-Mughni. He only described the doctrines and gave his refutations in detail without naming any specific sect.

On the other hand, we see in his Sharh: where he mentioned the doctrine of Jacobites, that they believed in the union through the essence.\(^50\) This is probably a reference to the Monophysite's argument that the nature of Christ subsumed into the divine nature at the moment of incarnation and this was a union of essence. However his reference to conjunction (Mujāwara) seems to indicate that he has muddled the doctrine of Monophysites with the Nestorians, by using the term which Nestorians applied instead of union.

Along with that, it is also noticeable that while describing the summary of Christian doctrines, in his al-Mughni, he mentioned two doctrines about union\(^51\) without naming any sect. It is obvious that one of them was Jacobite and other Nestorian. In his detailed discussion, he mixed both these doctrines and refuted them in a single argument, that indicates 'Abd al-Jabbār had not given proper attention to the sects. His only purpose was to try to criticise and invalidate the doctrines.

Maronites:

'Abd al-Jabbār mentioned this sect twice in his discussion in al-Mughni Vol. V as Märūniyya.\(^53\) The scholars have different opinions about its name. Some of them maintained that it was named after the hermit Maron, who had forward the heresy of one will in Christ. Others say that it was a city near Antioch.\(^54\) The historian preferred the first option. Consequently Maronite means a group of the disciples who gathered around Maron during his lifetime, and after his death, around the monastery erected to his memory, that was called Maronite Church later on.

During the early 6th century the Maronite monks were defenders of the

\(^{50}\) 'Abd al-Jabbār, Sharh, P.296.


\(^{52}\) Ibid., P.123.

\(^{53}\) Ibid., P.84, P.146.

\(^{54}\) İstifăn al-Duwayhi, Tārīkh al-Tāifa al-Märūniyya, P.3.
doctrine of Chalcedon Council. In 8th century, they were declared as heretic along with Monothelitism (that is the doctrine of one will). But they had never been informed about it.55 Some scholars justified their doctrine about one will, that according to them, as ontologically speaking, there were two wills in Christ. On the other hand, when they speak of one will, they mean one practical will, which is equivalent to action in the terminology. What was regarded as heresy was merely a controversy over semantics.56 But according to Sa‘id b. Bitriq, Maronites are remembered by this name, because they are attributed to Mārūn, a priest in one will and two natures in Christ.57

Julianists:

The fifth and last Christian sect, mentioned by ‘Abd al-Jabbār is Julianist, which he called it as Walyāniyya,58 while the correct pronunciation is Yūliyāniyya.59

Actually, they are called in Western language as Julianist or Aphthartodocetae. It is one of the two groups, into which the Monophysites were divided. From the name of their leader they were called in Armenia and its neighbourhood as Julianist, in Egypt Gaiamitae and in general as Aphthartodocetae.60

Julian of Halicarnassus, leader of the sect, (d. after 527), was a Monophysite. After being expelled from Halicarnassus in Caria by the Byzantine emperor I, he took refuge to Alexandria, and became the preacher of so called Aphthartodocetism.61 (teacher of the incorruptibility of the body of Christ.)62

As far as his doctrines are concerned, he maintained that Christ's body was essentially incorruptible and that His passion and death were real, but were the result of a free and extraordinary choice of His will.63

56. Ibid., P.246.
58. For further detail see translation footnote 60, P.146.
60. Dictionary of Sects and Heresies, P.38.
He further argued that because Christ was not subject to the effects of original sin, while Christ's suffering was real, that was due to an act of his will which made it possible for his body to experience death, though it was naturally not subject to suffering or corruption.  

On the other hand, there was another sect, that also separated from Monophysites which maintained the corruptibility of Christ's human nature. Their leader was Severus and they were called as Severianists.

It can be concluded that the Julianists believed that from the moment of incarnation, the earthly body of Christ was in its nature incorruptable, immortal, though this fact did not prevent him from accepting suffering and death by a free act of his will.

It is interesting to note that 'Abd al-Jabbār while describing the doctrine of this sect, maintained that they believed that Christ is a deity in terms of his being a human being. So He would be adored in reality. It does reflect that 'Abd al-Jabbār's knowledge about an obscure sect is accurate and sound. Because we see in the Dictionary of sects and heresy, where the writer attributed to them same doctrine as 'Abd al-Jabbār has mentioned. So he described under the Aphthortodocetae that one part of them maintained that after the incarnation, Christ ought not to be spoken as a created being as regards his humanity, but even as human he should be designated God and Creator, and must therefore have been a proper object of worship from the very beginning.

Muslim-Christian discussions:

The earliest recorded polemical debate took place by correspondence between the Umayyad Caliph 'Umar II (682-720) and the Byzantine emperor Leo III.
Although its authorship has not been established with absolute certainty.

About 781 AD Timothy I, the Nestorian patriarch of the eastern Christians and Mahdi the third caliph of Baghdad (775-785) debated with each other. The full report records the debate from the Christian side in Arabic and Syriac.\(^70\)

Another famous religious discussion that took place between two friends, the Nestorian Christian al-Kindī and the Muslim al-Ḥāshim and was later written down about 215/830.\(^71\) However, this is essentially a propagandist piece of work.

In ninth century we see for first time that Muslims approach towards Christian doctrine turned from a simple debate to a more systematic method. Among them are those polemics that belong to the rationalist group of Muʿtazilites.

1. Al-Qāsim b. ʿIbrāhīm al-Ḥasanī, a Zaydie, but inclined toward the Muʿtazilites. He died in 246/860. He wrote al-Raddʿalā al-Nāšāra, and it can be said that it is the earliest surviving anti-Christian polemic.\(^72\)

2. ʿAlī b. Rabbān ʿAl-Ṭabarī, a Nestorian Convert to Islam, wrote two treatises\(^73\) defending Islam. The longer work, Kitāb al-Dīn wa al-Dawla, was written during the reign of al-Mutawakkil, around the year 240/854. It contains a large number of Biblical references, and one can say the Muslim scholars were

---


\(^{71}\) Its Arabic text was published as, Risāla ʿAbd al-Masīḥ b. Iṣḥāq al-Kindī, in London 1870 and its translation was done by William Muir under the title of, The Apology of al-Kindī, London, 1887. Ḥamdī Bakrī also claimed that actually it was written in late ninth century and attributed to third century. For detail see, Risāla al-Ḥāshimi ilā al-Kindī, Majalla Kulliyya al-ʿAdāb, Vol. I, Part 9, (1947) PP.29-49.

\(^{72}\) It was first published by I. Di. Matteo, who edited it and translated in Italian in Rivista Degli Orientali, Vol. IX (1921-3), PP.301-364.

\(^{73}\) First book was translated by A. Mingana, as The Book of Religion and Empire, Manchester, 1922 and its Arabic text was edited by A. Mingana and published at Manchester, 1923. The shorter one, Al-Radd ʿalā al-Nāšāra, edited by I. K. Khalife and W. Kutsch, in Melanges de L Universite St Joseph, Vol. XXXVI, (1959), PP.113-148.
able to know the references of old and New Testament through these converts.

3. Abū ʻIsā al-Warrāq (d. around 861) was basically a Muʿtazilite and later on he became a dualist. He wrote Al-Radd ʻalā al-Thalāth fīraq min al-Naṣārā, which is preserved in Yahyā b. ʻAdī's refutation of it. There are attacks on the Trinity and incarnation in this work.

4. Abū ʻUthmān ʻAmr b. Bahr al-Jahiz, a very well known scholar of the Muʿtazilites (d. 869), wrote a small treatise at the request of caliph al-Mutawakkil, al-Radd ʿalā al-Naṣārā. It is used frequently by ʻAbd al-Jabbār in his al-Mughnī, while discussing the Christians.

5. Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī (d. 864), who wrote al-Radd ʻalā al-Naṣārā. Although he was not a theologian but famous as a philosopher, he was able to write an attack on Christianity and the approach is quite philosophical. It is preserved in the refutation made by Yahyā b. ʻAdī, a tenth century Jacobite scholar who analysed it in eleven short sections.

6. Abū ʻAbbās ʻAbd-Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Anbārī, generally known as al-Naṣīḥ al-Akber died in 293/905. He was a Muʿtazī. His famous book, Kitāb al-Awsat fī al-Mağālāt, is a small encyclopedia of the doctrines of Muslim and non-Muslim sects, together with critical remarks. It contains a small section about the Christian sects, but it is important as he has described twenty one sects of the Christians, most of whom are unknown.

7. Abū ʻAlī al-Jubbāh (d. 933) and Abu- al-Hasan al-Ashʿarī (d. 935) are more important and leaders of their own theological school. Unfortunately their works about the Christian doctrines have been lost, but the former's work can be seen in ʻAbd al-Jabbār's work especially in his al-Mughnī.

---

76. This text is edited and translated by Armand Abel, for his doctoral degree from Bruxelles in 1949, although Arabic handwriting is not good. PP. 1-68.
77. It was edited by J. Finkel and published from Cairo, 1926, PP. 10-38. He also wrote an introduction and translation of its few parts. See Journal of Americana Oriental Society, Vol. XLVII, (1927) PP. 311-334.
78. It is edited and translated in French by A. Perier, as Un Traite De Yahja Ben 'Adi, Revue de L' Orient Chrétien, Vol. XXII, (1920-1), PP. 3-21.
80. This book was first edited by J. V. Ess, who wrote a preface in German and published from Beirut, 1971. Section about the Christian sects, PP. 76-87.
8. Abu Mansur Muhammad al-Maturidi, (d. 333-944) the author of Kitab al-
Tawhid. He devoted two and a half pages to the opinion of the Christians
about Christ and its refutation.

9. Al-Hasan b. Ayyub, a converted Muslim, in the early fourth century, wrote
a letter to his brother 'Ali, because of his misunderstanding about Islam. It is
preserved in al-Jawab al-Sahih by Ibn Taymiyya. He criticised severely the
Jacobites and declared that Arius's view is very close to Islam.

10. Abu Ja’far Muhammad b. Babawayh al-Qummi, the son of well known Shi’ite
authority, died about 381/991. In his book Kitab al-Tawhid, there are two
sections containing discussion between Muslims and Christians. It does not look
like a substantial criticism, rather than Shi’ite propaganda.

11. Abu Bakr Muhammed b. al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī, (d. 403/1013) an Ashʿarite
theologian. His book Kitab al-Tamhid, that is devoted to Muslim and non-
Muslim's theological views. It has a section about Christianity. Although it is
not so lengthy, it is a very comprehensive summary. Some discussions are
similar to 'Abd al-Jabbār's discussion and others are quite new.

12. 'Abd al-Jabbār's (d. 1025) four extant work on Christianity.

80. Kitab al-Tawhid was first edited by Fath-Allah Khuleif as a doctoral thesis
and latter published from Beirut, 1970. See section about Christianity, PP.210-212.


82. For this letter see Ibn Taymiyya, al-Jawab al-Sahih, Vol. II, PP.312-363
(Cairo, 1905).

83. Kitab al-Tawhid was edited by Hashim al-Husayni, published from Iran,
1957. See its section about Christianity, PP.270-275 and PP.417-427.

84. Kitab al-Tamhid was first edited by R. J. McCarthy and published from
Beirut, 1957. See section about Christianity, PP.75-103.
PART ONE

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE CHRISTIANS

1 - Section

Summary of their doctrines

Our venerable scholar, Abū 'Ali has mentioned that it is one of the doctrines of all Christians except a small group of them, that God Almighty is the Creator of everything and the Creator is a living entity with speech; and His life is the spirit whom they call the Holy Spirit and His speech is knowledge. Among them are those who say that life is power.

They alleged that God, His Word and His Power are Eternal. The Word is the Son who is the Messiah Himself according to them, who manifested (zahra) in a body which was on the earth. They differed about what is entitled to the name of Messiah.

Among them are those who maintained that it is the word and body united with each other. Among them are those who alleged that it is the Word not the body. Among them are those who alleged that it (the Messiah) is the created body (al-jasad al-muhdath) and the word became a created body when it was in

1. Abū 'Ali Muhammed b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Jubbā`ī, one of the most celebrated of the Muʿtazila, was born at Jubbā in Khuzistān. He attended the school of Abū Yaʿqūb Yusuf al-Shahhām at Basra, who at that time occupied the chair of Abū al-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf. He succeeded al-Shahhām and it can be said that he was able to add a final brilliance to the tradition of the masters. He died in 303 A.H./915 A.D.

He thus held a place in the line of the Basra Muʿtazila who differ from the Baghād Muʿtazila especially over the question of human action. In Basra itself, he was particularly at variance with al-Nazzām (whom he opposed) and al-Jāḥīz.

the womb of Mary and became visible for mankind.

They all allege that the Word is the Son and whatever has the Spirit and the Word is the Son. They allege that all these three are one God and one Creator and they are from one substance. This is a summary of what they said.

You must realise that only some of the Christian doctrines can be discussed, and there can be a distinction [which is possible to understand] between what they agree on and what they disagree upon, and between the elements of their doctrines which agreed or disagreed upon which can be understood.

It is difficult to be exact about all their doctrines, because their arguments are based upon irrational principles and incomprehensible statements.

The famous sects among the Christians are as follows:

1. The Jacobites, the followers of Jacob.
2. The Nestorians, the followers of Nestorius. Sometimes they are called followers of Nisțür.
3. The Melkites, members of the religion of the king.

They also have further sects, some of which are old or more recent. Their doctrines which are in conflict with those three sects have been reported.

We will now report those of their doctrines which must be reported and which the three sects are in agreement upon.

Firstly, the Creator deity is one substance of three hypostases (agānim). One of these hypostases is the Father. The other is the Son and the third is the Holy Spirit. The Son is the Word and the Spirit is the life, and the Father is Eternal, living and speaking. All these three hypostases are the same in substantiality and different in hypostasy. The Son is always in a state of being begotten by the Father and the Father is always begetting the Son, and the Spirit is a state which proceeds from the Father and the Son. The being of the Son as Son of the Father is not in terms of offspring but rather like the generation of the word from the intellect and heat of the fire from the fire and the light of the sun from the sun.
They agreed that the Son was united with the person whom they call Messiah. The person manifested himself for the people, was crucified and killed.

There is some disagreement about parts of the summary which we have given. In their doctrine the Jacobites and the Nestorians maintained that the hypostases are the substance and the substance is the hypostases. Some attributed this also to the Melkites. Others have attributed to the Melkites the doctrine that the Eternal is one substance in three hypostases, and hypostases are the substance, yet the substance is different from the hypostases and there is no fourth one. They maintain that the hypostases are a simple substance and deny that it is a compound substance.

Then they differed regarding the hypostases. Some of them maintained that the hypostases are actually characteristics. Others considered them persons (ashkhās) and the others thought that they were aspects (wujūh) and attributes (ṣifāt). (This was) as if they were saying a single substance (existed) for three (khawāss) and for three persons.

Then they further differed. Some of them maintained with regard to the hypostases that they were different in hypostasy and the same in substantiality. Some of them said, "We do not say that they are different but we do say that they are three hypostases which are the same in the fact that they are only one substance." They differed again. Some of them alleged that each of these hypostases is a living and speaking God. This is a doctrine of some of the Nestorians. And the rest said that each of the hypostases on being mentioned individually is not a God nor living nor speaking.

They also differed: some of them maintained that the Word is knowledge itself. Some of them said that the meaning of Kalima (the Word) is knowledge. It was only named Kalima (the Word), because it manifests itself through speech. On the other hand, the doctrine of others is that the Word and speech are not knowledge. It is reported by others that they maintained that spirit is power.

They also differed: some of them reported from them that they said the hypostases are heterogeneous and His knowledge (Father's knowledge) and His life are different from Him. Some of them reported that the hypostases themselves are substance and nothing else. Even though in terms of being
hypostases, there is a distinction which is not made regarding terms of substance. They illustrated an example of charcoal when it becomes an ember, without seeing what it was before, for it acquired an attribute which it did not have in terms of being simply charcoal.

They vary regarding the nature of Christ and the union. The Nestorians claimed that Christ is a man and God. An anointing (aspect) and unanointed (aspect) which both united and became one Messiah. The sense of united is that He became one out of two. According to them in reality the Messiah is two substances and two hypostases. One of the hypostases of the deity, i.e., the Word, is Eternal substance, everlasting and the other is a created substance which came into existence after it had not existed. Sometimes they use the word ta'ajad (incarnated) instead of ittahad (united) and sometimes they said ta'annasa (became man) and tarakkaba (compounded).

The Melkites believed that Christ had two substances, one of them is Eternal and other is Created.

The majority of the Jacobites alleged that Christ has one substance, except that He is (formed) out of two substances. One of them is the substance of Eternal deity and the other is the substance of human being. They united and became one substance and one hypostasis. Some of them said, "He has one nature."

After agreeing that the union was an event which occurred in time (amr hadith) by which Messiah became Messiah, they differed on what the incidental event was and according to what aspect it existed. Some of them maintained that the Word (Kalima) united with that human being by means of intermingling. Some of them asserted that it (the Word) adopted the form of a human person as a temple and locus. Some of them maintained that (the Word) inhered in him and Word was covered by him and his body. Some of them said that it is nothing of that kind but it is as a picture of a human being appears in a polished mirror when he looks into it. Some of them maintained that it is in accordance with the appearance of the design of a seal in clay which has been stamped (by the seal) without the (actual) design being removed from the seal, and the inherence (of the design) in the clay.
There are doctrines of those who could not make the Word and the body one thing.

As far as the Jacobites are concerned, they believed that two substances have become one substance.

Some of them reported that the union is in the meaning of the will, not that the two subsisting entities (dhät) have united in reality. They differed about it in another way. Some of them believed that the general substance (i.e. nature) united with the totality of mankind and others said: He united with a personal human being. Then they differed about that on the basis of these two statements. Some of them saying, "He united with the whole of humanity" and some of them believed his Union with a part of mankind. Sometimes they considered that the Son united with the whole of humanity so that He will cause the redemption of all. Some of them said that He united with part of humanity, so that He will cause the redemption for part (of humanity).

They also differed about the nature of Christ as we described their controversies about the union. So, those who believed regarding the union, that two substances (natures) became one substance and created (muhdath) became Eternal, maintained that Christ is Eternal. On the other hand, those who explained the union differently maintain that Christ is Divine and human.

They differed about the crucifixion and death (qatil) after they agreed that Christ was crucified and died. The Nestorians maintained that the crucifixion took place with the human part of Christ, not the divine parts. The majority of the Melkites believed that the crucifixion took place with the entire Christ (where) Christ is a divine and human being at the same time. The majority of the Jacobites alleged that the crucifixion and death took place on one substance (nature) that is formed out of two substances (natures) which were God and mankind. He was the Messiah in reality and He was God. The pains were inhered in Him, so the Melkites and Jacobites believed that He who was born of Mary was God (deity) in reality. Some of them believed that Christ is one substance, Eternal in one aspect (jiha) and created in another aspect, born in one aspect and unborn in another aspect, crucified, died in one aspect, non crucified, died in another aspect. Some of them said that death, crucifixion and pain were in the terms of phantasy not in reality. The nature which is united
with Him is endowed with grace (latif) that pains do not inhere in it. It is narrated by a small group of the Jacobites.

They agreed that Christ should be worshipped and He is entitled to that. They have different opinions that either He is adored entirely or worshipped of that divine aspect which we have quoted their controversy about union and nature of Christ. Among the categories of the Christians there is a class called Maruniyya. They maintained that Christ is two substances (natures) and one hypostasis in the sense that he has one will. The deity was really crucified for the sake of our salvation.

Some of the people say of them that one of their doctrines is that the Word used to enter Christ during the time of performing the miracles and depart from Him in the rest of his actions. Some of their earlier scholars alleged that the Word at the time of union passed into the womb of Mary as the arrow crosses the air and water into the water pipe. It is said by some of their scholars who came earlier that God is one and they name Him Father and claimed that Christ is the Word of God and His Son through (God's) will. (Iṣṭifā). He is a creature who was created before the Creation of the universe and the creation of everything was carried out through Him. For this reason, they call him deity (God).

They said and alleged that Christ united with a human being through Mary and

2. Maronites: The only fully Roman uniate Church in the East. The name is derived from Maron, a Syrian solitary who died around 423. By their own theologians it is claimed that their existence can be traced back to St Maro, a friend of St Chrysostom. According to this tradition Maronites have always been orthodox and in union with Rome, but in fact they were originally Monothelites who followed Sergius of Constantinople. As a unite body they possess their own liturgy, which is in essence an Antiochence rite in the Syriane language in parts modified by Latin influence. Since 1926 the Maronite faith has been the Chief confession of the Lebanese state.

3. Watt, while translating al-Shahristāni's section about the Christian doctrines, translated word Iṣṭifā' as (by way of Choice), we translated it as the will of God, because it is very close to Christian theology.
He was crucified. They alleged that God has a created spirit that is more blessed than any other spirits and it (spirit) is intermediary between the Father and the Son, which takes inspiration from the Father to the Son. They alleged that in the beginning, Christ was an intangible substance and purely spiritual essence, not composite and not mixed with any other of the four elements. He only clothed these elements during His union with the body that was taken from Mary and where the four elements gathered together.

Among them some who alleged that Christ came into existence (ibtadā) through Mary and He was a noble prophet, whom God honoured and venerated for His obedience; He named Him His Son by the way of adoption not by (way of) birth.

The doctrines which we have presented are the famous one (of their doctrines) apart from what is to be mentioned later.
The Invalidity of their Doctrine about the Trinity according to the argument which we have reported from them

You must realise as mentioned before, the proven fact that Eternal God (al-Qādīm), is one without there being any other with Him in reality, is what proves the invalidity of their doctrine when there occurs in it anything on a basis which is contrary to common sense (ma'na).

However, when they say: God has three hypostases and they do not intend the three entities (dhawât) which are associated with attributes, their divergence only occurs in terminology, since they have referred by the attributes to God being knowing and living. [On the other hand] when they considered that He has three entities, as the Kullābiyya⁴ believed that He is knowing with knowledge and living with life, the proof which indicates that Eternal God is one, invalidates this doctrine.

As said before, the fact that anything which participates with God as being eternal, would not be able to characterise its entity (essence) by anything which would differentiate it from the other, refutes their doctrine, because since these hypostases were eternal, it would be impossible for the Father to be characterised by something which was not possible for the Son and the Holy Spirit and nor could any of those of them do this or be characterised by what was not possible for the Father. Thus it would not be possible for any one of them to be characterised by what was impossible for the others. This requires that the Son must be a Father and the Father must be a Son and a spirit and the

---

⁴. Kullābiyya, a Sunnī group of the Muslims whose leader was Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdullāh b. Saʿīd b. Muḥammad b. Kullāb al-Qatṭān al-Baṣrī. Watt has introduced him as an influential Mutakallim of the period of Mihna. He died shortly after 854. He is reckoned as a Ṣhāfī'ite though his teachers are not named. He is said to have argued against the Muʿtazilites at the court of al-Māmūn. Ibn Kullāb's chief contribution to Kalām, however was his elaboration of the doctrine of the attributes (ṣifāt) of God. He asserted that for each name such as 'powerful', 'knowing', 'eternal' there was an attribute of 'power', 'knowledge', or 'eternity'. These attributes were not God and not other than God. It seems that ʿAbd al-Jabbār is referring to this argument about the attributes here.

Peters, God's created speech, p. 21.
Watt, The formative period of Islamic thought, pp. 286-7.
Al-Ash'ари, Maqālāt, p. 169.
Holy Spirit must be a Father.

According to this method, our early scholars forced them to admit this doctrine that the Son is a son because since the Son participates with the Father in being Eternal, and must be similar in His self-subsisting entity (essence), it is necessary, if the Father must have a son, who is ilm and Kalima, that the Son is in the same situation with regard to the fact that He must have a son which is ilm and Kalima and so on. Whoever demonstrates the impossibility of need for a son, if there was a Son at all, must state the same with regard to the Father.

Similarly they would be required to admit with regard to the Holy Spirit that He had another spirit, because of what they had said, with regard to the Father, that He had a spirit and spirit of the spirit has a spirit and so on without end.

They have to admit that the Son has a Spirit and the Spirit has a son as the Father has/Son and a Spirit because they (both) participate in eternity which requires the fact that they are (of the same substance) requires the doctrine of the Son's participation with the Father in eternity, it is not possible for them to affirm that it is for the sake of it that He (the Father) needs a Son without both Son and Spirit (needing Sons and Spirits). They cannot claim the fact of His being a father and the son being a son of Him does not refer/His essence (subsistent being) by arguing that it refers to a cause, because, even though they referred by that to a cause, they have to declare that what He has in His essence (subsistent being) makes it possible for Him to be a knowing Father. It could be said that the Son, who is the knowledge and the Word, is the knowledge and the Word of Him. Whatever share He has in being eternal decrees that this attribute (sifa) will be possible for Him in the same way as it was possible for (the Son). In this way there is (proof of) the necessity of what we have forced them to accept already. We have already explained how this problem is repudiated during the discussion of the doctrine of Kullābiyya that He (God) is knowing and that it is not knowledge which requires Him to be knowing even they both (God and knowledge) share in eternity insofar as the fact that God being knowing is necessitated by implication and not because of knowledge being a subsistent being (li-dhātihi). So what we mentioned there it refutes this problem.

According to this method, our earlier scholars forced upon them (Christians) the view that every one of the hypostases is a deity because since the Son and the
Spirit participate with the Father in eternity, what requires His existence as a deity requires their existence as two deities. The existence of each one of the two as a deity repudiates the basis of their argument because they were led to that by the reasoning that since it is impossible for the Eternal and the one who is active, (i.e. God) be living except through life and to be knowing except through knowledge, it is necessary to affirm (the same) for the two hypostases, Word and Spirit. Therefore since it would be necessary according to the argument mentioned earlier, that each of these must be a God, this method has been repudiated. We must also affirm two more hypostases for each of the hypostases. The same is required for every case. This would require the affirmation of numerous deities in an infinite series as we forced the Kullābiyya to admit in this connection. So every aspect, by which we invalidate their doctrine, also refutes the doctrine of the Christians because their doctrines are similar in meaning although they do differ in language. However, the doctrine of Kullābiyya is more perverted, because they attest that God has many ma'nā as the number of attributes that He is entitled to. So they made the numbers of eternal entities (Qudamā) more than the Christians.

They might argue: We are not forced to admit that the three hypostases postulate three deities, because we say that they are three hypostases while there is one substance in reality. We would only be forced to admit that if we postulated that these hypostases were different and postulated that the substance (for each of them) was different.

The answer is that every argument which is brought forward to refute the doctrine, could not be dismissed by a difference in wording of that doctrine, because the basis of the refutation of the doctrine is in terms of meaning not in terms of wording. The variation of the words insofar as it does not affect it, is like the variation of expressions according to different languages which describe a doctrine which is invalid in terms of what makes it invalid, without

5. The use of the term ma'nā by 'Abd al-Jabbār here seems obscure. He had made it synonymous with the word Qudamā in the next sentence. It seems to be an attempt to find a word to describe the attributes (sifāt) which have been existing eternally. As noted before they are not God not other than Him according to the Kullābiyya.

6. This doctrine is said and approved by Christian scholars as Elias of Nisibis, (Cheikho, Trois Traités, P.29) and 'Afi b. Mu'amml (Ibid., P.75). See also Cheikho, Vingt Traités, P.2.
changing the nature (of the doctrine by the change of language).

We have said that since the Christians are in (ma‘ani) they have to accept affirmation of three subsisting entities (dhawât) in eternity i.e. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They make Spirit the life of them, by which He becomes living and they make Son, knowledge, by which He becomes knowing. When they admit that, then the postulation of three Gods which we have forced on them becomes inescapable and the wording does not affect it.

As for their doctrine: "We say that the hypostases are not different from the substance but they are other than the substance."

It is like the argument of Kullābiyya which states that the attributes are not different from God. In the same way that this doctrine has no effect on what we forced them to admit, the same applies to the Christians.

However, some of the Christians have claimed that the hypostases are different insofar as they are hypostases, although the substance is one. So it is not right for them to defend themselves from what we have forced them to admit by what they are claiming, even when they maintain that they must accept that the deity is different in one aspect and not in another.

This is an impossibility in terms of things differing from one aspect and agreeing from another. But it is more certain than that. This is the existence of things which are not different requires the abnegation of their being different and requires that they be one thing or several things.

According to this aspect, our scholars forced them to admit that their doctrine was contradictory and based on an illogical argument, because three being one and one being three are illogical in reality, whether they say that it is one from the aspect that it is three or from other aspect.

We say concerning the thing which comes within the totality of the group, that it is not other than it when you have added it to the group; and that it is other than each one of it when you single it out by descriptions from the point of view of applying a description (to it), because it is an entity which is different from other entities and characterised by attributes; and it could be characterised by them (i.e. these attributes) apart from the other entities without any consideration of the expressions concerning that.
If they followed this argument in their doctrine they would concede what we intended in terms of hypostases being different in an absolute sense (ma’ñā). Then they would be forced, as we mentioned before, to confirm deities and eternal entities that have no end. Whenever they do not concede that, we are quite right in accusing them of contradiction.

They might argue:
"According to your point of view it is right to say that numerous units are one group and countless parts are one human being and one entity without your statement being contradictory. So why did you not allow us to say that He is substance in three hypostases."

The answer is:
There is no doubt that we affirm that the units of the group are different in reality and we describe it by our statement "group" so that this group may be distinguished from the rest of the numbers and groups. We say one so that it may illustrate that it belongs to this group at one time. There is no contradiction since it is according to the meaning which we have given. It is not possible for you to do that because you do not affirm that the hypostases are different. You do not mean by your doctrine (of three hypostases being) of one substance that they (the hypostases) are a group. Similarly you do not apply this expression for other countable things when they total three in the same way as we can apply the number ten for all countables which total ten. So the removal of the contradiction from what we have mentioned is as obvious as the confirmation of such a contradiction in what you have claimed. We only meant by our statement about the parts of the human being that they are many (parts) and we meant (by it) that every part is different from the other and will be appropriate for that which nothing else is appropriate for. We mean by saying "one human being" that there is a group which consists of those parts (which make up a human being) which can be characterised as being one in activity and one in ability. That is reasonable and there is no contradiction in it. On the other hand you cannot attain the same position because you do not mean by your doctrine of "one substance" that it is a group of hypostases which are characterised by virtue of a structure in which the hypostases occur or something like that. So the contradiction remains within your argument while it is removed from ours as we said.

Furthermore, we meant by the contradiction which we accused them of, a contradiction of meaning. It is not possible to accept it without the words
contradicting themselves as we accused a person of who claimed that something was existent and non-existent, and that one substance was black and white. It is already known, that even though (this contradiction) is possible in words, it is not possible to accept what (those words) mean. The argument is the same with regard to what we have forced upon the Christians, for we have claimed what they maintain about one thing being three in reality from one or two aspects cannot be accepted. There is no point in pre-occupying oneself in repudiating whatever is unacceptable, because through that thing we would reach the point of invalidating what is valid so that we would remove the believer from his belief. As we already know this belief is impossible, there is no point in looking for an argument by which it could be removed.

According to this point of view, they are forced to admit that they must declare that God is different and the same because, in terms of the hypostases, it is required that He must be different and in terms of one substance it is required that He should be the same one. The existence of the things as being the same and different is impossible. They cannot say that they (the hypostases) are the same in the subsisting entities and different in those attributes which do not refer to the subsisting entities, but rather refer to those elements entitle them to an attribute (ma'āni)\(^7\) and whatever is like that. Because according to their doctrine the substance of the Father is only a Father who is a knowing and living. They maintain the same with regard to every hypostasis. So what we forced upon them to admit is correct that their doctrine is that they are the same in subsisting entity yet different.

It requires rejecting something and affirming it, because there is no difference between one thing being similar to the other and being contradictory to it and between its being existent and non-existent. Because its being contradictory demands rejection of what requires to be in accord in its affirmation, as we discussed in the Chapter of attributes.

As for those among them who maintained that "We do not say that the hypostases are different in order to escape from this argument," they have no protection from the consequence because it depends on meaning not the

---

expression. So in this doctrine they are in the same position as those who maintained that one thing is existent and non-existent. So we forced upon them to admit that it is the same and different. Therefore they wanted to set aside this argument by refusing to accept these. That is obvious.

Our venerable scholar Abū 'Alī forced upon them to admit that either they say that there are more than three hypostases or repudiate their doctrine.

He said to them: "When you affirm that there are three hypostases, in terms of that, it is impossible for you to believe that whenever He (God) is acting, He would be living and knowing. So you have affirmed that He has knowledge which is the Son and the Word, and you have affirmed Spirit which is life. Therefore you must affirm that he has Power because action cannot be produced except from one who has Power, for the action has a greater need for its agent to have power (to do it) than it has need for him to be living and knowing. This will make you affirm that He has Hearing, Vision and Perception insofar as the living must be hearing, seeing and perceiving. You must affirm that He has Will, for insofar as He is the doer of actions through his knowledge of them, He must be someone who intends actions. You must affirm for Him Might, Greatness and Unity, insofar as He is mighty, great and one.

If they deny Him having Power, then His being living and knowing must also be rejected. In this way the hypostases are repudiated. If they affirm Him having Power not through Power but through His subsisting entity (dhāt), then in the same way He must be knowing and living through His subsisting entity, not through Knowledge and Life. On the other hand, if they affirm Him having Power through Power and they make His Power to be His Life or Knowledge, then in the same way His Knowledge must be His Life and His (Kalima) Word must be His Life. In this way it is necessary to make a limit of two hypostases. If that is conceded, even though it is contrary to the evidence, they would have to concede that His being knowing and living is not because of (an element) (ma'ānā) which originally requires these attributes. If they affirm Power for God apart from the Knowledge and Life, Hearing, Seeing and Perceiving then

8. The Arabic text is which makes no sense. Obviously there is a confusion in the text. It has been translated tentatively as 9. The second repetition has no sense, so it has been dropped from the translation.
they are forced to affirm numerous hypostases. In this way, the doctrine of Christianity is repudiated.

It is impossible for them to say that He is living without being powerful and that He is living without being knowing (by arguing) that the case is the same for them both insofar as a living (Person) may sometimes be without both these qualities.

The position of the two, regarding the evidence, which is agreed upon is that there is no living (person) as we understand it, which would be without Knowledge and Power. There is no difference between these two in terms of the fact that if some aspects of a living (person) is without one of them, it is certainly imperfection. Then it is correct that what we have mentioned is necessary and requires that their doctrine is repudiated. They are forced to admit the doctrine that He is living without Life or Life is living. This is because either they have to say that living is only the Father not the two other hypostases or it is three hypostases. They might argue:

That He is the living, then they are forced upon to admit that He is the activity and Creating Deity. In this way is the repudiation of their doctrine that God itself is three hypostases. They might argue:

That the living is three hypostases, so that the doctrine may be continued. Then it is necessary that the Life be living alongside the Father. That is impossible because since a cause must create an effect (hukm) for something else, it is impossible for it to create an effect (hukm) for itself alongside the other thing. For this reason it is incorrect, that the knowledge is knowing in itself alongside something else, although it is possible that it should make somebody else be knowing.

If concede that the Life can be living, so that this attribute is required for itself alongside other things, they are forced upon to concede that His being living is Life. So in terms of His being living, it requires Life, as they maintained for a living person. In terms of His being Life, it does not require it. In this way it would be necessary to affirm endless hypostases. It would require the possibility of the living (being), which is the Father being Life in Himself and thus it would be necessary to dispense with Life which is other than Him. Similarly the question can be put against them, when they argued:

10. The word yasihu, has no meaning, so it has been dropped from the translation.
"That the Life is the life of the two other hypostases or the Knowledge is the knowledge of the two hypostases. So it is pointless to repeat it.

They are forced to admit the affirmation of three active (hypostases) because if they argue that whoever acts is a human being, they are forced to admit that he would be God. In this way, there is a repudiation of their doctrine that the deity is one substance of three hypostases.

Their argument would be like the argument of Kullābiyya, insofar as what is subject to the attributes is the deity apart from attributes. So they have to say that the action is (the action) of three hypostases. Each of them should be active. Its obligation requires that each of them must be living and having power and also each of them must be a deity. In this way, they are abandoning their own doctrine.

They might argue:
The action of three is one action so that your (i.e. 'Abd al-Jabbar's argument) is not necessary because when the action is only one, it does not need to affirm three agents, but rather one agent.

The answer is:
Because it is impossible that one action can be an action for more than one agent it follows that one of them may do it and another leave it. We mentioned its invalidity earlier.

It follows that the action of each of them would be different from his fellow as each of them is different from his fellow.

They might argue:
The action is an action only of one who is three.

The answer is:
There is no difference between affirming that it is an action of three and affirming that it is an action of one who acts who is three in reality in addition to affirming the act to them.

They might argue:
Every one of them is acting with the others and not every one of them is acting in reality.
The answer is:

Haven't you said they are three who are acting just as if one of them was acting with the other?

They might reply:

Every one of the three is part of the actor and the three of them are one actor.

The answer is:

This requires the possibility of dividing the deity who is acting. It also requires that they concede that Life is subject to division. It would require the possibility of the action being part of the actor the possibility of life being part of him (i.e. the Living Deity), because for Him to be acting and not an action is impossible as it would also be impossible for him to be living and not Life.

They are forced to admit that it is impossible to say that Life is a part of Him and yet not Him. They must admit that Life is different from Him, because there is no fourth position about it. They must affirm that Life is different from God. God would be the only Creator not the Life and Knowledge. Now their doctrine would be repudiated by the argument which we discussed of those who affirmed that along with Him (God) Knowledge and Power are eternal.

If they conceded that Life was living, they would be acknowledging the unity of God.

It is correct to repudiate the argument that Life is part of God or Life is God or that it is different from God. Since, if they held any such argument they would have to abandon Christianity.

The argument which affirms that He is active in eternity also forces them to say that He is a Father in Eternity, because it is reasonable to say that the Son was caused to be and the Father became a Father through it, just as an action is caused and an agent becomes an agent through that. Since according to them there is no contradiction between Him being a Father and a Son for all eternity, the same is the case with Him being an agent.

They are forced to admit that He is a subject to division into three divisions by virtue of fact that He is a changing body (jism) which is subject to differences and He is caused.
They also forced to admit that each one of these hypostases must be Eternal and exist because of an element which requires an attribute (ma'ānā). As they said that the Eternal is knowing and living because of an element which requires an attribute, it will not be correct for them to deny that they (three hypostases) are eternal and exist while the Father is Eternal and exists, because (in such a denial) there would be the affirmation of (the Father) being caused and non-existent. Since they argued that He exists without cause, it is necessary in the same way that He be living and knowing without it being through a Spirit and a Son, because just as it decrees His existing in eternity, and being everlasting, so it is necessary that He be knowing and living.

Concerning His Knowledge and Life, it has already been explained that they cannot say that they are attributes and they are not what is attributed to (Him). Because it will be repudiated in the same way by which the doctrine of Kullābiyya has been repudiated and because they describe what distinguishes each hypostasis from the other.

According to their doctrine that "the substance of three hypostases is one substance," they must admit that the Son is entitled to all the attributes of the Father insofar as His substance is the same as the Father's. Otherwise, if it would be possible that the Son was different from Him, even though the substance of the Son is the same as the substance of Father, it would be possible for the Father to cease being a Father and for the Son to cease being a Son. If this was the case, it would only be like this because of his (Son's) substance; this is because to affirm an equivalent of something in its substance along with its contradiction with regard to its attribute is to give the attribute predominance over its substance. If that was possible, it would also be possible for a thing to cease being its substance. This would mean they were no longer sure about the (being or) non-being of the Father and the Son, and whether the Father would cease being an Eternal Father.

They would have to admit that the (hypostases) are different, even though the cause for their differences would be the same as that which required them to be the same, because, if they argued that the hypostases were different without any reason which would require them to be different it would be impossible.

11. We read it and translated it as "al-rāji'a".
They might argue: 

That the hypostases differed because of their entities (a’yān) and substances, this would necessitate that, if their substance was one substance, they be the same. Otherwise, they would have to be different in substantiality as they were different in hypostasy. The Melkites and Jacobites do not maintain this when they say that it is possible for them to be different from one aspect. Therefore they must admit the doctrine that they are different from the aspect by which they are the same.

1. They are forced to admit that the son would be Father, since substance of the son is the same as the substance of the Father.

2. They are forced to affirm the Son as Father because, according to them, Fatherhood is one of the attributes of deity and one of things which requires the absence of imperfection. Then it is necessary that the Son should be Father, otherwise He would be incomplete. It is incorrect to say that the Fatherhood is attribute of perfection and Divinity, otherwise being a Son is contrary to it.

With regard to the Melkites doctrine that the substance is different from hypostases even though hypostases are not different from it they should be asked: How is it possible to say that the substance is different from them, while the hypostases are not different from the (substance). And how could it be reasonable? When is it conceded? Why is it not conceded that the substance would be different from them (hypostases) in reality, although these (hypostases) are the same as it (substance) in reality? When the (hypostases) being the same as the substance contradicts, the substance being different from them (hypostases) then it must contradict these (hypostases) not being different from substance and the substance being different from them (hypostases).

Furthermore, if the hypostases are three, and they made the substance different from them, then they need to affirm the fourth one. In this way they have abandoned their doctrine. If they claim that they refer by the substance to one of them, they contradict their argument that the substance is something else from them. This would require that one thing would be different from itself. This is irrational.

They cannot claim that the substance is not a fourth, while it is not one of the three, because that is impossible to judge as we mentioned before. There is no

37
difference between saying that is different from it and is not fourth, and yet not one of them, and between saying that it is different from them and it is one of them.

Furthermore, God must be the substance apart from the hypostases or He must be the hypostases apart from the substance or He must be both of them (the substance and the hypostases). If God is the substance, and according to them the substance is different from the hypostases, they are forced to exclude the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit from Divinity. If they say that God is the hypostases apart from the substance, they are forced to admit that the eternal substance is not the deity, and this would be abandoning their doctrine, because they claim that the deity is one substance of three hypostases. If they say that the deity is both (the substance and the hypostases), they are forced to admit that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are not God. Therefore whoever adores them does not adore God, and who disbelieves in them does not disbelieve in the deity. If they say that God Himself is substance which has three hypostases, they should be told that this would require that your doctrine that the God is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, would be wrong, because these are things which are added to the God, they are not the God. This would be an abandonment of Christianity and inclination towards the doctrine of Kullābiyya.

However this doctrine requires them to admit that three and one are not four. Rather they have to say that three and one is one ($3 + 1 = 1$). This would necessitate that someone saying "three and nothing else," was the same as saying, "three and something else." This would require that three things and something else are three. It would also require that to affirm and deny difference is the same. It would require that one and one makes one. Furthermore it would require the countable would not increase through the addition of numbers.

According to their doctrines, it is required that the hypostases should be a substance because, according to them it is not correct to affirm that that which is not a substance can exist by itself. Therefore they must say that the hypostases are the substance and the substance is another substance. They must affirm two substances that would be the deity. In this way it is a

12. (God is one substance which has three hypostases)
contradiction of Christianity. Then they could be asked, are the two (substances) the same or different? If they say, they are the same, why did one of them become hypostasis not the other?

If they say they are different, they are forced to affirm two different eternals. The substance of one of them is different to the other substance. This resembles the doctrine of Dualism. 13

If a proponent from them argues that the Son is the Word and Speech in reality and he is not Knowledge, then what we have already mentioned will invalidate his argument. It will also be invalidated by what confirms that the speaker only becomes speaker by virtue of the fact that he produces speech and speech can only be an activity of a speaker. That would stop him being an eternal speaker and Father 14 would require that speech is a created in time. It explains that through that speech would only be called speech, when it took place in the context of sequence. Then it would be from that rational category, which cannot be separated from that which requires creation. This demonstrates the invalidity of this doctrine. Whenever they put forward an argument against this view, they associate themselves with total ignorance.

According to this method, our early scholars forced them to admit that His speech has another speech, that speech would be a Father and that the speech which they affirmed is life, knowledge, motion and tranquility and it is the agent and creator. 15

Furthermore, since the word is not separated from the speaker according to them, why should it be more appropriate for it (word) to be a Son rather than a Father. Indeed the Father became more appropriate among us, because through

13. The term is applied to a system of thought according to which there exists two Gods. Here is it particularly the religious dualism which is ordinarily considered to be the Chief Characteristic of the Zoroastrian religion. According to them, the Supreme God is Ahura Muzda, conceived as essentially good and in opposition to him is Ausa Mainyu (the destroying spirit). Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. V, P.111.

14. 'Abd al-Jabbār as a Mu'tazilite does not accept God as an eternally speaking God with an eternal uncreated word. The same arguments, although not stated apply also to begetter and Father.

15. This argument is extremely elliptical. What 'Abd al-Jabbār's seems to be implying is that there is an unending chain of speech and life etc, if you define the Son as the Word of God, then as God, he would need another Word of God etc.
being a Father, He is the origin of the Son, through Him the Son existed. If He (Father) was not, the Son would not be. According to them, the Father does not proceed the Son, so why did he become more appropriate to be a Father than the Son?

If one of their proponents said, "we have claimed there to be three hypostases while He is one substance because things must have substance or accident," activity (fi'il) is possible from accident, so (it is required), that the Deity must be substance. The substance is two kinds: (1) body, (2) one which is without body. The body is subject to division and being assembled, so the Deity must be without physical body. He must be living or dead. The dead have no choice or preference or power of discrimination or power of actions. So we have confirmed Him as living and living can be further divided into speaking and non-speaking. So he who is not speaking cannot be described as having discrimination and wisdom. Therefore it is required He must be speaking. Thus it has been confirmed that He is a living and speaking substance. Now He must be living and speaking because He is a substance, having life and speaking power. If it is so because He is a substance, then it is required that every substance would be speaking and living. Therefore it is confirmed that He is speaking and living with life and speech. It is required that both (life and speech) must be from the substance itself, because they are not created in Him, because He is Eternal not Created.

They argued. then it is necessary for the substance to be the Father, Life would be the Spirit and Speech would be the Word whom they call the Son.

Sometimes they further say that the living is of two kinds, one kind can produce offspring and the other cannot do that. Then He would be incomplete. So it is necessary that Deity can produce offspring and it is also necessary that He would be the Father. So for this purpose we said, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And we make the Spirit as Life and the Son as Speech and the Word.

The answer to this is: the argument (itiṣbār) which you have put forward would only be acceptable (yajib) if the only thing which could be an entity (ma'lūm

---

16. This argument quoted by 'Abd al-Jabbār, is described by many Christian scholars, as one can see in Sharḥ al-'Aqīda al-Nasrāniyya (Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP. 3-4) and by Paul of Sidon (Ibid., PP. 20, 25, 49, 55) and by Elias of Nisibis, (Cheikho, Trois Traites, PP. 31-33) and 'Affīf b. Mu'ammil (Ibid., PP. 75-76).
that which can be known) was either substance or accident. We have explained that God is not a substance nor an accident. So the basis on which you have based this problem is false. Your doctrine that the substance is either with or without (physical) body, requires that the deity is without a (physical) body because he is not subject to composition. Therefore you must maintain that He is possibly something else apart from substance and accident, because since you were allowed to affirm Him as an agent, having His Own will without evidence, although He had no physical body, then it is right to affirm that He is not substance nor accident without evidence.

Their doctrine that it is required that He must be speaking and living, because if/otherwise of that was affirmed, He would be incomplete, requires them to admit that He is existing eternal, powerful, all hearing, all seeing and perceiving. This requires, since it is not possible that He would be in the same manner for His substantiality, that He would be (such) for (ma'āni) elements which would carry these attributes. In this way there is an affirmation of numerous hypostases like what they have confirmed of speech and life for Him. Their doctrine (that the life and speech are required to be of the same substance) is impossible, because whatever is of the same substance cannot have need of a cause (hukm) for itself. That is only possible for something which is different from it. Therefore the existence of one of them as living through part of the substance would not be possible because part of the substance would be its own substance. According to their reasoning He must be affirmed as Eternal generous and beneficient because whoever does not such qualities, would be a miser and deficient. Otherwise if He could be affirmed without (relying on) these two attributes (Life and Speech), it would be possible to affirm that He is living, without (affirming that He is) speaking. Then He might be speaking and delivering speech later as a result of men's need for it.

However, if substance is Characterised by Life and Speech because it is substance, every substance will have to be like that on basis of their argument. If substance is Characterised by Life and Speech because of its own special quality (khāṣṣa), that would invalidate their argument. They must, then, affirm that life and speech would have only become special qualities for a third special quality. For if they had not become special qualities for a third quality but simply because they are two special qualities, that would require the same with

17. We read it minhumā instead of minhā
regard to each special quality. This would require an endless number of special qualities.

According to what they have argued, He must be movable, having parts and body, because the substance, when it is not something like that, would be nearer to defectiveness. Indeed they are required to affirm the possibility of that with regard to Him, for anything in which that was not possible, would not be a substance. Then it is required that they affirm Him as substance who eats and drinks, because every living being who has not such qualities would be incomplete.

It is required, according to this argument, that they admit that He only became a Deity, because He is living and speaking, just as He was only living and speaking, because He was a substance. This requires the admission that every living and speaking thing would be Deity so the angels, jinn and human being would be deities.

Their argument that it is the necessary consequence (that) a speaker must be knowledgeable and wise is a matter of ignorance because the one who is knowledgeable and wise, arranges his speech, while a baby, sometimes, speaks without knowledge and wisdom.

Their doctrine that he who cannot produce offspring is incomplete and sterile and therefore it is necessary to affirm that He is a Father requires the admission that He has adopted a female companion, because he who cannot do that, would be incomplete. They are required to admit that the angels are also incomplete because they never marry and are not fathers, in spite of their doctrine that they are superior to human beings and have a greater status.

Some of them argued that He is one substance because if He was two substances, it would require that He was a mixture of two species and the intermingling of two substances. That is a sign of temporal causation.

They argued that He is three in number, because number three consists of two types of the numbers, that are even and odd numbers and whatever brings together two types of the number is more perfect than that which does not, because one of the two types of number does not attain numerical

18. For this argument see, al-Kindi, Risāla 'Abd al-Masih, P.30.
completeness, and to describe Him as incomplete is impossible. So it is required that He (God) should be characterised through numerical perfection and that is the number which brings together even and odd numbers. This requires them to admit that the Father by Himself brings together two kinds of numbers as does the hypostasis of the Son and of Spirit. This requires that the Father has three hypostases by Himself and then the number of the hypostases would be nine. Otherwise, it is required, if each does not bring together two types of number, each of them would be incomplete according to their argument. That requires that each one of the hypostases would be incomplete. That requires that the all would not be a Deity and the defect would be general to all of them.

Furthermore, according to them, the deity is not three in its substantiality, it is three in its hypostasy. So it is required, according to their argumentation that He would be incomplete in His substantiability, because He does not bring together two types of numbers. According to us, the defect is contrary to what they mentioned, because it must exist when He brings together two kinds of number or the kind which is even, for the establishment of that in Him would require Him created and would prevent Him from being eternal. This is incomplete, not as they claimed. Their statement requires them to admit that anything which brings together two numbers is more complete. Therefore, if the odd and even in it are more, then it is more perfect and excellent. Thus they must affirm numerous hypostases for the deity. It is also required that they must attach to Him every attribute which is attested to be praiseworthy and perfect. This requires that He had a body that is assembled, tall and wide.

It could be asked about their doctrine, that it is required that He should be a Father, so that He may not be imperfect. "Why did you not say that He is the Father in terms of sexual reproduction," so that He may not be imperfect

19. What 'Abd al-Jabbār seems to be referring here is the Christian concept of generation. Wolfson has discussed the mystery of generation in detail (see his book "The Philosophy of Church Fathers, pp. 287-304). He concludes: "That still, despite all their attempts at explanation, they felt that generation cannot be explained. It is a unique event, a mystery unlike any other kind of creation or generation in the world." He further supports his idea by some church Fathers: "So Irenaeus says: "If anyone, therefore, says to us, - "How was the Son emitted by the Father" - we reply to him, that no man understands that emission, or generation, or utterance or manifestation, or by whatever name one may describe His generation, which is in fact indescribable."
because only fatherhood could negate that imperfection not the one you mentioned, which is irrational. It requires that they admit that He is a body, which can adopt a female companion and can procreate as one of ours can. We are not going to argue with whoever has reached that point about Christianity. We have discussed it, while rejecting anthromorphism.

If they argue that the birth of the son from the Father is as the production of the Word through reason and the heat of the fire from the fire and light of the sun from the sun, it would be said to them that the Word is not produced through the reason, because sometimes, it can be uttered by an unreasonable person and sometimes one who may possess reason cannot produce one word. Word arrangement is only possible through knowledge by means of selection by the one who is doing it, not by being produced by the reason. If a Christian argued saying, by Word he meant knowledge, it should be argued that knowledge itself is reason, when it refers to necessary knowledge. On the other hand, if you meant acquired knowledge and whatever is similar, then it is not produced through a reason because the intelligent person is free from that and that is possible with regard to him.

He quoted Basil who had the same theory. "That the substance of the Father did not generate the son" by fluxion or by putting forth shoots, as plants put forth their fruits on the contrary, the method of divine generation is ineffable and inconceivable to the human mind." and finally he mentioned that the statement of John of Damascus: "that no other generation is like the generation of the Son of God" and "that the nature of the generation and procession is quite beyond comprehension."


20. For this analogy see the description of Christian scholars, Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP. 2, 5, 14, 21 and 42.
21. Ilm al-daruri (necessary knowledge)
Some scholars translated it as 'immediate knowledge', but Peters did not agree and said, that it is not a correct translation. Because we see that Abd al-Jabbâr has divided it into two categories, i.e., direct or immediate and indirect knowledge. So it would be better to translate it as necessary knowledge.

McDermott defines it as "necessary knowledge which is established in the mind through no effort on the subject's part and which the subject cannot doubt or deny". On the other hands Ilm al-muktasab as "knowledge that is acquired either by listening to revelation or by the subject's own reasoning."

Peters, God's Created Speech, PP. 53-55.
The reason that they deny him being Father in terms of sexual reproduction (tanāsul) is because in that there is requirement of Him (i.e. the Son) being created. This would necessitate the denial of Him being Father in terms of the generation of the word from reason, because the former would only be among created things.

The production of the heat of the fire from fire, is not possible, because, if the heat of the fire is produced through its substance, then it is required that every substance would be in the place of fire in terms of heat. If a proponent of them argues, "that heat is produced not through its substance but in terms of it (i.e. the substance) being fire", it would be answered: that is just as if you said that heat was produced from heat and the substance, or from heat only. It requires that a thing is produced from itself. If they argue "that we mean by that that its being fire would only be understood, as it having heat. Similarly the doctrine of the generation of the son from the Father is the same kind." It should be said to them, that it is required that you first affirm Him Father, then affirm that He has a Son who is generated from him. On the other hand, the affirmation of something as a fire is an affirmation of the heat in it, not that we claim that the heat is produced from it. So it is required that you affirm Father and Son at the same time on the basis of fact that they are two origins. Therefore it is possible for them to dispense with mentioning the generation. The argument about the production of light from the sun (can be treated) in the same way as the argument we have described. However, light is a body (ajsām; i.e., a physical entity composed of atoms) and body is not produced by another body. The sun has light because of its polished surface and because of its being characterised by the light which is on it. Because it is a necessary consequence when a body has such a quality (polished surface), it would have light; not that there is something which was produced from something else. In this situation there is no difference between one/says that

22. He seems to be arguing that as the Christian argument is that heat and the fire are the same substance, then it is simply producing itself.

23. In order to refute this argument, 'Abd al-Jabbar has resorted to arguments about the physical Universe. He has described light as a body (jism) which here means a collection of atoms. The sun, too, is such a body and only God can cause atoms to come into existence. Therefore, the sun does not produce light. In the rest of his argument he seems to suggest that the sun's surface is of a kind that reflects light and thus is described by the light which is reflected on it. In this way, he seems to indicate that he understands light and sun to be separate entities.
the sun is produced from the light or another that says its light is produced from the sun.

Some of them, in their presentation of their doctrine of the Trinity, by using the (image of) the sun and light, have relied on the sun and light being two individual elements (shakhsan) which one substance unites together and which are the same in substantiality but different in individuality (shakhssiyya). That is the case of the Eternal who is three hypostases which are the same in substantiality but different in hypostasy and personality (shakhssiyya). That is impossible, because the light of the sun is different from the sun and the attribute of the one differs from the attribute of other, and some parts are different from the other parts. According to them, that is impossible to say this about the hypostases.

Some of them argued: Whenever a human being is living, speaking and mortal, he is one human being. In the same way, the Deity is existing, living and speaking and He is one substance. It is wrong, because the human being is not a human being through his living, speaking and being mortal. He only becomes a human being when he is differentiated from all animals through structure. Even though he might be a human being as they described, it would not exclude the fact that what was correct with regard to him was what the structure had indicated. It would not refer through this description, one thing in reality, but it would refer to structured things, and each single part of us is not a complete human being. This requires them to admit that each one of the hypostases is not substance and they would have to admit that each is a particular (khass) substance although the substance is a substance common (to all of them).

However what they have maintained confirms our argument because we apply the same criterion (hukm) to every part of a human being which we can apply to the other. So it is required that they may apply such a criterion to every member and description of the hypostases which may be applicable to the other. In this is the contradiction of all that they rely upon. It is only possible to say that many parts are called one living human being because he lives through a life which inheres in him. It is the necessary consequence of the parts that they only require the criterion of being a man through occurrence of the numerous

24. For this argument see footnote 23.
25. ‘Abd al-Jabbār says according to them, but he obviously means that they would have to hold this after his argument.
parts of them which are structured in numerous parts of the substances. It is not possible that the Eternal Deity only became living because of His existence with others by being structured in a special substance, because that would require Him to be a physical and created body.

It could be argued against them: Why have you come to a point that it is not more appropriate to say that God is one substance of three hypostases rather than that He should be described as three substances of one hypostasis. They might answer: Because hypostases are different in terms of being hypostases but are the same in the substantiality. It would be argued against them: Why do you not say that they are different in terms of substantiality, but the same insofar as they are hypostases? Those of them who argue: I mean by my saying "one substance" that He is one in absolute description and my saying "three hypostases" means that He is characterised by His being eternal, living and speaking. I only mean through these expressions what I mentioned. Then his statement about his meaning contradicts the doctrine of the Christians, because it is their doctrine, as we mentioned before, to affirm three hypostases as one substance in reality. That explains that one of the doctrines of the Christians is the view that the Son is united with Christ and they characterise the Son by the union. If the Eternal was one thing in reality then it is not possible for them to say that that which is united is not the one who unites.

It is their doctrine that the union makes Christ of two substances, a divine (nature) and a human (nature), or He became one after each one of that had been one substance.

So all that explains that what he (such an opponent) said is far away from the Christian doctrine.

Although we have narrated this type of doctrine from some of their early scholars, they do not escape from the fact that they are wrong in this argument in two aspects.

One of them is to apply these nouns to Him in the classical Arabic language.

26. It is explained by Timothy I in his debate with Caliph Mahdī (see Cheikho, Trois Traité s PP. 6-7 and Yaḥyā b. ʾĀdī, Maqālāt, PP. 36-37.)
According to the shari'a, it is shocking. Secondly, they limited His attributes to Him being Eternal, living and speaking. That requires the denial of Him being Powerful, perceiving, willing, hearing and seeing. This is unbelief on the part of those who said that.

As for those of them who maintain that He is the Father of Christ in terms of adoption and respect, first of all this invalidates their argument that He is the Eternal Father. It requires that He would be His Father during His creation of Christ. The meaning of adoption is only possible with regard to one who can have a Son in reality or with regard to one who can be born like him and insofar as it falls into the category of living beings. Because of that, it is not possible that a dead body can adopt a living one as a son because it is impossible that it could have a son in reality while it is dead. It is also impossible that a young person may adopt a very old man as a son. In the same way he cannot adopt a calf or a young camel as a son. There is no similarity between our saying about Zayd that he adopts somebody, or our other statement that he exalts and respects him, because of that it is possible for one of us to respect one whom he cannot adopt as a son. It would be intended by that he treats him in the same manner as a son in educating, special association and rules which are related to the son and the father. That is impossible to believe, regarding the Eternal one. Therefore how could be said that He adopted him as son?

However, this argument requires regarding each one of the prophets, that he be His son in terms of adoption. There will be no distinction for Christ with anything which the others do not have. The human being sometimes associates somebody as brother as he adopts another in terms of respect and what is similar to brotherhood in reality. So there is no difference between one who said that He adopts some according to this meaning, and between others who say that He takes brotherhood with the other. Since it is invalid, it confirms that their doctrine that He is Father and has a Son, is not possible according to this aspect.

On the other hand, those who maintained: that since it is correct to say that Abraham is a friend of God, so why is it not correct to say that Christ is His

27. Such doctrine is attributed toward Photinus, Paul of Somosata and Paul al-Maşışı, see Cheikho, Trois Traites, P. 87, and Vingt Traites, P. 36.
son not through the reality of sonship, but in terms of honour? Our venerable scholar Abū ‘Alī said: The mentioning of khalīl (friend) with God is possible about Abraham in reality, because khullah (friendship) is taken from Istifā'a (specially chosen) and Ikhtisās (special association). It is said about a human being that he is a friend of the other when he associated him with a special characteristic with which he does not associate anybody else. So since He set Abraham apart through giving him revelation and giving him honour in a way in which He did not distinguish anybody else in his time, it is possible that he may be called "Friend of God". So he names himself "Friend of God".

This analogy requires that every prophet would be characterised by being friend of God, because each one of them was characterised by inspiration and honour which was absent from other people. Because of that our prophet said: "If I was going to take a friend, then I would have taken Abū Bakr as a friend, but your master is a friend of God so he named or called himself friend of God. He refrained from taking anyone among his community as a friend because he encompassed them all in his communication and explanation of the mission. Therefore it was not possible to give a special place to one of them in that way because the special character which God had given him, apart from the rest of the people of his time, to convey the message. Furthermore, He had distinguished Abraham with that, and it became a nickname for him which is possible in terms of the usage of the name. Do you not understand that the Qur'ān had characterised by this use of names Qur'ān, although its significance can be applied also to other (books). Moses was distinguished in that he was a person addressed by God, although God has spoken to the angels. It is more appropriate than giving khalīl the meaning of love or necessity, because that will hardly apply in both (God and Abraham). So it is a metaphorical expression. In terms of that, the lover distinguishes his sweetheart by that which he does not distinguish somebody else. The needy person needs what is needed, as a khalīl needs a friend whom he has adopted as a friend. Because of that it will hardly apply to both cases so it could not be said that everybody whom he loves is His friend, unless He distinguished him through His prophethood and other things which do not characterise someone else.

They might ask: Is not as the poet said -

If a friend comes one day to see him to ask for something, he will say my wealth will not be absent (from you) or prohibited (to you).
So he characterised him through this need.

The lexicographers explained that if the meaning *khaññ* is need/needed, then it is taken from *khallah* with the fatha on the *khä*. If its meaning is love, then it is taken from *khullah* with *damma* on the *khä*. So why cannot there be a literal meaning in both?

The answer is that, we did not disapprove its application to these two matters. We only claimed that it was a metaphor not that, if it was its real meaning, it would disprove our opinion. This is because it is required that Abraham was characterised by being a friend of God either because he showed what no one else could show of, his need through his devotion to God in that period of time, or he showed a love of God which he did not show for anyone else, or he was distinguished by Him in a way nobody else was characterised. Then the name became a proper noun for him. It is not possible to say the same with regard to sonship, because the real meaning of the son is that it must be the offspring of the Father, existing from his sperm. It cannot be imagined about God. It is required that it is impossible that Christ may be characterised as Son of God in the terms of Abraham who was described as a friend of God.

Abū ʿUthmān al-Jāḥīz replied and said that Abraham was not friend because of a friendship between him and God because friendship, brotherhood and sincerity are excluded from God. He (Abraham) was friend through friendship which he caused to enter himself and his state, because he showed his need through his devotion, to God, which no one experienced before him, through his being thrown into the fire, through his attempt to sacrifice his own son.

28. Abū ʿUthmān ʿAmr b. baḥr al-Jāḥīz was one of the greatest Arabic authors of all time. He was a Muʾtazīlī and political-religious polemi̇ċs. Born at Baṣra about 160 AH/776 AD. He belonged to Baṣrī Muʾtazīlī group. He stayed for a long time in Baghdad and won the compliments of al-Ḥārūn. He died in 255 AH/868-9 AD.

His encyclopedic knowledge is amazing. J. Finkel mentions that Risāla ʿīl al-Radd ʿalā al-Nisārī was written at the express wish of the court, because he had been in close association with the Christians. According to J. Finkel, although this work is merely a propagandist pamphlet, no other work goes so directly to the vital feathers of the problems, no work has such a potentially deadly effect.

through his giving away his property as a charity, through the way his people treated him, through his renunciation of his parents in life and death and through his leaving his homeland and emigration to another country and resting-place, so he became through these hardships friend of God. God brought him into relationship with Himself and named him His friend among the prophets as the Ka'ba is called temple of God among the other temples, as the people of Mecca are called people of God among all the people in other countries, and as the she-camel of Shâlî is called the she-camel of God. The same is the case for everything that God has magnified whether from good or evil or reward and punishment. Similarly the Arabs say, "leave him in the curse of God and His fire", as He said, the Qur'ân is the Book of God and al-Muharram is the month of God. As it was said about Ḥamza that he was the lion of God and about Khâlid that he was the sword of God. For this reason Christ was described as Spirit of God, because the souls are created through the sperm (seed) of men, when it is put in the womb of woman as is usually the case. God created in the womb of Mary a spirit and body in a miraculous way. Because of that distinction, Christ was called Spirit of God. 29 That cannot be applied to sonship, because it is well known by everyone of us that if each one of us is compassionate to a young puppy, and then looked after it, it is incorrect to call it a son and he cannot associate it to himself as a father. On the other hand, if he adopts a baby, and then looks after him, it is possible to call him a son, because it is similar to his own son and a similar (person) could be born to him. 30 Since it is not possible (to use the term Son) for someone who has body like another but would not be (in any way) similar to a son, if he had a son, it would be even more appropriate that such a thing could not be said with regard to God.

They might argue: Why is it not possible to say about Christ that He is Son of

29. From the beginning of the paragraph, up to this sentence, 'Abd-al-Jabbâr has quoted this reference from al-Radd'alâ. al-Nasârâ by al-Jâhîz. It seems that he has taken the whole source of information regarding the explanation of khâlîl and khullah from al-Radd, but with changes and leaving a few lines and adding few sentences. It is obvious that while dictating this chapter he had a copy of al-Radd 'alâ al-Nasârâ. For details - see Jâhîz al-Radd 'alâ al-Nasârâ, PP. 30-32.

30. This is another reference from al-Radd 'alâ al-Nasârâ P. 30 without mentioning the source. It is quite strange that the argument stated by 'Abd al-Jabbâr, is the original argument of al-Nazzâm against the Christians as al-Jâhîz mentioned it and then criticised it. But 'Abd al-Jabbâr mentioned it without any reference other than to al-Jâhîz.
God because He distinguished Him and created Him without a man as father?

The answer is that: The same is the case with regard to Adam because He created him without a man as father and a woman as mother.

They might argue: He distinguished Christ with an upbringing with which He did not distinguish anyone else. Therefore it is possible to describe Christ as His Son.

The answer is: It exists in all of the prophets, all of them were brought up by God, in the sense that He provided them with the means of subsistence and fed them. Because the concept of taking on the task of nursing and giving them food and drink could not correctly apply to God with regard to anyone. Christ is not excluded from the fact that it was his own mother who looked after him like rest of the people. If it was applied to God Adam would be the most appropriate case, because He distinguished him by the fact that He created him in His heaven and dispensed with him being brought up by mother and He settled him in His garden. So all these facts are more amazing with regard to Adam. 31

If it is possible to say that Christ is His Son, then that would be more appropriate in the case of Adam. All these will invalidate what they are depending upon.

Our venerable scholars explained that sonship cannot be applied in reality except to who is begotten by him on the basis of reason. It could not be used metaphorically with regard to someone who could take the place of his son, by virtue of the fact that he is a human being. They (further) expressed that the method of metaphor cannot be applied to the Eternal. If the metaphor could be used analogically, it would be incorrect in this place, and no advantage can be gained from it. So how is it possible when we know very well that the metaphor cannot be used analogically? They have explained that if one of our youth said to an old man, "My son, and oh my little son", it is quite reprehensible, although he is from the same species, because it is incorrect that he could give birth to such an old man. They (further) explained that one of us cannot say of a beast

---

31. This argument against the Christians is taken from al-Radd 'alā- al-Naṣārā by al-Jahiz (pp. 32-3). But this time 'Abd al-Jabbar has presented the summary of the argument in his own words not the exact words of al-Jahiz as he usually does.
that it is his son, nor of inorganic bodies. The dissimilarity of the Eternal with physical bodies is more intense than the dissimilarity of one of us with a beast or an inorganic thing. The former is dissimilar with regard to the essence and latter is dissimilar with regard to attributes. So it is more appropriate that it should not be applied with regard to Him.

By depending upon what is said in the Gospel, "I am ascending to my Father"\(^32\) and upon Christ describing himself as His Son and God as Father, and upon Christ asking his disciples to say in their prayers, "Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name",\(^33\) and God's saying to David,\(^34\) "A Son will be born to you, who will be named My Son and I would be named His Father",\(^34\) (by depending on all this), they argue that it is necessary that it would be a decision from God who ordered us to name him by it and God should be worshipped through him (Christ), even though this name (Son of God) is not well-known in classical Arabic as your doctrine of the revealed names of God.

This is wrong, because what they mentioned its position is like isolated reports (\textit{akhbār ahād}) insofar as we do not know about its authenticity. Therefore it is not possible to adhere to it and be absolute about its authenticity.

It is reported from the Torah, the Gospels and the Book of Psalms that God said, "Thus says the Lord, Israel is my first born (Ex. 4:22) He is the first of my creatures whom I adopted him as son."\(^35\)

That requires that Jacob would be Son of God. If it is conceded then it is correct that God would be a grandfather of Joseph. If it is possible to say that, then it is possible that He would be paternal and maternal Uncle through the aspect of love and respect and then it would be correct for Him to be a companion and friend. It is invalid because if it requires honouring Christ through a description, then it also requires that the Eternal would be created through describing Him in terms which require imperfection. How is it possible to say that He is Father of Christ? It is incorrect to say that He is uncle of the

\(^{32}\) John. 20:17 -  
\(^{33}\) Matt. 6:9 -  
\(^{34}\) It seems a reference from the Bible, but it does not exist in the Bible.  
\(^{35}\) The second line does not exist in the Bible.
Children of the disciples or cousin in terms of the fact that Christ said to his disciples: "You are my brothers".  

How it is possible to say that, while God has denied this phrase of (Jews and Christians in the Qur'an) who said: "We are the sons of God and His beloved one" (5:18). He also denied the doctrine of the Arabs when they assumed that the angels were His daughters. He denied that. If it was not impossible to be used as a name and understood of Him, he would not have denied it.

They might argue: If that was correct in the Torah or the Gospel, would it have been a correct deduction?

The answer is: We have no knowledge about this use of language, so we are not forced to admit its interpretation. It is only necessary that we know that it is impossible for God to adopt sons and it is impossible for us to discuss what is meant by that or similar things in their argument. When we became aware of that, we interpreted what is reported from the Torah and the Gospel, that, if it was correct, then its meaning in the sentence is different from sonship. It is possible that in their language, it might be permissible and it might mean that He is Eternal, Deity and Lord, although that would be impossible in our language.

Languages have different conditions with regard to that. Therefore we maintain that whoever is going to translate one language to another must be well-versed about what is possible to say about God and what is impossible from the aspect of reason. He must be fully aware about their real meaning and metaphorical usage because one word sometimes is used in its literal meaning for one thing and as a metaphor for another, and he must know what may be put in their place in the second language which may be used in its real meaning, not in metaphor. The one who translated a metaphor from the first language into something which only has a real meaning in the second language, has made a mistake. There is no doubt that in these books the metaphors are something

36. According to the New Testament, Christ said: "And stretching out his hand towards his disciples he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers, For Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister, and mother. Matt. 12:49-50.

37. See Qur'an when it says: "What has your Lord favoured you with sons and taken to Himself from the angels females". (17:40).

38. For Christian viewpoint, see Sharī al-'Aqīda al-Naṣrānyya, (Cheikho, Vingt Troites, P. 5).
similar to the not clearly intelligible passages in the Qurān (mutashābihāt). It is known that when many of the commentators interpret Arabic through Persian they are mistaken in their method, either through the ignorance of the meaning from the aspect of reason or language.

It is reported that it is in the Gospel: "I am ascending to my Father and your Father" (John 20:17). This would require Him being their Father as well as His Father. It is said that the correct version is that: "I am ascending to my God and your God." (John 20:17). The mistake occurred in the quotation of the words and the change the alif for rā.\(^{39}\) (i.e. ﷺ for ﷺ).

They might argue: When it is conceded according to you that God proclaims that Christ is His Word and His Spirit, why do you not allow that He can say in the Gospel that He is His Son.\(^{40}\)

The answer is: Our venerable scholar Abū ‘Alī said: The purpose behind characterising Christ, as the Word of God is that people can get guidance through him as their guidance through the Kalima (Word). The meaning of our phrase that he is the Spirit of God is that people live through him in their religion as they are living through their own souls that exist in their bodies. That is an extension and comparison of it with the kalima (word), which is evidence and with the spirit, which those of ﷺ who are alive need. It is just like speech which describes that which leads as a light and a healing, in terms of truth which would be known through it, just as the path is known through the light and in terms of that the salvation in religion which occurs through it, just as the healing occurs through the medicine. It is not necessary that, when a word is permitted in the usage in different places, it would have been allowed in another place without any evidence, because of that we could not say that Christ is Son of God, by analogy of our phrase that He is Spirit of God and His Word. In the same way it is said that Gabriel is the spirit and it is not said that he is the son. There is no difference between those who asked us to apply the word son, to him in the terms of us characterising him by the fact that he is spirit and between our demands that he would be called father and brother of God through analogy of that, because the meanings of all these in their reality

---

39. For this argument, see Apology of Timothy I, p. 156.
40. Elias of Nisibis has applied this argument and referred to the Gospel. (See Cheikho, Trois Traites, p. 35)
are not possible with regard to God, nor are the aspects, by which it could be said metaphorically that a human being can be a son of someone else, possible about God as we mentioned before. So the claim about that is invalid.

No one can say: Why did not you concede that God adopted him as son according to the aspect of mercy, insofar as nobody could look after him? (The reason for that) is that would require that Adam would be His son and it would also be necessary in the case of the angels who have no father that they would be the children of God. It can be said about a person who took pity on another and adopted him as son that he can be called his father because he treated him as son in the same manner. These meanings are impossible with regard to God. We have explained (before) that the real meaning of friendship is possible with regard to Abraham, in terms of Him distinguishing him and trusting him with His revelation. It is quite right (to say) that about the rest of the prophets even though mostly it is used with regard to Abraham. It is not possible to say that about the believers because He did not characterise them with knowledge and revelation. Therefore all (these arguments) repudiate Christ being called the Son of God.

As for their calling him the Word of God, it is incorrect in its real meaning, because the meaning of speech in its reality is arranged words. Christ had a physical body. Therefore he cannot be a speech. He was called Kalima (Word) or God insofar as there was guidance through him and his prophylactic.

Abū 'Uthmān (al-Jāḥīz) said: Christ was called Spirit as Gabriel is called Spirit of God and Holy Spirit in the same way as He named the Qur'ān that when He said: "Even so we have revealed to thee a spirit of our bidding" (42:52) and He said "He sends down the angels with the spirit of His command." (16:12). This phrase did not require that Gabriel or the Qur'ān are sons of God, so in this way it does not require that with regard to Christ. As for the phrase of God, "So we breathed into her our Spirit" (66:12), this should not be understood in its real meaning because it is impossible with regard to God. It is as His phrase about the story of Adam, "When I have shaped him and breathed My spirit in him, fall you down, bowing before him." (14:29). It does not require that he (Adam) would be His spirit in its real meaning or His son. The same is the case with Christ. All these (arguments) invalidate what we narrated from them about the Trinity and the rest of what they derived from that as their explanation of hypostases, as they have explained it, and their application of analogies in this
matter, because most of these are interpretations of the expression. What we mentioned before as evidence that God cannot be a physical body, repudiates most of their phrases and examples, because their external meaning would reflect that He was a body. Whoever considered all these (arguments) will understand the invalidity of the all that they hold as doctrines and the examples which they depend on. So there is no need to pursue the matter in greater detail.

3 - Section

Repudiation of their doctrine about Union and what is related to it.

You should realise that what we are engaged in refuting is only what is reasonable about their doctrines in this chapter, not what is impossible to believe. We have narrated from them (their doctrines) in general, (now) we will indicate the invalidity of what comes within the bounds of reason and classify it as the discussion allows.

Their doctrine about union involves several points:

1. They may say that the Son is from the group of the hypostases that united with Christ.

2. Or they may say that what united with him is the substance which has three hypostases.

If they argue that the Son has united with him, then they must admit that the Son is a God who is creator, producer and agent or they must make God the Divine Creator, the Father whose Son is the Kalima (word) apart from the Father.

   [Their doctrine (united with him) has many aspects:]

3. They may say that each is (in the same position) as it was, but the will of the Son is will of Christ or the will of Christ is His will or their wills are quite different from each other but what one wishes the other must wish, so that this is what we (the Christians) mean by union.
If the essence of God and the essence of man; or the substance of both of them are as before;

4. Or they may say that the union has required the removal of their essences from what they were before.

*************

Bearing in mind (all) that they would have to give (one of several expressions).

1. They may say that He (the Son) was conjoined with Christ, i.e., Christ became like a vessel for Him.

This doctrine is reported from some of them. 41

2. They may say that the Son mingled or merged him.

3. They may say that the Son inhered (became incarnate) in Him, not he was conjoined with him.

*************

Those who hold the doctrine of inherence (incarnation) must maintain,

Either the Son inhered in all the parts of Christ; or the Son inhered part of him.

*************

These (doctrines) would apply whether they maintained that,

Either when He was united with him, He and Christ were two 43 substances and two essences;

or they both become one in reality - as has been reported concerning the majority of the Jacobites that two substances became one substance.

*************

Those who hold these doctrines is required to say:

Either when He united with him, He would be united forever;

Or that He unites with Him in certain circumstances.

*************

41. This is a Nestorian expression about incarnation.

42. We read it an yaqūlū.

43. Here ʿAbd al-Jabbar clearly using dhāt as a synonym for jawhar. This is not the way he treats it when he maintained that jawhar is a physical being.

For detail see Chapter II, PP. 110-114.

58
In the same way, their doctrine about the death and crucifixion of Christ requires as they believe that:
Either they may say: that He unites with him as he was;
Or that He ceased to from being united with him.

These are the main argument of the rational aspects about union. We shall explain the refutation of all these, then we shall repudiate their doctrine about the adoration of Christ and what is related to it.

************
You must realise that the discussion of Christian doctrine shows that according to them that which united with the body of Christ is a divine being who is able to do what can only be done by God, because they rely on the view that divine action was manifested through him. So it is required that Son of God and His Word has united with him. If they maintained that the Son cannot do what God is characterised as having power to do, then this doctrine is impossible. That must be accepted by them or they must say that that which is united with the physical body of Christ is the Father Himself, and because of that it was possible for Divine action to be manifested through him.

Their doctrine about the worship of Christ would require what we have mentioned through these two aspects, namely:

1. That God united with him, so he is entitled to be worshipped from the aspect of his divinity not the aspect of his humanity.

2. The Son is the (hypostasis) which is united, but he is entitled to be worshipped in the same way as the Father.

Their doctrine that Christ has two substances, divine and human nature, requires that that which is united with Christ is a God. They said that He is the Son or the Substance which consists of three hypostases that through which we repudiate their doctrine about the union, will repudiate both of these aspects.

As for those who maintained that He has united with him in the sense of will, their doctrine will divide into three aspects.

1. Their wills are different, but it is required that they both agree in will.
2. The will of the divine nature is same as the will of human nature.

3. The will of human nature is the same as the will of divine nature.

4 - Section

That the will of God (Qadim) is different from the will of Christ

What indicates the invalidity of the first (argument) [Their wills are different but it is required that they both agree in will] is the fact that it is the possibility of each of two all powerful beings (i.e. God (Qadim) and Christ (Messiah) for their will and wish to enable one of them to will the opposite of what the other wills. It is possible that one of them could dislike what the other wills, just as it would be impossible for them to have different motives for actions. There is no difference between those who maintained that there must be a concurrence of will of the God (Qadim) and Christ and between those who maintained that their motives must be in agreement. It is also required that their actions must concur so that the action of each of them may be possible for the other. We know that the refutation of that is through the same method as the refutation of their doctrine by the argument that every attribute which occurs for one of them must occur for the other in terms of eating, drinking and crucifixion etc.

Furthermore, it is right of one who wills something that he should be one who knows about it or be virtually one who knows about it. [It is known that the God (Qadim) is a knower because of Himself. Who knows what would be in the future in terms of advantages and disadvantages while Christ also knows through a knowledge (given to him).] As it is not required that he may know everything that God (Qadim) knows, in the same way it is not required that he may will what God wills.

Furthermore, it will involve Christ knowing everything which God (Qadim) knows. In the same way, it is not necessary that he may will everything which God wills. Furthermore, it is required that when God sent him as a prophet and he became Christ, he wished everything that God wished or he wished it in certain circumstances according to the will of God. It is impossible to accept the first statement because in this circumstance, God does not will everything which Christ wills because He wills matters which are His personal acts;
whereas the acts of men (ibād) are subject to sequence (of time) in one circumstance after another. So how could it be said that Christ wished such things in all these situations? On the other hand if he wished such things subject to sequence (of time), in that case he would be wishing for something for himself only. So how could it be said that he is united in terms of union of will, even though both of their wills may have been united partially. Furthermore, this doctrine requires with regard to all of the prophets the same as their doctrine about Christ; that He would be united with all of them, and all of them would be His sons. (This is case) because Christ only agrees with Him in terms of will, by virtue of being a prophet and on the grounds that he has manifested miracles. That is also necessary for the rest of the prophets. But it is possible that there could be among the mukallaf (who is obligated to observe the precepts of the religion) someone who knows the welfare of the people and wishes another thing which God wishes in terms of acts of obedience. Therefore it is necessary that God would be united with him.

However, according to them He was united with Him at his beginning of his life, although in that state, he did not concur with God in all of His acts of will. Therefore would not the same be possible for the rest of men who concur with Him in one will or special intentions. This refutes their special characterisation of Christ with what they have characterised.

Furthermore, how could union through concurrence of will be necessary without concurrence of knowledge and perception of things where everyone who knows what He knows or realises what He realises must be united with God? If that (i.e. knowledge) is not necessary the same is the case with regard to will.

5 - Section

The invalidity of the doctrine of those who claimed that God has United with Christ, through the fact the will of the divine nature became the will of human nature.

44. Taklīf is imposing a requisition or constraint upon any one, it requires an action in which there is difficulty and trouble. Technically it means the necessity which lies on the creatures of Allah to believe and act as He has revealed to them. On this definition, it applies only to things necessarily required and to things forbidden. According to Islamic teaching every sane human adult (āqlī, bālīgh) is thus mukallaf. E.I., Vol. IV, P. 631.
What repudiates their doctrine that He has united with him, through the fact that the will of divine nature became the will of human nature, is that the evidence has indicated that God (Qadim) wills through a will without any limitation of location (Mahall), as we shall explain later on. It has become known that the physical body can only will, through a will that inheres in part of it. Since that is true, it is not possible that the will of God would be the will of Christ, through the fact that the divine will could not be in part of Christ. Similarly it is not possible to say that His act is the act of Christ, through the fact that it did not exist through him, because it is the requirement of an act that it will only be characterised by being the act of one who carries it out, through it occurring through him (agent). Similarly, the will can only be the will of the physical body through being in part of it. So anyone who allows the will of God (Qadim) to be the will of Christ, must concede that His action will be located in him.

Furthermore, why did God's will become more appropriate to be the will of Christ than the will of the rest of bodies. When in fact He (only) associated it with Christ in the same way as He associates it with other bodies. That would require that all living creatures would will through His will and this is invalid, because this would mean that it would be impossible for God and men to will something repugnant as that is impossible for God. It would mean that it is also impossible to wish anything Contrary to what God wished and to dislike what He wished. The position would not differ about it, whenever God (Qadim) wished anything.

Furthermore, if it is conceded that His will would be the will of him without it being located in any place, then it would be possible that their wills, knowledge and everything which characterise them, would refer to God. That requires the impossibility of one of them disliking whatever the other wishes, and knowing what the other does not know. (As a result of shared ignorance) it would require him being ignorant of what exist in hearts of any one of us. That would exclude Him from being the one who knows Himself. Likewise it would require Him to know about a thing without knowing about it (at the same time) as Zayd knew it and 'Amr did not know it. It would require Him to be desiring and needy, because it is not possible that He would be subject to a knowledge which existed in our hearts without desire, through the fact that one of them (God and man) sometimes existed to the extent in which the other existed. The absolute
invalidity of that requires that the original base of the argument is invalid.

Furthermore, this doctrine requires that He would be united with the rest of living persons and there would be no distinction for Christ. It is required in every situation that God would be united with the rest of the prophets, because their state (ḥāl) and the state of Christ are not different in anything which they have mentioned in this matter.

6 - Section (12)

The Invalidity of the doctrine of those who argued that He united with him through intermingling, conjunction and being unified in terms of a vessel (haykal) skeleton and a location

What repudiates their doctrine of that God (Qādīm) has united with Christ, through the will of Christ becoming will of God, is the fact that the will of Christ requires that it would be situated in part of Him (God). Otherwise it would not be situated in and characterised by him. What inheres in the heart of Christ cannot be applied to God (Qādīm), because that would have required that the rest of what inhered in him would have been subject to the same rule. In this way there would be the necessity of Him being ignorant through any ignorance if it existed in (Christ) heart and desiring, if it existed in (Christ) heart. It also requires His being an observer of what does exist in (Christ) heart and thoughtful and regretful. All of these are impossible for God. So it required to invalidate what they said about His will that it is His will.

Furthermore, why should his will became more appropriate to be the will of any other person, by virtue of the fact that the relation of all these with God (Qādīm) is the same. This also requires everything that we mentioned before of the necessity of His being one who wishes evil things and willing and unwilling for one and the same thing. (For example) when Zayd wished it and ʿAmr did not

45. Apparently qalb means heart, or lump of flesh pertaining to it, but here ʿAbd al-Jabbār meant mind or secret thought, soul or intellect.

wish it. It also requires the possibility of Him being knowing and ignorant at
the same time, and whatever leads to that must be invalid.

Furthermore, before Christ was born, created and was living, God would have
been willing different affairs. It was known that it was impossible (to say) that
He was willing through the will of Christ, because in these circumstances Christ
did not exist as alive.

Therefore, it is necessary that He would be willing through the will which had
no location (mahall). It is impossible to say that He will wish through the will
of another living person, because we are discussing what was before the
creation of every living being (and) because He would have to will the creation
of the first whom He created. In this situation His being willing through a will
is required without any location (mahall). So it is required that He would be
willing through a will without any location after the creation of the creature,
because what required that in one circumstance, will require it in every
circumstances, insofar as it is known that the relation of the causes of what
requires it to be established will not change. However, this doctrine requires
that He must be united with others besides in the same way as He is united with
him, and all others would be His Sons as Christ is His son. In this way is the
total repudiation of their doctrine.

7 - Section (123)

The repudiation of the doctrine of these who claimed that God united with
Christ, in the sense that He inhered in him.

As for the doctrine of those who maintained that He united with him through
mingling, cojoining and uniting with in the form of a human and in a special
location, it is invalidated by what we pointed in the argument that God is
neither substance nor physical body, because since that is confirmed about Him,
and conjunction is only possible between the substances and physical bodies,
how could it be said that God has mingled, cojoined and became united with him
in this way?

We have explained that such doctrine about Him, requires Him to be created
and to be excluded from being an Eternal deity. It requires the impossibility of
the occurrence of God in bodies. Nobody can say that He was cojoined with him and mingled with him in a way that contradicted what they understood about the conjunction of the substances. So this doctrine will not lead to what you i.e. (Christians) mentioned, because conjunction is only understood on this basis. It is only possible with regard to the substances. There is no difference between those who affirmed Him as being cojoined to Christ according to an unreasonable way and between those who affirmed Him as tangible, composed and compounded with him and being part of him in an unreasonable way.

An opponent might argue:
Do you not say that God is in every place not through the Conjunction? So concede it in the same as we argued.

The answer is:
We say in a metaphorical way and we mean by it that He is the organizer (mudabbir) everywhere and knows about every place and what occurs in it as we mentioned before. What we intended by using this expression is reasonable, and the possibility of using this word for it in a metaphorical sense is intelligible. It is not the case as you said, because you made Him cojoined to him in its real meaning and characterised Him with the body of Christ according to this point of view and not something else. Then You contradicted it through your doctrine that He does not cojoin with him in the same way as the conjunction of substances. It is a rejection of what has been affirmed.

Furthermore, if it is possible that He is cojoined to Christ, then why is it not possible that He is cojoined to the rest of the prophets and others? Why do you distinguish Christ in that He united with him apart from others? Why do you not concede that He might unite with him on some occasions and He cojoined with him on some occasions? Why do you not concede that He cojoined with inorganic bodies and united with them? What merit does Christ have in this Union, in view of the fact that his condition and the condition of the rest of the bodies are same with regard to God.

An opponent might argue:
I affirmed Him united with him apart from the rest of the bodies, because divine actions were shown through him and by him.
The answer is:
Then concede that He (God) would be united with the rest of the prophets for the same reason. Concede also that He would cease to be united with him when the miracles do not appear from him. Furthermore, the showing of the miracles through him does not indicate that He occupied him through conjunction or something else, because God is able to bring about miracles, even though He is without any location. Furthermore, why did it become more appropriate for Him to be united with Christ for this reason, than being united with the body that God raised through Christ. Indeed this statement would be more appropriate, because that is where the action occurred not in Christ. Otherwise if its occurrence is possible without unions with Him (ie., the dead or blind) then its occurrence should be possible without the union with Christ. In fact it is possible without God's Union with anything. In this argument is a refutation of this doctrine.

Furthermore, it is required that He could be cojoined either to all parts of Christ or to some of them. His being cojoined is not applicable to all of his parts. That would require that God is of many parts but it is proved (beyond doubt) by the evidence that He is one. (Being cojoined to many parts) would require God to be in many locations on one occasion. It is impossible in every case where conjunction might be possible. If it was not for that, then it would be possible for a body to be in two places. On the other hand, if He cojoined some of his parts, then it would require that He was united with part and this part would have a special particularization which the others did not have. That would mean, that part is a thing by which the miracles appeared, not Christ, consequently this doctrine is repudiated. So through all these arguments the invalidity of their doctrine about the union according to this point of view is correct.

8 - Section

The invalidity of the doctrine of Jacobites that Christ has a divine nature and a human nature, which both united and became one nature.

As for the doctrine, that God has united with Christ, ie, inhered in him, it is invalid through many aspects. One of them is: that everything which inhered in a thing and existed there, after it had not been in it previously, must be one of
The two categories: either it existed in it through being created like the 
existence of accident in the substance, or it transferred to it as the transfer of 
one substance that became cojoined to another. It could only be understood 
through these two aspects, because we have indicated that the transfer is 
impossible about a thing which has no limitation. It is impossible to say that He 
transfers and inheres in Christ, for that if God (Qādīm) occurred in Christ 
through transference that would require that He was a substance. If God 
existed in him through the fact that He inhaled in him and occurred (hadatha) in 
him like the inherence of the accident (in a substance), this would require that 
God was created. However if transference is impossible for Him, then it is 
more impossible to speak about His createdness, because the creation of 
something already existing is more impossible than the transfer of a thing which 
has no substance.

They might argue:
Is it not according to your venerable scholar Abū `Ali that speech exists on the 
tablet or tongue without having been transferred from another place or 
without having been created. This is a rational category which You have 
ignored. So you must allow God (Qādīm) to unite with Christ according to this 
point of view. You cannot reject it merely, because you do not hold it, and that 
does not stop this argument from being a rational argument.

The answer is:

According to Abū `Ali speech can only take place in a location (maḥall). He 
maintained that it occurs in a maʿnā (element which carries an attribute) which 
is a voice, writing or memory of it. If God (Qādīm) inheres in Christ on this 
basis, then it would be impossible that He is free from location (maḥall). He 
would only exist in him because of a maʿnā which occurs with it. However, 
everything which exists in something else, after it has not existed in it 
previously, must be of two categories.

1. The first is that it existed before it was not in it. Then it went into it.

2. The other is that it did not exist before at all. That it was caused to be in 
it. It was known that God (Qādīm) existed before His union with Christ. 
Whatever is like that it would be impossible for it to occur in something without 
a maʿnā which caused (it to occur in it) like speech according to Abū `Ali.
However, if it occurs in something else, not because of ma'na which occurs, that is impossible. As we explained before it is impossible to say that it inheres in it, because of a reason in which that would be required and therefore it would dispense with a ma'na because of which it inheres in it. We have already explained this doctrine in detail.

They might argue:
We say that He united with him, not on the basis of incarnation and not by the means of conjunction. So our doctrine is not involved in what you have mentioned. Granted that we said that He inhered in him, how is it forced upon us to admit that we treated it in the manner of inherence of the accident in location (mahall). Why is it not possible for us to affirm Him as inhering in him according to a different reason (wajh). So our doctrine is not repudiated as you mentioned it.

The answer is:
A thing existing in something else can only be established in itself on a rational basis. Similarly every doctrine that affirms what is irrational must be invalid. Likewise the doctrine of the existence of a thing in something else on an irrational basis (wajh lâ yu'gal) must be invalid. It is already known that it is impossible for a thing to be understood to exist in something else, except if the other thing is like a container (zarf) for it or cojoining to it or inhering in it or its spatiality (hayyiz) being the spatiality of the other. What our venerable scholar Abû 'Ali put forward about speech comes within this category, because he affirms that it inheres in location (mahall) even though he maintained that it takes place in it not through creation. Since that is established, what we said already; that it is only reasonable for one thing to exist in another on this basis, is possible.

They might argue:
Could not the thing take place in time, without anything being cojoined to it or inhering in it. This is a rational argument outside the two categories which you mentioned.

The answer is:
In reality, the thing that occurs in time, has no relation with it. We only say
that it existed in it through a mašā that it occurred with it. Even though its existence and its occurrence was not possible in it. For that reason it is said concerning its time that it occurred in terms of us making it be of the same time as it. As we say, that the coming of Zayd existed when the sun was rising. Sometimes we say, that rising of the sun occurred on the occasion of the coming of Zayd, according to the different situation of whom we are addressing. So this category has no effect for what they said about the union of God with Christ. Therefore we do not let it come into the discussion of the arguments and we limit that argument to these two categories which we have mentioned.

What shows the soundness of our comments, is that everything which existed in something else, would either be with it in its location or in another location which was cojoined to it. So whatever took place with it through conjunction could only be a substance as we have mentioned before. What took place in its location, would only be that which inheres. To exclude a thing which exists in something else, from these two categories is irrational. There is no difference between those who claimed a third category (for that) and between those who claimed a fourth or fifth for it. If God was in union with Christ and it is not possible that He was cojoined with him, then He must inhere in him and become in his location. On the basis of what we established, anything else would be irrational.

They might argue:
It is possible that an accident may exist with other another accident only according to these two reasons.

The answer is:
One of them would not exist in the other. They would both exist in something else. Therefore it has no relation to what we have mentioned. If it had a relation with it, it would not effect it, because when both of them existed in one location, then the spatiality for one of them is spatiality for the other.

They might argue:
Why do you not concede that He did unite with Christ, not according to this

1. We have dropped the word "innihū" from translation because it has no meaning in the context.
reason, but in the same way as a picture of human being appears in a polished mirror when it is looked into, 46 or appearance of the engraving of a seal in clay in which it has been stamped. It is a rational basis that does not refer to inherence and conjunction.

The answer is:
We do not maintain that a picture of a human being appears in the mirror or is printed in it or shows its likeness, because if it is printed in it that which printed must be a substance or an accident. It is known, that sometimes there is seen in the mirror (a reflection) which is bigger than (the actual object reflected), and that which is big cannot occur in that which is small. How can that be said when a man sees his face in the mirror according to its extended shape or he sees someone else's face without their being any difference (in the actual nature of the mirror)? Therefore why should it follow the same course if what he sees in it is not really his face? How can it be compared with the shadow of a man which may occur? The shadow is nothing more than the blocking of the sun's rays. Consequently it differs according to what it has blocked of the sun's rays. Thus it blocks much during the beginning of the day and a little around noon and sometimes it has no shadow at all before noon. (In one way) it might be possible (to say) that what he saw in the mirror was his face in reality, but he looked at it through the mirror, and that mirror became an instrument for him. In terms of that it is impossible that his face would be facing his eye. It needed something else by which his face would be facing it and that would become instrument to his eye. So we see that one of us rushes to use the mirror, when he intends to know the form of his own face, just as he rushes to use his eye to see the things which can be seen. When there is no fixed picture in the mirror, it is impossible to use their analogy of it with regard to union and the Trinity.

As far as the appearance of the engraving of a seal in clay, there is an accident which occurred in it and the engraving of a seal is an impression in it. This happens if the engraving of a seal encounters a soft body in which it sinks and there will be an impression of it, just as parts of it are depressed and other parts of it raised. So accidents whose state (ḥāl) differ from the seal occur in

46. The analogy criticised here by 'Abd al-Jabbār is a Jacobites expression as mentioned by Yahyā b. 'Adī and al-Shahrīstānī. See also Chapter I, P. 105.
the engraving. If God has united with Christ, according to this basis, He must be inhering in him or it is necessary that something else inheres in him. Since according to them the second argument is incorrect, the first is confirmed.

It is only possible to speak about the union as we have mentioned it, and to affirm the third aspect is incorrect and irrational. It is impossible to say that He inheres in him without (it being) according to a rational aspect of inherence, namely that he comes within his spatiality. However, that is irrational as we mentioned before. Therefore the doctrine of those who claimed that He united with him not according to these two aspects and that that was still rational is (demonstrated to be) invalid.

They might argue:
Since the being of God exists without any location (mahall), and without the aspect by which substance and accident exist, allow us to posit that His being exists in Christ without that being through conjunction and inherence.

The answer is:
When we affirmed Him existing, we did not exclude Him from the reality of existents, we only denied Him an attribute which is separate from existence and that is, that His being in cojoining or inhering, because of proof of the impossibility of that. Your doctrine is not like that, because you affirmed that He is in something else not according to the reason which is rational as being a thing in something else. Therefore you must affirm Him inhering in him or cojoining to him. Since both doctrines are invalid, their doctrine about the union is invalid.

The other thing which repudiates their doctrine that He has united in the sense that He has inhered in him, is that everything which exists without any location (mahall), cannot exist in a location. It indicates that, when a substance cannot inhere in a location, it would be impossible in every way. When inherence of the accident in a location is possible, it requires its being inherent in a location in every situation. So their doctrine, that He inhaled in Christ after He had not been inhering in Him, would be invalid.

47. We read lakin instead of lianna.
They might argue:
Why is His inherence in him not conceded after he had not inhered in him?

Does it contradict the rest of the accidents?

The answer is:
If He inheres in him, it must for one of two reasons, either His inherence is required in him or it is possible also and then the opposite would be possible. It is impossible to say that it is required in him, because when God was living (prior to Christ's existence) he did not inhere in the body of Christ. Then according to them (later when Christ's body came into existence) He inhere in it and Christ attribute (i.e. of Divinity) became one and the same (as God's). However, since Christ came into existence (bāqī) and if it was possible for God to inhere in him, God would have to become subject to the substance (jawhar) which, in the state of Christ existence, pertained in only one aspect (jiha) despite the fact that God could exist with that aspect.

However, it is not possible that He should inhere in Christ while there was the possibility of Him not inhering because that would require Him to be inhering in him by virtue of an element (within God) which demanded this (ma'nah). That is not the doctrine of the Christians. They maintained that God united with Christ and they were two substances and two separate natures, then they became one person which encompassed both. They do not affirm a third fact.

(If there was the possibility of the ma'nah referred to above) that ma'nah would have to leave a relationship with God. That relationship with God would require that either the ma'nah inhere in God or it inhere in His location. It is impossible for the ma'nah to inhere in God because God cannot be a location for something else. That is totally impossible for Him. Nor is it possible for the ma'nah to inhere in God's location because it would be more appropriate to require it to exist in Him than to require other things to exist in Him. If that ma'nah did not exist, either God would not exist or God would not become united with Christ (because there was no ma'nah in God which could give effect to that). There is no conceivable ma'nah (by which) God could become united with
the body of Christ except that which we have discussed (and rejected). 48

They cannot say that He exists in him, by reason of Christ's life and when Christ's life does not exist, God ceases to inhere in Christ, because life in Christ is the same as in anybody else. Therefore, if it is by reason of life that He inheres in him they would have to concede that He inhere in others.

They cannot use that argument that he (Christ) is like a voice in relationship to speech according to our venerable scholar Abū 'Alī, because according to Abū 'Alī voice is only possible with regard to him by virtue of the reasonable and accepted argument of the need of his speech for voice. They cannot provide any category which God would need it for.

The other argument which invalidates this doctrine is that if God inheres in mankind, it would require that which is inhered in has an effect which did not exist before: either it becomes separate from other things through the realisation (of the inherence) or a state occurs which did not exist before, as we say, in the rest of the maḏānī which inhere (in mankind). 49

They might argue:
An effect which does occur in that which is inhered (muḥall) in it, is that it becomes one of those things from which divine action is possible and that was not the case before.

The answer is:
This would require that at (the moment of the) existence (of the union) (by virtue of) God being power that which is inhered in becomes capable (of doing) that which it would not (ordinarily) be capable of and certain things are possible for it which were not possible before. Since that is invalid the (whole) doctrine is invalidated.

48. Here ʿAbd al-Jabbār refuted the Christian doctrine through the argument of maḏā. As a matter of fact it is pure Muʿtazilite argument presented against the Kullābiyya. But ʿAbd al-Jabbār applied it wrongly against the Christians. It can be said that according to ʿAbd al-Jabbār Christians and Kullābiyya are in same category, so he could not justify in his argumentation.

49. Here ʿAbd al-Jabbār seems to declare a doctrine that the man has a maḏā that carry the sīfāt.
On the other hand, if God inheres in Christ, He could only inhere in him in terms which are (already established as) invalid because everything that has occurred in something else can only inhere in it through transference or through the invalidation of that by which it would have existed. When that thing is one of the things which cannot be transferred and is one of the things which remain (constant), it would only be separate from that which is inhered in by abolishing it or by abolishing what it needs. If God inheres in mankind, and it is known that mankind may die or be wiped out and so God must be excluded from inhering in mankind - God would be required not to be separate from man except by contradiction which would deny that or by the abolition of what man needs, so that it would be contradicted through that or else he would have to stop existing in him through the abolition of what he needs, even though it did not exist, as in the case of (sound) in Abū ʿAlī's theory of speech. All that is invalid, because it requires that He would be non-existent or that he had to have a maʾnā that exist in humanity.

They might argue:
If God may inhere in mankind, and it is true that He may separate from it because He does not need what you mentioned to be separate from it, He must be separate from it in the circumstance (hāl) of the possibility for His being separate from it.

The answer is:
It is known that God can inhere in the body of man in a circumstance in which man is living, not a circumstance in which it is possible that man is not living. Therefore, it is a possibility of His existing in him in such a circumstance, when it is possible that he may not exist. It requires that He may not be separate from him except through the aspects what we mentioned.
If God inheres in man, He must inhere in one of his parts and He would be a human being in reality as Mu'ammer\(^50\) said, or else they affirm the man is a visible body. Then their doctrine must have two aspects, either they say that He has inhere in his every part, although God is one, or He has inhere in one of his parts. Therefore, they affirm as many parts for God as man has, of which every part of Him (God) inhere in part of him (man). It cannot be said that every part of God has united with every parts of man, because that would require God having as many parts as the part of mankind, or the affirmation of many deities. Both of these are unsound. That is not as the Christians believe, because they maintained that He is one substance of three hypostases. They do not affirm for Him, many parts according to the parts of man.

---

50. Mu'ammer b. 'Abbād al-Sulami, a leading Mu'tazilite of the eight-ninth centuries. He was founder of a school of thought known as the Mu'ammariyya. He was a well known person among his contemporary colleagues and later authors. He born and brought up in Basra. He received his training there, and gained wide recognition among the leading theologians. Later on he moved to Baghdad.

His influence on the Mu'tazilites can be deduced from the impressive list of his pupils. In addition, he is described as a very learned man who held independent views as an outstanding polemicist and a great seceder from Qadariyya.

Ibn Murtadā asserts that Mu'ammār had been exposed to gnosticism and Zoroastrianism. Al-Sharistāni reports that he was under the influence of philosophers.

In the theological sphere, Mu'ammār was concerned with most issues related to the Uniqueness of God, His attributes, speech, bodies, will and accidents on which he had independent views and which he explained through his doctrine of ma'nā. While the Mu'tazilite in general maintain that God is the creator of bodies and accidents, Mu'ammār maintained that God is the creator of bodies not of the accidents, which he considers as either natural or voluntary creations of bodies.

The doctrine to which 'Abd al-Jabbār is referring is that according to Mu. 'Ammār atom (juz) itself is not a body, but the eight atoms make up a body. As reported by al-Ash'ari, accidents are not created by body. Mu'ammār maintained atoms are aggregated, accidents follow by necessity, the atoms produce them by necessity of their nature, each atom by itself, producing whatever accident resides in it. He died between 831-850 A.D.

It is also impossible to say that He inheres in one of the parts of Christ, while he is a man, because the evidence has indicated that a living human being is its totality not one part (only) as we shall point out later, because according to the Christians the way of union is that by he showed the divine actions. It was manifested through the totality of Christ not the one part of the heart. So it is impossible to relate the union with it.

They cannot say that He unites with one of his parts, even though a human being is a totality (Collection of parts), because it is required to know its location and to differentiate between it and others and to show the divine action manifesting through it, not through the totality. It is also required that this part would be Christ, the powerful, active and adored one according to them. It could not be said that God has united with Christ, rather it would be required to say that he has united with one of his parts. How is it possible that He unites with one of his parts not the other? Why did one of his parts become more appropriate than the other?

None of them can say that He inheres in one of his parts while the totality of Christ is characterised through it, as their argument about the ma‘āni which are required to be applied to the whole. It is because the union which they are affirming is only referring to the existence of God in man, not that they are affirming a state (ḥāl) for man that is required for God. It is required that its application should be limited to his location and it will separate from what we say about the ma‘āni that are related to the whole.

They cannot say that God is one (thing) and (sometimes) unites with all the parts of Christ, because everything which inheres in another thing, cannot inhere in them, unless one and the same ma‘ānā inhere in many locations without requiring the existence of locations which are in concurrence with each other. According to us the inherence of concurrence is possible in two locations because their concurrence is required because its class Jins would require their concurrence and would prevent it being in one place. That is impossible with regard to God. So it is required that He must be like the rest of the accidents whose inherence would only possible if he inhere in something else, which was in one location.
They might argue:
Is it not possible to be similar to the doctrine of Abū 'Ali, who allows the inherence of the speech in many locations, although it has one ma'na? Therefore concede that a similar kind of inherence takes place when God inheres in all the parts of man.51

The answer is:
What you mentioned is not one of our doctrines. The evidence demonstrates the opposite. The argument by which we repudiate it is the same argument as we repudiate this doctrine (of yours) and to use it as an objection (to our theory) is not possible.52 Furthermore, according to Abū 'Ali (this doctrine) was possible with regard to speech, because he affirmed that speech alone existed in more than one location. That is impossible with regard to God's inherence (in man). So the comparison with it is invalid.

They might argue according to the first aspect:
Is it not possible that all parts of man are one man? So why is it not possible that part of God is in every part of man and its totality is one God?

The answer is:
It is possible only to say that about a human being, because he becomes living through the life that needs a structure, the structure through the life in it is one thing. It is impossible to say with regard to the parts of God, if He had many parts, because some of Him would be tantamount to being from other (parts), because of the impossibility of him being a structure and because God is qualified by being powerful (qādir) which is (one of the) qualities which refer to His essence. The essential attributes (ṣifāt al-dhāt) characterise (takhtass) every part of Him, not just the totality of His (parts) and they are different from the attributes of ma'āni. This defeats that argument.

However, if He inheres in Christ and if that was possible for him, then the way of its possibility would be (through) the manifestation of divine action by Christ.

51. Speech does not exist in articulated sound, but also in written letters and memory.
52. One must bear in mind that Abū 'Ali's argument about speech is not accepted by 'Abd al-Jabbār. See, Peters, God's created speech, PP.300-2.
It does not require his union with him (Christ) because God does not act through dependence or movement. He only creates the actions as he created the bodies and other things, because He is powerful (Qādir) in Himself and His ḥāl (state with regard to being powerful) differs from the state (ḥāl) of one who is able with the ability of one who needs in terms of action to use that ability in a location where such ability can be used. If that is true it is possible for the action to appear through the hands or voice of Christ even though God was not united with him.

Furthermore, what they affirm by which He (God) is united with Christ, requires them to concede that He is united with the rest of the prophets, because of the divine action which appeared through their words and prayers. In this way there is the repudiation of the special distinction of Christ by union with God as they believed.

If it is possible that God can inhere in the body of Christ, then it is also possible that He may inhere in an inorganic body. There is no way by which they can make it impossible for Him to inhere in an inorganic body. Otherwise His inherence in the body of Christ must be impossible for the same reason.

Because if they might argue:
It is His right that He only inheres in something where there is life as (here is) knowledge, - They are forced to admit the impossibility of the existence of His essence (dhāt) except in a location in which there is life as (there) is knowledge.

They might argue:
When He inhere in an inorganic body, it would not be able to manifest divine actions. The case is different when He inhere in a living body.

The answer is:
Since it is possible that He performs divine actions, that has resulted from him, so why is it not conceded that He may inhere in inorganic bodies and may create divine actions through the hand and voice of Christ. If it is possible that God exists in eternity without manifesting a divine action, why should it not be

53. Although in the text it is Iddīā, we read it as duṣā that makes better sense.
possible that He exists in an inorganic body without manifesting divine action. In this way, there is the proof for what we forced upon them about His being united with an inorganic body and what we required them to accept. In this way there is a repudiation of what they claimed about the special characterisation of Christ with that. According to this argument it is required that they must accept His inherence in every living thing as we forced upon them. Indeed it is required that they must approve His inherence in the location where divine actions have occurred, because through these (actions) He is more distinguished insofar as his action occurs in them. (These arguments) confirm the invalidity of their doctrine that He has united with Christ according to the way of inherence.

9 - Section

The Repudiation of the doctrine of the Jacobites that the nature (jawhar) of divinity and humanity have United and they became one nature (jawhar)

Most of the Jacobites maintained that the substance of God and humanity have united, then they became one substance, one hypostasis and one nature. It is invalid, because it is impossible that two things would be one thing in reality as it is impossible that one thing would be two things (in reality). We have described in the previous chapter that it is impossible that one thing may become many things. It requires the impossibility of two things being one thing.

However, if it is possible that God can unite with mankind and become one thing, then it is possible that two substances would be one substance through the conjunction, or accident would be one thing through its inherence in the substance with another accident, or many accidents collectively would be one thing in one location. If that is invalid and the relationship of one thing with another (within this subject) does not affect the different aspect of the relationship (in that), then the doctrine that God through His union with mankind becomes one thing is also invalid. Furthermore, if what they say was possible, it would require that death was impossible for mankind because through union with God man would become one thing with Him. Thus man

54. This term is not a Jacobites expression, but rather Nestorian.
would be outside his human nature, for the possibility of death is one of the characteristics of human nature.

Furthermore, it is required according to their doctrine that after the union every attribute which characterises a human being would be impossible for Christ and every action would be impossible for him, such as eating, drinking, crucifixion, killing, length, breadth, depth, motion and extinction, because through union he would be outside his human nature and its substance. Otherwise, there would be no meaning and benefit in their doctrine that through unity with God, he has become one thing, even though his situation is as it was.

Furthermore, according to their doctrine, it is required that Christ became eternal (through union with God), after he had been created in time. It is impossible that a created (being) should become eternal as it is impossible that the eternal should become created. Indeed that is absolutely impossible for a created (being) because what existed after it had not existed, cannot become something which has existed eternally because that would require its existence in a state (ḥāl), the non-existence of which has already been established. That is impossible in that regard. Since that is impossible (to believe) the existence of a ma'na cannot change from being impossible to possible, nor can the non-existence of a ma'na change from being impossible to possible nor (can it do this) through union with God or anything else. Similarly things which have been established cannot become impossible because of a ma'na or an accident (ṣārid).

If God has united with man when they both became one thing, there must be several possible effects (waṣıld).

1 - either this one (the one being resulting from the union of God with man) has the quality (ṣifa) of God and has come out from the quality of mankind.
2 - or it has the quality of man and has left the quality of divinity.
3 - or it is characterised by both qualities.

1. (according to the first effect) If it has the quality of God, then it is required that all the things which are the speciality of mankind such as looking, length and the rest of the qualities that he has got such as drinking, killing, crucifixion would be impossible for Christ. According to that, it would be a departure from their doctrine because they affirm that Christ after sonship and union with God
was seen eating and drinking as he has done before. They affirm the crucifixion and killing after that, even though they differ about whether the crucifixion was related to God or man.

2 - If it was through the quality of man and He left the quality of God through the union with man, then it is required that Christ may not show any divine action and that the status of Christ would be, after the union with God as it was before and that his condition was the same as anybody else. This would require that the idea of him being God was invalid and he left his own qualities through the union with God and that would be as if he never existed. (According to them) in that it would be possible for the eternal (God) or for the Son not to exist. Both situations are equal in impossibility because the substance of the God cannot be non-existent. Similarly it is impossible that they should become two hypostases after they were three hypostases. It requires that the God (Qadim) becomes created (although He was already existing) and God will leave his personal quality. The manifestation of miracles through Christ would be impossible because he has left his divine nature. Even if there had been the union with God, the two would have become one thing and this thing would be characterised by the quality of humanity and divinity. Then why is it more appropriate that it became one thing rather than becoming two things as they were before, because there is no way by which it can be said that Christ has two substances and two natures after the union, otherwise it would be established in this doctrine. It is required that their doctrine would be incorrect that they became one thing.

However it is the doctrine of some of them that Christ died in reality. When he died, God ceased to be united with him. That requires that Christ was different from (Him) because of the possibility of Christ having separated from (Him) at the time of death. This is the sign of difference. However, this doctrine requires them to admit that if Christ died and repudiated the creation of himself, if he had become divine through the union with God, death and extinction must be possible for God, if through union with God, (God) and mankind became one thing. But this doctrine requires that God Himself was crucified and killed. If that is possible for Him then all suffering would be possible for Him and all the rest things that happened to the created bodies would be possible for God.

Furthermore, if it was possible that Christ became eternal God after the union,
what was the criterion by which createdness of the bodies is known? Because when it is possible that something can become eternal, then the method by which bodies are demonstrated to be created becomes invalid. In this there is absolute invalidation of the method of knowing God, whether it could be said that (Christ) was one of those for whom union was possible or not. Indeed all of them would have to admit, according to their doctrine of union with God, that the one united with Christ was God who is one substance apart from the hypostasis of the son and word, because the way by which they affirm the union through the manifestation of divine actions by him requires them to admit that, unless each one of the hypostasis is one God in reality, and they give up the basis of their doctrine. Then they would be holding a doctrine which we have already refuted, - (namely) the doctrine of those who maintain that alongside God there is a second power equal to him according to the argument of mutual hinderence (dalālat al-tamānu)\(^{55}\) and other argument. However, everything which inheres is something else must change the basis (hukm) which refers to it with regard to the rest of the ma'a\(\text{ān}\) which inhere in location which cannot be perceived or comprehended; it cannot require a basis (hukm) which is separate from it. Therefore if the Son inheres in Christ, it would be necessary that there was the requirement of a basis (hukm) for him (i.e., Son inhering in Christ) was particular to him. The manifestation of divine action by him is separate from that and would not demand that it (i.e., new hukm) should be required. We only maintain that the power requires him to be able and because he is able, creation by him is possible and what is required by the power really refers to him.

Our venerable scholar Abū 'Alī forced them to admit that they must say that Christ worshipped himself, if at union Christ and the Son became one thing. It is impossible that somebody worships himself, because worship is like gratitude (shukr). Just as nobody can thank himself, in the same way it is impossible for somebody to worship himself. He forced those who maintained the union does

---

55. *Dalālat al-tamānu* is a logical term used by Muslim logicians, expressing that God is second to none. The term is based on the fact that the object who is able to produce something, is able to produce the genus of that something and its opposite, - if there is an opposite. 'Abd al-Jabbār's argument implies that it is possible that one hypostasis wants to move something, while the second one wants to keep it immovable. It is called mutual hindering, for the object cannot be moving and immovable at the same time. See Peters, *God's Created Speech*, PP.264-5.
not require them to be one to admit that Christ worshipped part of himself. This is just as impossible as the first one. He forced them to admit that at the union, action of God would be the action of mankind. If this is possible, it is also possible that the power of both would be one power, whatever one of them was capable of doing, the other would be capable of doing. If the man is able through his own essence like God, it is required that both of them must be the same. The same is the case, if God is capable through a power like mankind.

He forced them to admit that the other two hypostases can be united as was possible for the hypostasis of the Word, because their substance is one. So what can be applied to one of them, would be applied to the rest. He forced them to admit the difference and separate nature (taghāyur) of the hypostases insofar as union was positive for one of them apart from the rest.

He forced them to admit that the Son has united with Mary, as he united with Christ, because Christ is part of her. According to this argument, some of them interpreted the verse of God: "And when God said, O Jesus son of Mary didst thou say to the men "take me and my mother as Gods apart from God." (5:116) Arbery; that God mentioned it as the way of requiring (a denial by Christ) because if Christ was God insofar he Was Characterised by the fact that he was born without a male, so it is required that Mary would be in that category because she gave birth to him without sexual intercourse; even though our venerable scholar Abū 'Ali has interpreted it in a literal sense, and there were among them those who maintained this doctrine.

He also forced them to admit this doctrine, that there would be a possibility of mutual hindering (dalālat al-tamānu') between these hypostases, because when their substance is one, it is required to be able. That substantiates the mutual hindering among them; that requires their weakness and feebleness or weakness of some of them. He explained that they cannot co-relate the Trinity with their doctrine that affirms Him as living, when it does not refer to His essence. Therefore it must refer by that to something else. The same applies to His being affirmed as knowing and speaking by his argument that every affirmation will refer by it to His essence, not anything else because it is possible to refer by many attributes to one essence. He further explained that at the time when they said about God that He is deity and substance and a thing and eternal, it was necessary that they refer through that to one essence (dhāt). Therefore it is possible for us to say the same as we said before. He explained that the
knowledge and indication take the place of description and affirmation. We have already dealt with it in full, so there is no need to repeat it.

He forced them to admit that they affirm for Him, power, sense of hearing and vision, insofar as they affirmed Him (to be) powerful, hearing and seeing. That requires the affirmation of Him as many hypostases. When they refer by all that to His essence, their reasoning became defective. 56

(114) They are forced to make God as the hypostasis of the Father, who is affirmed as living, knowing and speaking, without (affirming) that thing, for the sake of which he becomes living as do the Kullābiyya. 57

We have already discussed their different descriptions about the unity with God. Those among the Nestorians and Melkites who have described the union with God in terms of inherence and intermingling are far from the truth. Because it is their doctrine that they did not become one thing and they are two natures as they were. If it could be said that anything which is in this stage is united, it would require that when an accident inheres in a location the accident and the location must be united. That is invalid.

Those of them who maintained the doctrine of corporal incarnation, are using an expression which is not correct according to the doctrine which they have presented. If they maintained that (i.e., God did not become a body at the time of union) they cannot affirm that He becomes united with Christ, because the body of Christ was, after their claim of union, the same as it was before. There is no difference between them maintaining with regard to the rest of the hypostases, if they were to maintain it, that He becomes corporal incarnate with the rest of bodies. What follows from that must be invalid.

The same applies to whoever maintained that God became man (ta'annasa) because it is impossible for God to become man. The same applies to whoever

56. Here 'Abd al-Jabbār seems to be inconsistent, as he left the real discussion, i.e., incarnation and jumped into the Trinity.

57. According to Kullābiyya's doctrine, God is living through life that is not Himself, but rather than an entity. 'Abd al-Jabbār means to say that Christians must affirm God only through the Hypostasis of Father, by which He is affirmed as living, Knowing etc., but they must not be actual entities for Him.
said He became a composite (i.e., a mixture of God and man).

As for those who depend in this connection following the earlier generation by referring to the books (i.e., books of The New Testament) and by blind imitation (taqlid) of the four (evangelists), their doctrine is invalid because discussion is about sifā of God and what is impossible for God and what is not, can not only refer to revelation. If what they claimed is confirmed as revelation, then it must be interpreted according to what it requires. How would that be possible when the basis (maudū') of their doctrine is blind imitation and referring to the reports of four (Gospels). It is impossible that such knowledge will occur through the reports of four. They cannot say: Since Christ is one of the prophets of God according to you, how can your claim invalidate our doctrine along with the fact that it is taken from it? The reason is that we know their untruth about that and we are quite sure that he (Christ) only brought what reason demanded in terms of the Unity of God, not the Trinity. We are also aware that they make a mistake from the aspect of reporting and interpretation and because those whose books they received were John, Matthew, Luke and Mark. This is one of the things which they acknowledge because when Christ was missing and they alleged that he and his disciples had been killed, there was no one left holding his religion to whom his book and his law might be conveyed except these four. They alleged that they dictated the Gospel in three languages. It has been known that it is legitimate (to accuse) the four of alteration, substitution and lying. So how can their reporting about what is possible for God and what is not be relied upon. We can rely upon only what we have maintained because the reporters of our book (Qurʾān) and the principles of our religion (Islam) are a huge group (too large) to agree upon a lie. Thus necessary (darūrī) knowledge has occurred (to support) what that group reported. Therefore what we maintain is true.

Consequently, by this method we have repudiated what they reported about the killing and the crucifixion of Christ because the original source of their report is these four and even though they relied upon their blind imitation with regard to it. (This is the case) because if someone is crucified after having been killed, it may change the appearance of the person who was crucified so that he looks like someone else. Thus when it was reported that (Christ was crucified) it is quite possible that similar circumstances were involved. The true nature of
anything in such circumstances cannot be known through necessary knowledge
because one of the conditions for the truth of something known by necessary
knowledge is that it must be among those matters whose circumstance (hāl) has
(no 58) ambiguity. It has been suggested that it is possible that the resemblance
of Christ was (miraculously) projected on a person who was crucified. Therefore
the circumstances may have been ambiguous. If that is possible because that
was the time of a prophet when ordinary events may be disturbed and became
miraculous because of that prophet. What we mentioned first is more
appropriate to rely upon because we know through the words of God:
"Yet they did not slay him nor did they crucify him but it seemed like (him) to
them. (4:157)
that it is not possible that their report has occurred in such a way which
requires (necessary) knowledge because that would require the repudiation of
the source (i.e., the Qur'ān) which we make as a base for reports. Because (the
sight of) that crucified man coincided with the circumstances (hāl) of their
missing Christ. Therefore (it seemed to them) that there was a strong
probability that Christ was the crucified man.

It was not possible for them despite that, to maintain the clear claim in the
Gospels. In fact, in this, they are following blindly their leaders as Nestorius,
Jacob and whoever held the religion of the emperor (i.e., Melkites). Therefore
no doctrine of theirs can be affirmed by them on the basis of logical deduction,
because the source of their doctrine is only blind imitation without taking into
account the arguments on which doctrines should be accepted. When they turn
to logical deduction, their circumstances are same in that as was reported
about one of them, whom one of our fellows asked:
Why have you made the hypostasis of knowledge as Son not the hypostasis of
life? He replied, because knowledge is masculine (in gender) and life is
feminine (in gender).
Then the questioner asked:
"So why did you not say about life that it is the daughter of God because life is
feminine."

58. In the text, it is Yaltabisu, we translated as negative Lā Yaltabisu
A similar thing was reported to me about Qurra \textsuperscript{59} (a leader of the Melkites) is their leader who with regard to the Trinity, relied upon (the argument) that it is required that God must be master (\textit{ra'\text{\=a}s}). It is impossible to say that He is united through mastery (\textit{ri'\text{\=a}sa}) with His creature, because that would require that He has no kindness (\textit{minna}) for them, if He had created them in order to be master over them, it would be necessary that His mastery must be eternal. Yet this mastery (\textit{ri'\text{\=a}sa}) must exist over one who is subject to it. This subject of mastery (\textit{mar\text{\=u}s}) must have two aspects.

1 - Either it would be like God in substance or lower than Him in substance.

If it is lower than Him as substance, so the mastery of God has descresed from its dignity, because it is the glory of mastery that it is mastery over him and like Him in its nature. For that reason when it is said about a man that he is the master of bull and ass, he gets very angry.

Then it is necessary that the subject of mastery would be like God in substance. Again His mastery would be either through force or by consent or natural mastery. It cannot be by force, because it is impossible to say that force will take possession of that which is like God. It is also impossible that it would be through consent because whatever is like that must have a beginning. It is also possible that he would not give consent to it. So it is affirmed that it is a natural and it is like the mastery of fathers over sons and like the mastery of Adam over Abel. So it is affirmed that He has a Son and he is like Him.

\textsuperscript{59} - Apparently it is a confusing name, as it is in the text. It also shows incompetency of the editors who could not manage to correct it or to write a foot note about it. As a matter of fact 'Abd al-Jabbār intended here Theodore Abū Qurra a famous Christian scholar. Little is known about him. He was a bishop of Ḥarrān. It is said that he came under the literary and probably personal influence of John of Damascus whom he calls, his master.

Biographers are not sure about his time, but from his connection with John of Damascus, Abū Rā'īt of Takrīt and al-Mā'mūn, the Abbasid caliph, one can say that he lived from about 740-820.

J Waardenburg reported about him that he wrote seventeen polemical treatises against Islam. His Arabic work has been published, a few titles are below:

I. Arendzen, Theodori Abu Kurra de cultu imaginum libellus e codice arabico nunc Primon editus latin versus illustration, (Boon, 1877):
Constantin Bacha, les oeuvres arabis de Theodore Aboucora eveque d' Haran, (Beyrouch, 1904).

A. Guillaume, Theodore Abū Qurra, M.W., vol. XV (1925), P.422,
He has informed you of what we reported about their arguments that the basis of their doctrine is taken from blind imitation, so that we cannot accept as an argument anything that follows that course. Do you see that someone who put forward that argument does not know that what he has said, for it requires him to affirm that (God) has a female companion, so that He may be master of her as Adam was master of Eve. This mastery (i.e., over Eve) is closer to nature than his mastery over Abel because that is hadith. When the female companion is excluded from Him by that which requires it (to be excluded), the Son is also excluded from Him for the same reason.

How is it then possible that three hypostases may be affirmed through this argument when its reasoning only requires the affirmation of subject of mastery and it would be completed through two Hypostases. Furthermore, the mastery cannot refer to God at all. It can only be used about a person who comes forward from his people with a state which differentiates him from them. It is impossible to be said about God.

If a proponent opposed that by saying that God must be (malik) master, generous, noble, and mighty. Then after that he affirms for Him manā and hypostasis, so what would be separated from Him? We did not mention this specious argument, so that we may discuss its invalidity, because its situation is obvious. But (we brought it forward) in order to warn against the fact that the situation with regard to their doctrine is, as we have explained, taken from blind imitation. As for their calling the hypostases as characteristics (khawass) and attributes (sifāt), people have given much attention to discuss this. To go over such expression would be futile. We have put already forward the invalidity of whatever is connected with manā, whether they say that the hypostases are changing and different or they deny that, or they say that it is different from the substance or it is not the substance or they say it is the substance because discussion about the invalidity of all that has come earlier.

10 - Section

Concerning the invalidity of what they believed about Christ and his adoration and what is related to that.

You must realise, that all the Christians whose doctrines we have quoted are
among those who profess the worship of Christ. They differ about what is worshipped with regard to him and in what way he (Christ) is worshipped. Their doctrine in this matter is based upon their doctrine of union and (God) becoming man.

So whoever of them maintain that Christ is one substance, one hypostasis and one person, say about him that he would be worshipped in reality. However they are two sects. The Jacobites maintained that he is human being and God, although he is one substance. But he is a human being in one aspect and God in another, like the human being who is spirit in a different way from that by which he is a body. The other sect who is called Walyâniyya alleged that Christ is God insofar as he is man and the divine nature could only be understood through the aspect by which he is human. So these two sects believed that he is adored in reality.

However the Melkites, Maronites and Nestorians maintained that Christ has two substances (natures), the divine one and human one, God and man, although they differed among themselves. Some of them maintained that their will is one. Some of them said that they have two wills.

60. Walyâniyya, it is a most confusing sect, because it has many pronunciations, as we see 'Abd al-Jabbâr mentioned it only once. While during the summary of the Christian doctrines, he described their doctrine without naming it. Al-Shahrîstâni mentioned it as Ilyâniyya, and said that they were a community in Syria, the Yemen and Armenia. Watt translated it as Julianists and commented that they belong to the sixth Century, none of such sects still exist and their views are studied only by the specialists in the history of the theological doctrine.

Al-Nâshi al-Akbar mentioned them as al-lawliyâniyya. According to him they differed from Jacobites only in one doctrine and they belong to Armenia.

When we study Maqâlât dinîyya qadîma, edited by P. L. Cheikho, there is a treatise called Maymar fi Siha al-din al Masihî, here this sect is also described as lawliyâniya. But the editor who was a great scholar corrected it as al-yûliyâniyyîn. It seems to me correct because their founder was Julian (d. after 518) bishop of Halicarnassus in Caria. So it was changed from Julian to Yuwlyyan. (See Introduction, PP. 13-14).

All of them maintain that the human nature and God was crucified and died. They say that Mary gave birth to God. They do not say that God was born because (by that) it could be imagined that she gave birth to three hypostases. However, the Nestorians maintained that Christ who is God and man was born and crucified. They do not say that God was born and crucified. As for the Jacobites they say, that God was killed and crucified in reality, although they do differ about whether the pain was felt by him or not as we maintained before. Sometimes they maintained that Christ had two births: one of them was divine from God before time (eternally), the second one was through human nature from Mary in time.

You must realise that what we have explained about the invalidity of their doctrine about union repudiates all they believed that Christ is worshipped, creates the bodies and provides them with the means of subsistence and he is the benefactor; that is the creator of the world and entitled to be worshipped individually or with the other (hypostases). Because the discussion about that is (from the earlier discussion) and its invalidity depends on unsoundness of that.

The evidence that we mentioned before that a body cannot make a body, life and power will invalidate their doctrine about that. It is well known that the state of Christ was a body in reality. So how it is possible that he does such deeds that entitle him to be worshipped by living bodies, despite the fact that it is impossible for him to grant them the gifts by which he is entitled to be worshipped.

There is no difference (when the situation is similar) between those who declare that he should be worshipped or the rest of prophets or the rest of the bodies (should be worshipped) because worship could only be entitled to the extent of benefits which would be greater than His benefits would equal. Because of that no human beings are entitled to be worshipped apart from any other on the basis of their different circumstances in being able to produce much or little benefits to others. Insofar as the benefits which are produced by them are not characterised in the same way as the benefits of God, because He is characterised through certain facts:

1. He is the original source of the benefits because if He does not exist, the rest of the benefits would not be possible. From this aspect all benefits come from Him.
2. He has reached such an extent that nothing can equal His gifts.

3. Because the gifts of the others are in reality gifts from Him, He became their master by way of the fact that through Him giving is possible by means which come from God, whether with regard to the gifts or Himself or the one who receives the gifts. It has been known that the occurrence of all these aspects are impossible except because of God. Therefore He must be characterised by being entitled apart from anyone else, even though sometimes other benefactors are entitled to be thanked according to their gifts to others as we know through evidence. Because knowledge of the good in thanking a benefactor and of the fact that the benefactor is entitled to it and of the fact that it is the duty for the one who received the gifts to do it, is necessary (darūrī) knowledge in most cases.

All of that shows that the body is not entitled to be worshipped in any way. In this (argument) there is the disproof of their doctrine that Christ is required to be worshipped. However those of them who maintained that he is God in a real meaning and that two substances became one, must admit that God is a body which is limited, which eats and drinks (etc.). Because if that is not admitted, they would have to maintain that all of that, i.e., eating, drinking etc., was impossible for Christ, despite the fact that we know that such an argument is invalid. We have already known that that is impossible for God, because of the argument we have presented about the creation of the bodies and we have already presented it against the corporealist (mujassima)⁶¹ by the way of argument.

It is well known from the circumstances of Christ that he used to worship and invite people to worship. How it is possible to say that he is worshipped in reality? How it is possible for the one who is worshipped to worship himself? If that is conceded, then he would be the Creator of himself, the benefactor of himself and God of himself. All that is contradictory and impossible.

However, according to their doctrine, it is necessary that He would be capable

---

⁶¹ Corporealist, who give bodily attributes to God. It was emphasized by orthodox Muslim group that god was not corporeal and not material, and those who held that view were sometimes called mujassima. E.I²., Vol.4, P.33.
of suffering, death and pain. If that is possible with regard to him, it is also possible for him to be punished or rewarded. In these conditions worship is not right for him and his condition of being needy would be like the condition of rest of bodies.

They cannot maintain what befell him in forms of being killed and crucified by claiming that it was an imaginary thing not a real thing because they made God as man and according to them the killing of man or his death is (something whose possibility) is established. It is impossible that it may befall him without him feeling pain, for that would require that God feels pain in reality.

Those who maintained (the doctrine of Christ being) two substances and two natures must confine the worship to the divine nature apart from the human nature. That repudiates their doctrine that the one who is worshipped is Christ or else it requires that they maintain that he is a divine hypostasis.

They might argue: Our doctrine is that Christ includes humanity and divinity, therefore we can worship him.

The answer is: It is necessary that they do not allow Christ to be the adored one, because this doctrine includes something else together with the adored one. There is no difference between their saying that Christ is adored, a creator and provider and between their saying that Christ cannot eat, drink, be crucified and be killed because since it is possible to attach to God aspects of worship and other things which are only possible for God, it is possible to deny things which are impossible for God, even though they are possible for humanity such as eating, drinking and crucifixion etc. They are forced to admit that God is a product of seed or born from Mary as they believed, either according to some aspects or all aspects.

Our venerable scholar Abū ʿUthmān al-Jāḥīz said, there is a need for a minute examination of their doctrine so that such invalidity may be explained. Otherwise there must not be any mention of God in these terms, may He be kept completely away from their doctrines.

If one of their proponent said: We adore Christ not because he is divine or God united with him but because he is the intermediary between us and between
God, insofar as we know God through him. Because of his great blessing and the fact that it is very close to the blessing of God (Qadim), it is good for us to worship him.

The answer is: According to the beginning of this section that would necessitate that it was good to worship all the prophets for this reason. It would also necessitate that we should worship our fore fathers and the rest of those whose kindness and gifts have been great to us on account of His kindness, because they cannot distinguish the blessing of Christ by anything which separates it from the blessing of those we have just mentioned according to the explanation we have given of the special nature of God's blessings through matters by which these blessings are distinguished from other blessings. There is nothing in the blessing of Christ that makes it greater than blessings of others. That necessitates that they (accept) the two aspects which we have maintained. We do not concede the prostration which God ordered to be made to Adam was an act of worship to him, because no one is entitled to worship except God. He ordered (Satan) to prostrate and other thing from the point of view of Adam's closeness to Him and as an act of worship to Him. This is evidence of the merit of Adam and worship is not one of the things whose condition is changed or revealed because of such a command. Thus worship is appropriate through revelation as we maintain with regard to the religious acts of worship. Since no thanks can be due without a blessing or gift, therefore no worship can be due without the special blessing (of God) which we have mentioned. If it could be possible that such order was appropriate, the same would be possible with regard to thanks. Therefore we said, that thanks, praise and honour are only appropriate where they are due. We shall mention the discussion that worship is only due to God (later giving) an explanation of worship the difference between it and thanks and (other matters) which are conneded with it in the chapter of waŚd (threat). In the argument presented now, there is convincing (proof of our position).

As for the arguments which they use against our claim that he spoke in the cradle and that it is genuine, it would have been as widespread among them as the rest of his miracles, the discussion of that will be mentioned in the chapter of miracles and reports (akhbār). In the same way the doctrine by which they object to the Qur'an, as their argument is that in the Qur'an, there is affirmation of Idris and Noah and others as prophets while they were not
prophets, or in it (Qur'an) that God never sent revelation (to any one) except men and it is not the case, and God said to Christ.

"Didst thou, say unto men, take me and my mother as Gods apart from God." (5:116). While none of the Christians said it. And it is in it that Jews said, "Surely God is poor, and we are rich" (3:181). and that "Allah's hand is fettered" (5:64).

And they said about Ezra, that he was Son of God, while (according to the Jews) it is known that they never said it, in addition to other similar matters, these will be dealt with in (the chapter) of miracles. So there is no need to mention them now.
PART TWO
Chapter I

Commentary on the Christian Doctrines alluded to by 'Abd al-Jabbār in the translation of al-Mughnī (Vol. v. pp. 80-85)

Before going to discuss and criticise two main Christian doctrines, i.e., Trinity and union of incarnation, 'Abd al-Jabbār has given a brief summary of the famous Christian sects and their differences about the person and nature of Christ. It is notable that during presenting the summary, 'Abd al-Jabbār failed most of the time to indicate the names of the sects. This adds to the difficulty of identifying these sects. Sometimes even in detailed discussion of the doctrines of various sects, he fails to identify the sects whose doctrine he is discussing.

On the other hand, al-Shahristānī (d. 548/1153), although later than 'Abd al-Jabbār, elaborated the summary in such a way that every doctrine is related to a particular sect. It is interesting that sometimes there is a resemblance of the phrases and wording between al-Shahristānī and 'Abd al-Jabbār. It seems that both scholars are quoting from the same source without naming it. As a result, al-Shahristānī's work has been helpful in identifying the sects which held the various doctrines and this has been supplemented by the works of Oriental Christian scholars writing in Arabic.

1. In the beginning 'Abd al-Jabbār referred to a small group of Christians, who do not admit the doctrine of Trinity. (al-Mughnī, p.80/translation, P.19). Later he gives further information about their views when he says that they believed that "Christ came into existence (ibtā'ādā) through Mary and was a noble prophet, whom God honoured and venerated for his obedience and named him His Son by the way of adoption not by way of birth." (al-Mughnī, p.85/translation, P.25).

Both al-Shahristānī and Ibn Ḥazm attribute this doctrine to certain individuals. According to al-Shahristānī Butinus (Photinus) and Paul of Samosata said that Christ was a righteous man ('abd) and was created but God honoured and dignified him because of his obedience and called him Son by adoption (tabānī) not by birth and union.1

1. Al-Shahristānī, Milal p.176.
According to Western sources, Paul of Samosata maintained "that from the incarnation the Word rested upon the human Jesus as one person upon another and that the incarnated Christ differed only in one degree from the prophets." According to 'Afif b. Mu'ammil, an oriental Christian scholar, there was also a Paul al-Maṣḥi, an unfamiliar father who believed in a purely human nature of Christ.

But Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) described at least three Christians who believed that Christ was a man and a messenger of God.

The first is Arius, a priest in Alexandria (c. 319 AD), who maintained that Christ was a created man and the Word of God. On the other hand, western sources gives us a clear picture that, "Arius believed that God the Father is an absolute unbegotten, the begotten Son is in some sense subordinate and inferior, because derived from the absolute unity.

It does mean that Christ, although created was an instrument for the creation of the world. We find the same view attributed to Arius by 'Afif b. Mu'ammil, who was a Melkite.

Later 'Abd al-Jabbār, himself gives a more detailed view of the Arian doctrine without actually naming. However, al-Shahristāni who set out a similar view does attribute it to Arius. "Abd al-Jabbār said, "It is said by some of their scholars who came earlier that God is one and they name him Father and claimed that Christ is the word of God and His Son through (God's) will (Iṣṭīfā'a). (al Mughni, p.85/Trans. P.24).

The second given in Ibn Ḥazm is also Paul of Samosata (260 AD) whose teaching according to Ibn Ḥazm, that Christ was a man and a messenger of God and simply a prophet like other prophets.

---

3. Cheikhho, Trois Traites, pp.87-89.
5. V.A. Harvey, A handbook of Theological terms, p.25
7. Cheikhho, Trois Traites, p.87
The third is Macedonius (d.c. 362), who supported a modified version of Arianism and believed that Christ was a human prophet and man, but considered him as the Holy Spirit and Word of God. However, both of these (spirit and word) were created.10

Again 'Afīf b. Mu'ammiil conforms that Macedonius believed that the Son and Holy Spirit were created beings.11

There is another sect mentioned by al-Nāshi al-Akbar as al-Muṣallīyāniyya. He said that there was a minor group from them who alleged that the human nature of the Messiah can see the divine nature and knows it. They denied that Christ is an incarnate deity, by they asserted that he is a human being, not God the Almighty.12 Al-Shahristāni called them Muṣallān (the worshipper) and said that they were a group of Nestorians.13 Al-Shahristāni did not mention such doctrine towards them as mentioned by al-Nāshi al-Akbar.

It is well known that such sects were declared by the Orthodox Church to be heretical.

2. 'Abd al-Jabbār then referred to a sect who maintained that life is power (al-Mughnī, p.80/Trans. P.19).

It would seem from this exception that the Holy Spirit is being identified as power. This possibly refers to the Jacobites, because according to Yahyā b. 'Adī, the well known Christian apologist and philosopher, who was himself a Jacobite, the property of Holy Spirit is power (qu'da).14 However later 'Abd al-Jabbār reports "Others maintained that the Spirit is power" (al-Mughnī, p.82/Trans. P.21). It is not clear whether there is any distinction between these two statements.

3. Then 'Abd al-Jabbār describes three views of the nature of Christ.

10. Ibid., p.48
11. Cheikho, Trois Traites, p.88
12. Al-Nāshi al-Akbar, Kitāb al-Awsāt, p.79
13. Al-Shahristāni, Milāl, p.176
14. Yahyā while refuting al-Kindī, the philosopher, maintained that according to the Christians, the property of Holy Spirit is power. (qu'da) see "Un Traite De Yahya Ben 'Adi," edited by A Perier, Revue de L'orient Chrétien, vol. XXII, (1920-21) P.5.
without their naming those who hold them. They are:

i. The Messiah is the word and body united with each other. (al-Mughnī, p.80/Trans. P.20)

According to al-Shahristānī, this is a Melkite doctrine, namely that the Word was united with the body of Christ.15

ii. The Messiah is the Word, not the body. (al-Mughnī, P.80/Trans. P.20).

This appears to be a Nestorian doctrine because the Nestorians insisted that God should not be born of woman. Therefore they refused to attribute human birth to Divine nature. The human acts and suffering of Christ belong to the man Christ.

iii. The Messiah is the created body and the Word became a created body when it was in the womb of Mary. (al-Mughnī, p.80/Trans. P.20).

This appears to be a Jacobite doctrine because they maintain that a third element is produced out of fusion and mixture, just as the fusion of fire with coal produce a live coal.16

Al-Shahristānī said, that according to Jacobites the Word was transferred into flesh and blood.17

4. 'Abd al-Jabbār alleged that the Spirit is a state which proceeds from the Father and the Son. (al-Mughnī, p.81/Trans, P.21). His statement about the procession of the Spirit is not correct, because it is a western part of Christendom. According to Harvey, the Eastern Church protested that such doctrine was not to be found in Scripture.18 However, 'Abd al-Jabbār in his

---

15. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, p.173
16. Ibn Kammūna, Tanqīḥ al Abḥāth, p.52
17. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, p.176
18. V.A. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological terms, p.86
Tathbit, while describing the Nicene Creed correctly, this when he says that the Spirit proceeds from the Father.\(^{19}\) Along with that two converts ‘Alî b. Rabbān al-Ṭabarî and Ḥassān b. Ayyūb also described it in this way\(^{20}\), it is obvious that they knew Christian doctrines better than ‘Abd al-Jabbâr.

5. ‘Abd al-Jabbâr quoted the differences which arose among the Christians when they tried to define the hypostases (agānîm).

i. Some of them maintained that the hypostases are actually (khawāss) characteristics and others as (ṣifāt) attributes. (al-Mughni, P. 82/Trans P.21).

\(\text{Yahyā b. ‘Adī, a Jacobite scholar said, “that this single (Divine) essence (dhāt), is not multiplied in itself but is described by three sifāt or if it is preferred three khawāss.”}^{21}\)

This would indicate that this is a Jacobite viewpoint.\(^{22}\)

ii. Others considered them persons (ashkhâš), (al-Mughni, p. 82/Trans P.21).

This doctrine has been attributed to the Nestorians by al-Shahristâni who says, they sometimes change the term and use shakhs (person) instead of hypostasis.\(^{23}\)

‘Affî b. Mu‘ammil condemned the use of shakhs and said that whole person who could be indicated is distinguishable in the external world, while it is different with regard to the hypostasis.\(^{24}\)

21. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, p. 74. ‘Ammār al-Ḍasāri (d. 845) a Nestorian scholar called them essential particularities (khawāss) of God’s essential being.
22. Another oriental scholar Ibn ‘Assâl gives a similar description. See Ibid., p. 137
23. Al-Shahristâni, Milal, p. 176
24. Cheikho, Trois Traites, p. 76
iii. Others thought that they were aspects (wujiḥ) (al-Mughni, p. 82/Trans. P. 21).

Eutychius of Alexandria (877-940) a Melkite scholar maintained that these hypostases are three aspects (jiḥāt) worshipped in the essence of one God. However, he denied that they should be thought of as being three (separate) wujiḥ (aspects).

The distinctions here are rather hard to follow. Watt in his translation of Kitāb al Burhān by Eutychius fails to define or translate jiḥāt and wujiḥ. It would seem that the use of the word wujiḥ implies a greater separation between the three hypostases than jiḥāt. The use of jiḥāt to describe the hypostases seems to be a Melkite doctrine whereas the more separate concept of wujiḥ may be Jacobite.

6. ‘Abd al-Jabbār then turns to the differences of opinion as to whether the hypostases are different or the same in hypostasy and substantiality.

i. Some of them maintained that they were different in hypostasy and the same in substantiality.

ii. Some of them said, "We do not say that they are different, but we do say that they are three hypostases which are the same in the fact that they are only one substance". (al-Mughni, p. 82/Trans, p. 21).

On this matter one should refer to the statements of three Christian scholars.

1. Timothy I, a Nestorien scholar, while replying to the Caliph al-Mahdī, said, "If we keep in mind the substance, there is no difference among them. On the other hand, if we look at every one individually, then there is distinction among them."27

In the same debate, he also declared, "They are distinguished through hypostases and they are the same in nature (tabī'a).28

---

26. Ibid., p. 41
27. Cheikho, Trois Traites, p. 6
28. Ibid., p. 7
2. 'Afīf b. Mu'ammil claimed that the substance is same for the hypostases, but hypostases are not same as each other. 29

3. Yahyā b. 'Adī asserted that each hypostasis is different than the other two in ma'na. 30 In another treatise he said, that we say that there is a separation (fasl) among them on the one hand, and there is no separation among them on the other hand. 31 Thus it can be seen that this doctrine is supported by the Nestorians in the person of Timothy, the Melkites in the person of 'Afīf and by the Jacobites with person of Yahyā.

7. 'Abd al-Jabbār attributed two doctrines about the nature of hypostases to the Nestorians.

i. Some of them alleged that each of these hypostases is a living and speaking God. This is a doctrine of some of the Nestorians.

ii. The rest said, each of the hypostases on being mentioned individually is not a God nor living nor speaking. (al-Mughni, P.82/ tran, P.21)

The same doctrines are reported by al-Shahristānī as being Nestorian doctrine. 32

8. 'Abd al-Jabbār reported the differences among the Christians about the meaning of kalima.

i. Some of them maintained that the word is knowledge itself. (al-Mughni, P.82/ tran, P.21)

Al-Shahristānī attributed this doctrine to the Melkites, when he says that by the kalima they mean the hypostasis of knowledge. 33

29. Ibid., P.79.
31. Ibid., P28.
32. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, P.176.
33. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, P.176.
ii. Some of them said that the meaning of kalima is knowledge. It was only named kalima because it manifests itself through speech. (al-Mughni, P.82/ tran, P.21).

Al-Shahristāni attributed to the Nestorians when he says, then the Nestorians interpreted knowledge as speech (nutq) and kalima. 34

iii. On the other hand, the doctrine of others is that the word and speech are not knowledge. (al-Mughni, p.82 tran. p.21).

This doctrine has not been identified.

9. 'Abd al-Jabbār described about the hypostases that whether they are different from one another or not?

i. Some of them reported from them that they said, the hypostases are heterogeneous and this knowledge (Father's knowledge) and His life are different. (al-Mughni, p.82, / tran. p.22)

In other words one can say, the hypostases are other than God; the knowledge of God and life of God are different from Him.

ii. Some of them reported that the hypostases themselves are substances and nothing else. Even though in terms of being hypostases, there is a distinction which is not made regarding terms of substance. They illustrated an example of charcoal when it becomes ember. (al-Mughni, P.82/tran. P.22).

It has not been possible to identify the first of these doctrines. However both al-Shahristāni and Ibn Kammūna attributed the analogy with charcoal, as mentioned by 'Abd al-Jabbār to the Jacobites. 35

10. 'Abd al-Jabbār reported the views of three Christian sects about the person of Christ and his union.

34. Ibid., P.175
35. Ibid., P.177, Ibn Kammūna, Tanqīh, PP. 52 and 53
i. The Nestorians claimed that Christ is God and man. According to them in reality the Messiah is two substances and two hypostases.

ii. The Melkites believed that Christ had two substances, one of them is eternal and the other is created.

iii. The majority of the Jacobites alleged that Christ has one substance, except that he is (formed) out of two substances. (al-Mughni, P.82-83/tran, P.22).

‘Abd al-Jabbār has correctly reported these doctrines.

However, he used the word substance (Jawhar), while Paul of Sidon used the word "nature" (tabi'ā). ‘Abd al-Jabbār sometimes also uses the term tabi'ā. It would seem that he regards the two terms as synonymous as do many Christian scholars.

11. ‘Abd al-Jabbār goes on to say that the Christians agreed that the union was an event which occurred in time (amr hādith). However they differed on the manner in which this union took place. He then listed five methods without identifying the Christian groups concerned.

i. The word (kalima) united with that human being (i.e. Christ) by means of intermingling. (al-Mughni, P.83/, tran, P.22).

Al Shahristānī and Ibn Kammūna attributed this doctrine to the Jacobites.

36. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP. 28-9
39. Al-Shahristānī, Milāl, P.177, Ibn Kammūna, Tanqīḥ, PP.52-3. Al-Shahristānī also attributed this doctrine to the Melkites (See P.175) that is incorrect. Watt, while translating this section by al-Shahristānī failed to point out this discrepancy.
ii. The word (kalima) adopted the form of a human person as temple and locus. (al-Mughni P.83/tran, P.22).

Although the analogy of temple was attributed to Nestorians as Ibn Kamīnah40 mentioned, the Orthodox Fathers similarly describe the body of Christ in its relation to the incarnate Logos as a house and a tabernacle and a temple. A.J. Wolfson commented that this analogy was applied by Saint Paul and John of Damascus.41

iii. The word inhere in him and word was covered by him and his body. (al-Mughni, P83/tran, P.22).

This doctrine has not been identified.

iv. It is as a picture of human being appears in a polished mirror when he looks into it. (al-Mughni, P83/tran, P.22).

Al-Shahristānī attributed this to the Jacobites.42 Al-Shahristānī's attribution seems correct, because Yahyā b. 'Adi has used this analogy in his affirmation the doctrine of Trinity to explain how God is one jawhar of three sifat.43

v. It is in accordance with the appearance of the design of a seal in clay which has been stamped (by the seal) without the (actual) design being removed from the seal, and the inherence (of the design) in the clay. (al-Mughni, P.83/tran, PP.22-23).

Al-Shahristānī seems to attribute this analogy for the union to the Nestorians.44

12. 'Abd al-Jabbār reported differences among the Christians about the union of Will.

40. Ibn Kamīnah, Tanqīh, P.53
41. A.J. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Fathers, P.368
42. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, P.177
43. Yahyā b. 'Adi, Maqālāt, PP.12-17
44. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, P.177.
i. The general substance (i.e. nature) united with the totality of mankind - sometimes they considered that the Son united with the whole of humanity, so that he will cause the redemption of all. (al-Mughni, PP.83-84/tran, P.23).

There is no doubt that it is a Melkite doctrine because we see that Melkites scholars supported this point of view. 'Afîf b. Mu'amml, while describing the Melkites point of view said that the Lord Jesus Christ united with the general nature (tabî'a) of mankind so that he may cause the redemption of the race of mankind from the slavery of Satan. If this union was possible with a personal nature, then he would be only able to save one person. In this suggesting, that when the word took on human nature, it was the nature shared by all mankind.

Eutychius of Alexandria also said, "The hypostasis of the word with the entire God head, assumed total humanity, the whole of one mingled with the whole of the other so that he might give salvation through the whole of the divinity, giving it to the whole of humanity."

ii. He united with part of mankind (i.e. Christ) so that he brings about the redemption for part of humanity. (al-Mughni, PP.83-84/tran, P.23).

According to Al-Shahrastâni this is a Jacobites doctrine. In addition Abû 'Isa al-Warrâq, a Mu'tazilite, while refuting the Nestorians and Jacobites referred to their doctrine that union with humanity was partial.

13. 'Abd al-Jabbâr then deals with differences among the Christians about the nature of Christ.

i. He points out that "Those who believe that in the union two substances (natures) become one and the created (muḥdath)
became eternal (The Jacobites, cf No 10. (iii) maintained that Christ is eternal." (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.23). This is also a Jacobites doctrine as Al-Warräq and al-Shahristāni claimed.\footnote{Ibid., P.9, Al-Shahrīṣtānī, Milal, P.177}

ii. Whereas "those who explain union different by maintaining that Christ is divine and human".

This is a Melkite doctrine. In 10(ii) he refers the Melkite belief that "Christ had two substances, one of which is eternal and the other created".

Most of the Christian scholars also supported this point of view.\footnote{Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P.28, Trois Traites, P.79}

14. 'Abd al-Jabbār next turned to differences of opinion among the Christians concerning the crucifixion and death (gatl) of Christ.

i. "The Nestorians maintained that the crucifixion took place with the human parts of Christ, not the divine parts". (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.23).

Al-Shahrīṣtānī reported the same doctrine with regard to the Nestorians and added as a reason, "because pains do not inhere the deity".\footnote{Al-Shahrīṣtānī, Milal, P.176} In the same way we see that when Caliph Mahdī asked Timothy I, a Nestorian Father, can God Himself die? He replied, "The Son of God died in one nature (i.e. human) but not in his divinity".\footnote{Cheikho, Trois Traites, P.17}

ii. "The majority of the Melkites believed that the crucifixion took place with the entire Christ (where) Christ is divine and human at the same time." (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.23).

The same doctrine is reported by al-Shahrīṣtānī.\footnote{Al-Shahrīṣtānī, Milal, PP.173-4} In addition to that we see that Paul of Sidon, a Melkite scholar, while explaining the Melkite point of view, said that although the divine nature could
not be harmed in reality by pain, it participated with the human nature in it because of the fact that (pains) are (suffered) in by the body (of the human nature) which is in reality united with it (the divine nature) in the hypostasis. 54

iii. "The majority of the Jacobites alleged that crucifixion and death took place for one substance (nature) that is formed of two substances (natures)". (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.23).

Al-Shahristānī has given a similar report and added that, "the Jacobites say, that if it is for the substance (nature) which formed (the two natures) there would be no union." 55

iv. Some of the Jacobites believed that Christ is one substance, eternal in one aspect (jiha) and created (muḥdath) in another aspect, born in one aspect (jiha) and unborn in another aspect. (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.23).

This doctrine is also attributed by al-Shahristānī to some of the Jacobites. 55 It seems to be an attempt to explain the substance (nature) of Christ after it had been formed from the divine and human substance (natures).

v. Some of them said, that death and crucifixion and pain were in terms of phantasy not in reality. (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.24).

Al-Shahristānī attributed this doctrine to a sect called Ḥyāniyya. 56 He clearly means the Julianists. 'Abd al-Jabbār's identification of them as a small group of the Jacobites is also correct. 57

15. 'Abd al-Jabbār described the doctrine of a sect called Maronites who maintained "that Christ is two substances (natures) and one hypostasis in the sense that he has one will." (al-Mughni, P.84/tran, P.24)

54. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P.40
55. Al-Shahristānī, Milal, PP.177-8
56. Ibid., P.178, we have introduced this sect in the footnote of the translation P.89 and in the introduction, PP.13-14.
57. Ibid., P.178.
This description is supported by 'Afīf b. Mu‘ammil, but he used the term tabī‘a instead of jawhar.58

16. With reference to the worship of Christ, ‘Abd al-Jabbār mentioned a doctrine without naming the sect, which held it, "the word used to enter Christ during the time of performing the miracles and depart from him in the rest of his actions". (al-Mughni, P85/tran, P.24).

Al-Shahrastānī reported the same doctrine without naming any sect, but he described it in the context of the Jacobites, but it is not a Jacobite doctrine.

17. ‘Abd al-Jabbār mentioned another analogy concerning the union, "that the word at the time of union passed into the womb of Mary as the arrow crosses the air and water into the waterpipe". (al-Mughni, P.85/tran, P.24).

Al-Shahrastānī attributed this analogy to a group of the Jacobites. This reporting of Shahrastānī seems to be incorrect, because al-Nāshī al-Akbar described it as Maronite doctrine62 and ‘Abd al-Jabbār himself mentioned it in the context of Maronites.

58. ‘Afīf b. Mu‘ammil mention an unknown person called, Awghāliyūs who also believed that the body of Christ was a phantasy (khayāl) not a reality. (Cheikho, Trois Traites, P.88).
59. Ibid., P.87
60. Al-Shahrastānī, Milal, P.178.
61. Ibid., P.178.
CHAPTER II

Muslim and Christians views of the Meaning of
Jawhar and Aqānīm

‘Abd al-Jabbār declares that the Christians are agreed that "(God) the Creator is one substance (jawhar) in three hypostases (aqānīm)." In order to understand both the Christian doctrine and to explain ‘Abd al-Jabbār's and other Muslims critique of this term, it is necessary to examine the use and meaning of the terms jawhar and aqānīm.

Jawhar

Jawhar has been translated "substance". Like the substantia, this represents a group of philosophical notions which have been repeatedly used by Christian thinkers to formulate their ideas of God and especially of the Trinity. Substantia translates the Greek word ousia, the abstract noun of the verb 'to be' and its technical use begins with Plato. According to Latz, substance means, that which stands of itself, the independent subject, the real being or that which is. It is contrasted with accident (Arabic 'ard) or appearance which essentially inheres in substance as its support and only occurs as a further attribute of the real being or as the channel through which something is or appears. At Nicaea the divine word was declared to be 'of one substance with the Father,' the true expression of His being involving no change or diminution. They explained the relationship of three persons to one substance on the analogy of three members of a single species, while also affirming that the God head is an indivisible unity. In short, the word is used to express the underlying being, by which all three persons are one.

For ‘Abd al-Jabbār jawhar implies physical being, the substance which can receive accidents. This word as far as ‘Abd al-Jabbār is concerned means that

1. C. Stead, A New Dictionary of Christian Theology, P. 554
2. J. B. Latz, Encyclopedia of Theology, P. 1649
3. C. Stead, A New Dictionary of Christian Theology, P. 554
4. Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, P. 1319

110
God is created and temporal.⁵ He states clearly "God is not substance nor physical body (innāhū taˁālā laysa bi-jawhar wa lā jism.) This understanding or misunderstanding of the Christian use of jawhar is repeated by Imām al-Ḥaramayn, where he attacks the Christian doctrine of the substance of God, arguing that substance in the language of theologians means that which has extension. Alternatively, substance is defined as that which receives accidents, but it has been explained before that, God cannot receive contingents.⁶

Elias of Nisibis, a Christian apologist, has tried to defend the Christian position. He explained that this difficulty is essentially a matter of confusion in translating from Syriac. The Syriac word for self-existent being kiyān was translated into Arabic as jawhar. Now this word carried in Arabic the meaning of that which carried an accident. If that is the interpretation of jawhar, then certainly God is not jawhar. If on the other hand, jawhar is used in the sense of "self-existent" (qaˁim bi-nafsihi) then no difficulty exists.⁷

Paul of Sidon, further justified describing God as a jawhar and argued that whoever has studied philosophy and logic, will not deny calling Him jawhar, because every existent would be either jawhar (substance) or 'ard (accident). If we consider anything, we shall see either it is self-existing, that is jawhar, on

5. Peters while explaining the philosophy of 'Abd al-Jabbār about the Jawhar (substance) said,

"Because 'Abd al-Jabbār's philosophy is never purely metaphysical, but tends always to be the expression of a physical reality, this discussion coincides in his doctrine with a physical world view which sees the world as composed of separate atoms which are brought together in composites to constitute material bodies."

He further said, "A substance, by its being pure materiality, from itself has only a small number of qualities, all related to the concept of "materiality". Besides its being a substance, it can be existent. When it exists, it is spatial (mutahayyiyiz). This is the most characteristic quality of a substance, because this is the meaning of materiality being in space."

'Abd al-Jabbār used this phrase in most of his books that God is neither substance nor body. It does mean that God should in that case have the essential qualities of a body and bodies should have the essential qualities of God, for, if two things have one essential quality in common, they must have all essential qualities in common.

Peters, God's Created Speech, PP. 119-120

6. Al-Juwaynī, Al-Irshād, PP. 27-28
7. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P. 127
depending for its existence on something else, that is 'ard. 8

However, 'Abd al-Jabbār maintains the argument that God is not a substance or an accident, maintaining that there can be an entity which he refers to as maḫīm (this which is known) which is neither substance nor accident. 9

This argument is not acceptable to Paul of Sidon. He maintains that there are substances which do not carry accident and do not occupy space. These he calls al-jawāhir al-latīfa and he gives example as the substance of spirit, intellect and light etc. Since these jawāhir latīfa which are created do not carry accidents or occupy the space, it is even more appropriate that the Creator of these substances has no need of any accident or space. 10

A Muslim who shows more understanding of the Christian understanding of jawhar is al-Bāqillānī, if the quotation given by Elias of Nisibis is correct. Al-Bāqillānī says, "If we scrutinise the saying of the Christians that God is a single substance of three hypostases, we find no divergence (between us) except in name, because Christians assert that God is a substance which is unlike created substances in that it is self-existent being. Thus the meaning is correct, while the expression is wrong." 11

However in Kitāb al-Tamlild, al-Bāqillānī takes a different view. There he argues that, if we admit that God is a jawhar, so it must be like other intelligible (maqūla) substances and from their species and able to carry accidents. If they accept it, so they contradicted their own religion. If they disagree, we shall ask them, when you deny (our statement) that God is existing, but neither substance nor accident, and He is not like (other) existing things in this world, in this way, He is not like (other) substances. There is no difference in these two statements. He further argued, that when we see that every substance has a space and carried accidents, it does indicate that such a thing would be created and God cannot be created. 12

Elias observes that if jawhar is to continue to be used in the sense in which Muslims are currently employing this term, then there will be no Arabic term

8. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P. 25
10. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P. 25
11. Ibid., P. 127
12. Al-Bāqillānī, Kitāb al-Tamlild, PP. 77-78

112
for "self-existent". In that case it would be best to use the Syriac term for "self-existent" namely kiyān. Elias in another epistle has argued, and insisted that if it is incorrect to call God as jawhar, because there is no such expression in Islamic traditions, Muslims should indicate a specific word that can replace "self-existing". Otherwise they have to allow them its usage. The problem is clearly a problem of terminology and 'Abd al-Jabbār seems to refuse to acknowledge its existence, insisting that jawhar as substance must carry accidents and therefore cannot be used of God. It may well be that the use of jawhar for substance is not a good translation. The Greek for substance ousia corresponds with the Syriac kiyān "existing". However, the Muslim theologians, including 'Abd al-Jabbār, would still not have accepted any term which was used of God and anything which carries accidents. Muslim theologians do, in fact, use dhāt as a word for God's subsisting essence and being.

**Aqānim (Hypostases)**

Aqānim, singular uqūnm, is the Arabic transliteration of the Syriac words for the Greek hypostasis. The term that played an important role in the controversies out of which the doctrine of the Trinity emerged. Before its meaning became fixed, it seems to have been capable of three interpretations.

1. That which defines something as belonging to a class, hence essential being (ousia).
2. That which stands under a set of properties.
3. A particular embodiment of certain qualities, hence individual being.

The ambiguity of meaning was not only a source of confusion to Greek speaking theologians, but raised further problems for the Latins, who could not be sure whether to translate the term as substantia or persona.

---

13. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P. 128
14. Ibid., PP. 30-31
15. There are occasions when Christian theologians appear to adopt almost identical terminology. Thus Yahyā b. 'Adī uses dhāt (subsisting entity) as a synonym for jawhar (substance). This brings to mind earlier Christian theological Christian discussions where hypostases had been used to mean the same as ousia (substance).


16. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological terms, P. 106
17. Ibid., P. 106
Eventually, with the acceptance of the Nicene homoousion a clear distinction between ousia was established in the east, ousia expressing the common divine substance by individual hypostases. Thus the 'one substance three persons' formula of the Latin tradition has its Greek equivalent one ousia and three hypostases.\(^{18}\)

It was mainly under the influence of the Cappadocian Fathers that the terminology was clarified and standardized and the theological ambiguities removed. From the Council of Constantinople of 381 onwards the formula, "three hypostases in one ousia" came to be everywhere accepted on an epitome of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.\(^{19}\)

It must be noted that there are certain sects which were declared as heretic by the Church. They maintained that the term Father, Son and Holy Spirit by which God is described are only names or predicates or attributes without any reality, as the heresy of Praxeas, Noetus and Sabellius. On the other hand the apologists maintained that three members of the Trinity are real beings not mere names and therefore the distinction between them is real and not nominal.\(^{20}\)

---

18. Young, New Dictionary of Christian Theology, P. 237  
20. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Father, P. 310
CHAPTER III

The Ṣifāt in Islamic and Christian Theology

In order to study 'Abd al-Jabbār's arguments against the hypostases, it is necessary to understand the background to his view of the attribute (ṣifāt) of God and their relationship with the hypostases.

The problem of the ṣifāt deals with the question, whether the terms applied to God in the Qur'ān, such as living, knowing and powerful, imply the independent existence of life, power, knowledge which although inseparable from the entity of God can be distinct from Him.

The problem also involves the question of the meaning of the terms predicated of God in comparison with the meaning of same terms predicated of other things.

The Orthodox Doctrines

The orthodox theory of the divine attributes as expressed by Wensinck, is that the divine qualities are admitted to be eternal in the full sense of the term azali (without beginning) and abadi (without end).¹ Not only the qualities of God but also His names, - the living, the almighty etc are confessed to belong to Him from eternity.²

The Kullābiyya and the Ashārites, as representatives of orthodox theology, presented different arguments to the problem of ṣifāt. Al-Juwaynī has given special attention to Ibn Kullāb by writing a special chapter about him and his school of thought. He said, that they took on the responsibility of refuting the Mu'tazilites concerning their denial of the attributes of God. With reference to Ibn Kullāb and the Kullābiyya, al-Juwaynī maintained that Ibn Kullāb had a proper school of thought and a group with its own doctrine.

His followers later joined the Ashārites.³ According to al-Juwaynī Ibn Kullāb's

¹. A. J. Wensinck, The Muslim Creed, P. 202
². Ibid., P. 206
³. Al-Juwaynī, Al-Shāmil fī-Uṣūl al-Dīn, PP. 54-5
doctrines were very similar to the doctrines of Traditionlists and Sunnis. The credit for this goes to Ibn Kullāb who arranged them in a proper manner. Al-Juwaynī has presented the doctrine of Ibn Kullāb as it has been recorded by Al-Ashʿarī in many places. Ibn Kullāb asserted that for each of 'powerful', 'knowing', 'eternal', there was an attribute of power, knowledge and eternity. According to him, God is knowing means that knowledge belongs to Him (lahū īmān) and is subsistent (qaʿīm) within Him i.e., knowledge by virtue of which He is said to be knowing.

Ibn Kullāb justified his position and interpreted it by his famous phrase, that it is impossible that attribute will be God and will be other than God. (lā hiya huwa wa lā hiya ghayruhu). This seems to mean that they are not entirely different from Him but also not completely identical with Him; they share common features but they are not interchangeable. Ibn Kullāb and his followers never said that the sifāt were qādim but they only said, they were azāli (without beginning). Perhaps this is an attempt to distinguish them from God as qādim is the word, traditionally associated with God and is even used by theologians as a synonym for God.

In an attempt to explain the relationship between the sifāt and God, the Kullābiyya and Ashʿarites seem to have involved the doctrine of maʿānī. Maʿānī in this context seems to mean elements within the Divine Entity which carry the sifāt. However, they also seem sometime to be used as sifāt according to an argument presented by ʿAbd al-Jabbār. They argue that these maʿānī are characterised neither by existence nor non-existence and suggest that they were equivalent to the Muʿtazilite ahwāl.

This doctrine aroused the indignation of ʿAbd al-Jabbār and he tried to show the contradictions in it and unsystematic way in which the Kullābiyya and the Ashʿarites presented it. ʿAbd al-Jabbār said, that at first they characterised sifāt as maʿānī, when they called them knowledge, power and life. Then at the same time, they characterised them as attributes. And finally they maintained

4. Ibid., P. 55
5. Ibid., P. 55, al-Ashʿarī maqālāt, PP. 169-170, P. 546
6. Ibid., P. 546-7., E. L (S), P. 391
7. A. K. ʿUthmān, Naṣrīyya al-Taklīk, P. 176
8. For details see, Peters, God's Created Speech, PP. 156-157
9. ʿAbd al-Jabbār, Sharh, PP. 183-4
10. Ibid., P. 184
that they could not be characterised. All these be found to be totally contradictory and incomprehensible. 11

He did concede that if they meant by these ma'ānī what the Mu'tazilite meant by āhwāl, then he would accept that doctrine. 12

As far as al-Ash'arī is concerned, he followed Ibn Kullāb in affirming the attributes of God, but he differentiated between positive and negative attributes. He is in agreement with the Mu'tazilites in the latter not the former. He also affirmed seven attributes in God's entity like Ibn Kullāb and he interpreted them in the same way as Ibn Kullāb did. It is to be noted that there is no difference of opinion between Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites about attributes pertaining to action (ṣifāt al-fīl), because they are extra from His entity and created. The difference is only about attributes pertaining to the subsisting entity.

Finally, there is the question of the exact position of these attributes according to Ash'arites.

Are they identical with the entity or additional to it, or in a technical term, are they nafsī or ma'nawī? Nafsī means which describes the entity itself and not by a ma'nā (element which bears an attribute) existing in it additional to the entity. Ma'nawī means, what is attributed to the entity from a ma'nā subsisting in it. 13

The Ash'arites and Kullābiyya maintained, that these attributes are ma'nawī and additional to the entity. So they say, God is living by life which is additional to His entity, knowing by knowledge, which is additional to His entity. The same is the case in the phenomenal world.

The Development of the Mu'tazilite Doctrines up to time of 'Abd al-Jabbār

When the orthodox doctrine became exaggerated, it led to a form of anthropomorphism. This led to a reaction. Thus it has been suggested that Wāsīl b. 'Atā' denied the existence of any attributes including knowledge, power

11. Ibid., P. 184
12. Ibid., P. 184
and will on the grounds of their implying polythism, when he said, "Whoever affirmed mašāni (elements which carry attributes) and an eternal attribute (sifa), has affirmed two deities."  

14 - It is also possible to assume that it was in his subconscious that the Muslims should not get involved themselves in such a doctrine as the Christian had done before, by affirming three permanent attributes, i.e., existence, knowledge and life which they called hypostases.  

15 The followers of Jahm b. Šafwān, a contemporary of Wāsil maintained that God has neither knowledge nor power. They believed that He is neither knowing nor powerful because such attributes would belong to other than Him.  

16 Jahm was thus the first to introduce into Islamic theology the semantic aspect of the problem of attributes. 

17 After the death of Jahm, his theory was modified by his two contemporaries, Al-Najjār and Dirār. As far as Najjār is concerned, one can conclude from his theory that he denied the existence of any real attributes in God. He interpreted all terms attributed to God as being predicated by virtue of Himself (li-nafsihi). He suggested that all affirmative propositions in which positive terms are predicated about God are to be taken as being negative in meaning. 

18 On the other hand, Dirār maintained that the meaning of the statement that God is knowing or powerful is that He is not ignorant and powerless. He had a similar attitude towards the other attributes of the Creator as being predicated of Him by virtue of Himself (li-nafsihi). 

19 Consequently, it seems that Najjār and Dirār were the first to introduce the negative interpretation of attributes into Islamic theology.

The Mu'tazilites regarded the divine attributes as being an element of multiplicity in the unity of God's nature or essence (tabi'a, dhāt). They alleged that these attributes did not have any independent existence but were

14. A. K. 'Uthmān pointed out this view, see his Qādi al-Quḍāt, P. 153  
15. Al-Shahrīstānī, Milal, PP. 31-32  
16. Al-Ash'ārī, Al-Ibāna, P. 54  
18. Al-Ash'ārī, Maqālāt, P. 284, Shahrīstānī, Milal, P. 62  
19. Al-Ash'ārī, Maqālāt, P. 281
merged in the Unity of God's being.  

Among the Mu'tazila, al-Nazzām (d. 845), denied knowledge, power, hearing, seeing and other essential attributes and maintain that God is continuously knowing, living by virtue of Himself (li-nafsihi) but not by virtue of knowledge, power, life etc and the same was the case with regard to the rest of the essential attributes.  

With regard to the Mu'tazilite, Abū al-Hudhayl (d. 849), two views are attributed to him.

1. Glory, mighty, splendour and greatness and other attributes by which God is described are predicated of Him by virtue of Himself (li-nafsihi).  

2. God is knowing by virtue of a knowledge which is Himself (hū) and He is powerful by virtue of power which is Himself and He is living by virtue of a life which is Himself and the same with the rest of the attributes.  

When both al-Nazzām and Abū al-Hudhayl described the divine attributes as terms predicated of God by virtue of Himself, they seem to mean thereby that each of these terms indicate a property of God.

Abū al-Hudhayl is also reported as maintaining a doctrine which contradicted the earlier report, namely that God is knowing by virtue of Himself means that knowledge is other than God. On the other hand, al-Nazzām affirmed that any property predicated of Him belongs to Him only.

One has reason to believe, that according to these Mu'tazilite theologians, any attribute of God could not have a positive meaning but must be interpreted negatively. Al-Shahrastānī while reporting the details of Abū al-Hudhayl's formula, and another formula which he quoted anonymously (but one can recognise as al-Nazzām's theory) is that the former is an affirmation of what later Abū Ḥāshim called modes (ahwāl), or the same as the Christians

20. Watt, Islamic Philosophy and theology, P. 49
21. Al-Ash'ārī, Maqālat, PP. 884-6
23. Ibid., P. 165
claim as hypostases. Whereas the latter is a denial of the modes.\textsuperscript{24} Abu al-Hudhayl was also the first to divide the attributes of God into two categories.

1. \textit{Sifāt} \textit{dhāt}, (essential attributes or attributes pertaining to the entity)

2. \textit{Sifāt} \textit{Fi’il}, (attributes pertaining to the action).

The first category consists of knowledge, power, life, hearing and seeing. God cannot be characterised by their opposite functions, i.e., He would not be ignorant, powerless and so on. On the other hand, according to second category God can be characterised by their opposite functions, as His being willing and unwilling etc.\textsuperscript{25}

Later Mu’tazilites and Ash‘arites also divided the attributes into these categories, although they have differences about the number of attributes. Even oriental Christian scholars categorised the attributes of God and asserted \textit{dhāt}, \textit{nuqt} and \textit{hikma} were in first category and others in the second category.\textsuperscript{26}

Because of this new theory, Abū al-Hudhayl, faced criticism from Ash‘arites. Al-Baghdādī countered his theory with the following argument. "If Allah is knowledge and power, it is not that He should be knowing and powerful because knowledge cannot be knowing and power cannot be powerful. He should be forced to draw the same conclusion if he said that knowledge of Allah is Allah, and His power is Allah. This amounts to saying that His knowledge is power, and if Allah’s knowledge is His power, Abū al-Hudhayl must conclude that what is known to Him is performed by His power. The being of God therefore would be something performed by His power because it is known by Him. This is a form of unbelief and what leads to it is like it."\textsuperscript{27}

After Abū al-Hudhayl there were two other Mu’tazilite scholars who have somewhat different views. 'Abbād b. sulaymān (d. about 250/864) maintained

\textsuperscript{24} Al-Shahrūstānī, \textit{Milal}, P. 34.

\textsuperscript{25} Al-Khyyāt, \textit{Al-Int`iṣār}, P. 75, see also R. M. Frank, \textit{The Divine Attributes according to the Teaching of Abū al-Hudhayl Al-`Allaf}, \textit{Le Muséon}, vol. LXXXII, (1969), PP. 469-473

\textsuperscript{26} Cheikho, \textit{Vingt Traites}, P. 57, PP. 126-7

\textsuperscript{27} Al-Boghdādī, \textit{Muslim Schism and Sects}, PP. 130-131
that God is knowing, living and powerful without affirming any knowledge, life and power. Consequently He is knowing without knowledge and powerful without power. -Mu’tammar (d. 850), on the other hand, introduced a new interpretation for this issue when he said, that every change that occurs in this universe, is through a ma’nā (an element which bears an attribute) that He created. He further added that these ma’ānī are continuous without any end. Thus God is knowing through a knowledge and His knowledge is due to a ma’nā, and this ma’nā to another without any end.28

In the third phase of the debate the renowned Mu’tazilites Abū ‘Ali and his son Abū Ḥāshim al-Jubbāl introduced more developed arguments. However they had a difference of opinion in this matter. As reported by al-Shahristānī, although both scholars described the relation of attributes to God by the expression "by virtue of His entity" (li-dhātihi), they each interpreted that differently.

Abū ‘Ali al-Jubbāl denies the attributes when he says that the fact that God is knowing or living by virtue of His entity indicates that His being knowing is not an attribute as knowledge or as a mode or state (ḥāl) that requires His being knowing.29 There is another report by al-Asfārī that Abū ‘Ali al-Jubbāl rejected the theory of Abū al-Hudhayl, i.e., God is knowing with a knowledge which is His entity. Al-Jubbāl maintained that there is no knowledge, no power by which He is knowing and having power in reality. He simply said God is knowing by His entity.30 But he approved the distinction between sifāt al-dhāt (attributes pertaining to the entity) and sifāt al-fi’l (attributes pertaining to the action).

Al-Asfārī and al-Baghdādī have criticised al-Jubbāl’s claim, that the names of Allah are subject to the regular rules of grammar. Therefore it is possible to derive a name for Him from every deed which He performs. Consequently they are rational considerations. (ītibārāt faqīyya).

Al-Asfārī argued in replying that, "There is nothing that we call it extra from His entity. This heresy of yours is worse than the heresy of the Christians in calling God the Father of Christ although they do not hold, that

28. Al-Asfārī, Maqālāt, P. 228
29. Al-Shahristānī, Milāl, PP. 55-56
30. Al-Asfārī, Maqālāt, P. 524
He produced pregnancy in Mary."\(^{31}\)

On the other hand, Abū 'Ali's son, Abū Ḥāshim maintained that the generic names were mere words to which the reality corresponded. Abū Ḥāshim avoided the word quality or attributes that caused a bitter atmosphere between Mu'tazilites and orthodox Muslims. He suggested that the state "God knows" means that He is in a state of knowing and same is the case with regard to other attributes. States are neither known or unknown, neither existent nor non-existent, neither eternal nor temporal, neither God nor other than God.\(^{32}\)

There is another difference of opinion among the theologians on both sides about the nature (kaifiyya) of attributes and number of self-pertaining attributes (ṣifāt al-dhāt).

According to al-Ash'ārī, there are seven, i.e., knowledge, power, life, will, hearing, seeing and speech. Al-Jubbā'ī only accepted two i.e., knowledge and power. While Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī denied all attributes except one, which he called ʿalamiyya (universality). The majority of the Mu'tazilites maintained at least five essential attributes, i.e., knowledge, power, life, will and hearing.\(^{33}\)

"Abd al-Jabbār Doctrines of Ṣifāt

"Abd al-Jabbār's own views about the attributes of God were similar to his earlier teachers, although there were some differences and developments. Unfortunately, the first two volumes of al-Mughnī are missing in which he had discussed the problem of attributes in detail, but in his two other works, i.e., al-Muhīt and Sharḥ, he has provided a fairly clear picture.

First of all "Abd al-Jabbār has divided the attributes into two categories.

1. God's essential attributes or attributes pertaining to subsisting entity. (ṣifāt al-dhāt).

31. Al-Baghdādi, Muslim Schism and Sects, PP. 188-9
2. His functional attributes or attributes pertaining to action. (ṣifāt al-fi'l).

‘Abd al-Jabbār explained this division and said that some attributes follow the existence of an act from Him, whereas others do not.⁴⁴ ‘Abd al-Jabbār in his tawrīṣ works i.e., Sharh and al-Muhīṭ declared that there are only four essential attributes.

1. powerful (qādir)
2. knowing (‘ālim)
3. living (ḥāyy)
4. eternal (qadīm)

He accepted them as essential attributes (attributes pertaining to the subsisting entity) in agreement with Abū ʿAlī and other scholars. Such attributes as His being willing, non-willing and what follows the divine names and qualities on His being mighty, powerful and great refer to His attribute qādir.⁴⁵ ‘Abd al-Jabbār made it clear that ʿālim (knowing) and ʿilm (knowledge) are not two separate things. They are actually one thing. On this point he considered the dualists, the Christians and the attribuists (including Kullābiyya and Ashʿarites) in the same category.

In his opposition to the Kullābiyya and the Ashʿarites ‘Abd al-Jabbār argued that if we admit that God is knowing through a knowledge, it would be either known or unknown. In case of latter, its affirmation is impossible. If it is known, then it would be existing or non-existing. It cannot be non-existing. In case of existing, it would be eternal or created. According to ‘Abd al-Jabbār all such categories are invalid. So there would be only one aspect that He is knowing because of His subsisting entity.⁴⁶

‘Abd al-Jabbār further criticised those who maintained the doctrine of the attributes by arguing that if we admit that He is living through life, and as a matter of fact, life cannot be perceived except as a result of its application

---

34. ‘Abd al-Jabbār, Sharh, P. 130
36. Sharḥ, P. 183
through location (mahall), then ultimately God would be a body (jism). In the same way, power cannot be applied except as a result of its application through a location. In this case, God would be a body and a location of the accidents.  

'Abd al-Jabbār gave two explanations of his opponents and then refuted them. The first was that they affirmed the fact that He is knowing, required that He would be knowing through knowledge, because a knowing person is one who has knowledge. They supported their argument that we see through evidence that every knowing person has a knowledge. Therefore, the same is the case for that which is invisible.

The second was that knowledge is a cause for being a subsisting entity which is knowing, and a cause must be studied through all its aspects. Therefore it requires that every knowing would be knowing through a knowledge.

These arguments were attacked by 'Abd al-Jabbār when he maintained that there was no evidence that everyone of us was knowing through a knowledge. Thus their analogy was invalid. He further remarked that if everyone who is present (shāhid), who is knowing has a knowledge, then same is the case of one who is absent. According to 'Abd al-Jabbār they relied upon mere existence. In this way, if there is anybody who is present, who has a heart, then they have to make the same decision on the one who is absent.

If they maintained that knowledge was a cause for a knowing person, they would have to maintain that movement is cause of body. According to 'Abd al-Jabbār this analogy was unacceptable because movement could only exist when the body was moving. Whereas a body can be movable and unmovable.  

'Abd al-Jabbār has mentioned the Kullābiyya sect, during the discussion against the Christians at least seven times in his al-Mughni  

and there is also a separate section in al-Mughni vol. VII, for the refutation of Kullābiyya with regard to eternal speech. In the same way he criticised the Kullābiyya during the discussion about the Christians three times in his Sharb  

and once in his al-

37. Ibid., PP. 200-201
38. Ibid., PP. 205-6
41. Sharb, PP. 294, 295

124
Muhitt. In all these twelve attacks against Kulläbiyya, it is evident that they concerned with the attributes. More than once 'Abd al-Jabbār declared that Kulläbiyya are more perverted and worse than the Christians because they have increased the number of the eternal. During his criticism, he has declared that the Kulläbiyya and the Christians are in the same category. There is no difference between them except their way of expression.

The Šifāt and Hypostases:

It has become clear that there is great similarity at one level in the Islamic doctrines of Šifāt, the doctrine of attributes, and the Christian doctrine of hypostases. Even the majority of the Mu'tazilites, including 'Abd al-Jabbār, conceded the possibility of a limited number of Šifāt, the essential attributes or rather to be more precise, the attributes pertaining to the subsisting entity (šifāt li-dhātihi).

It is noticeable that these attributes are very similar to the attributes used by Christians to describe the hypostases, e.g. knowledge, power and life. Yet it seems that this is, in fact not so much a result of Muslim borrowing from Christians as Christians using the Muslim attributes to define the hypostases of the Trinity.

It has already been observed that Christians did occasionally use the word

42. Al-Muhit, vol. I, P. 222
44. Wolfson has remarked, "that Muslims began to discuss the divine attributes under the influence of a discussion about the Trinity". He pointed out that the Mu'tazilites especially chose such attributes, as he suggested were already used by the Christians as knowledge, power, life etc. Consequently one can say that the Muslims borrowed this idea and applied it in elaborating their own doctrine of God. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Kalam, PP. 126-127
45. Wolfson's theory has been criticised by S. H. Griffith, who pointed out that his mistaken initial assumption is that the Muslims have borrowed these lists from Christians.

He also remarked against the theory of Wolfson, that he is missing the point that the Christian apologists were taking their cue from the Muslim mutakallimin and not vice versa. Sidney H. Griffith, Ḥabib ibn Hidmah Abū Rā'iṭah, Oriens Christians, vol. LXIV, (1980), P. 188
\(\text{dhät}^{46}\) as a synonym for \text{jawhar}, probably under the influence of Muslim theologians. Where this does happen that they also describe the hypostases as \(\text{ṣifāt}\).

The Nestorian Christian apologist 'Ammār al Baṣrī comes close to the Islamic doctrine of \(\text{ṣifāt}\) when he describes living (\text{ḥayy}) and speaking (\text{nāțiq}) as referring to the \(\text{ma'ānī}, \text{life and etc, (This use of the word seems to involve the Kullābiyya usage when it is equivalent to \(\text{ṣifāt}^{47}\)) because of the \(\text{dhāt}\). However, he then adds, because of the constitution (\text{��nīyya}) of the \text{jawhar}. As has already been pointed out the use of \text{jawhar} was unacceptable to Muslim theologians.

The Christian doctrine appears in its fullest form in the writings of Elias, the bishop of Nisibis (d. 1049). He says:

"The names of God belong to two categories that which refer to His being and essence i.e., the essential attributes or attributes pertaining to the entity (\(\text{dhātiyya}\)) as we say self-existing, wise and living, and those which refer to His actions (\(\text{ﬁlīyya}\)), which are derived from such things as Him being Creator, generous, providing, merciful etc ... and what is similar to that. Thus to say that God is living and wise is the equivalent of saying that He is self-existent (\(\text{qā'im bi-nafsihi}\)). When we say that God is living and wise, it is as affirmation of Him as \(\text{dhāt}\). The point is that life and wisdom in the Godhead are not additional composite powers, as they are in men’s wisdom and life. Rather life and wisdom are part of God’s essence (being) and very nature, and inseparable from His being. On the other hand, the attributes like creation, generosity, will and mercy are \(\text{ṣifāt} \text{filīyya} \) (attributes pertaining to action) and are related to the actions of God. For example, \text{khalaqa} is derived from \text{khalaqa yakhluqu} ..... and etc. All these \(\text{ṣifāt} \text{filīyya} \) are derived from verbs and they are related to both the Creator and the creature. Thus the epithet "generous" is concerned with Him and to those to whom He showed generosity and the same is the case with regard to other attributes.

(Finally, he concluded) that the same would be applied in all such names that are derived from \(\text{dhāt}\) (essence) i.e. being, wisdom and life. Since \(\text{dhāt}\)

(essence) wisdom and life are self pertaining characteristics and will, generosity, mercy and the like are attributes pertaining to actions. So they called dhāt (essence) wisdom and life as characteristics (khawāṣṣ) and hypostases and will, generosity and mercy and what is similar like that would be named as attributes. 

From this quotation, we can see that Elias has practically adopted the Muslim classification of ṣifāt. It also appears that he has used dhāt as an equivalent of jawhar and khawāṣṣ and ṣifāt as equivalent of hypostases. However the quotation also shows that he used dhāt as equivalent to hypostasis. Thus, although heavily influenced by Muslim theology, we are left with the unsatisfactory definition of dhāt as both hypostasis and substance.

However it is the case that traditional Christian theology would have applied all the ṣifāt li-dḥātihi to each of the hypostases. As a result of using Muslim ideas about the ṣifāt to explain the Trinity, they have opened themselves to arguments about the need for each hypostasis to be living and knowing etc, arguments which ‘Abd al-Jabbār ruthlessly presses home.

48. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP. 126-7
49. Al-Mughni, P. 91, see also Chapter II, PP.110-114.
CHAPTER IV

A Comparative Analysis of 'Abd al-Jabbar

critique of Trinitarian Doctrines

In his study of Christian doctrines in al-Mughni, 'Abd al-Jabbar concentrates almost exclusively on two areas, i.e., Trinitarian and Christological doctrines.

It has been necessary to categorise 'Abd al-Jabbar's criticism of Trinitarian doctrines because his own presentation lacks rigorous systematisation and as a result it is difficult to differentiate between his arguments. Whenever possible there has been an attempt to substantiate the statement he attributes to Christians in the light of Christian scholars writing in Arabic and other more general works.

************

'Abd al-Jabbar first objects to the generally accepted Christian doctrine of the Trinity, that "God is one substance (jawhar) of three hypostases (aqdnim)". He maintains that this will destroy the unity of God or absolute oneness of God.

'Abd al-Jabbar is prepared to concede some of their argument as being merely terminological if they do not mean by "hypostases" independently subsisting entities (dhawat) which can be associated with attributes (sifat). Thus they can describe God as knowing without predicking an independent subsisting entity, knowledge. He is therefore demanding a definition of hypostasis which would exclude from it any idea of an independently subsisting entity. This was a problem that has concerned Christian theologians right up to the time of the general acceptance of this doctrine. However, 'Abd al-Jabbar himself is guilty of some exaggerated terminology. The meaning of dhawat as independently self-subsisting entities was a meaning that had been possible for hypostases in the early days of the Christian discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity. It was no longer really a possible translation. As far as 'Abd al-Jabbar is concerned he argued that, if they do insist that the hypostases are independently subsisting entities associated with attributes, they are guilty of polytheism. He uses this opportunity to compare the Christian doctrine with that of the Kullabiyya who maintained that attributes such as power, knowledge and eternity were not God and not other than God. Thus by implication accusing the Kullabiyya of making

1. 'Abd al-Jabbar, al-Mughni, vol. V. P. 86

128
the attributes (ṣifāt) of God equivalent to the Christian hypostases.² By using the word dhawāt, he seems to be deliberately distorting the Kullābiyya doctrine of ma'āni elements within the deity which carry attributes. He seems to describe the Kullābiyya view by indicating that the ma'āni and the sifāt, attributes, are according to them the equivalent to dhawāt.

'Abd al-Jābbār then goes on to argue that since the hypostases are, according to the Christians, eternal they cannot be characterised by anything which would distinguish the one from the other.³ Although the argument is not effectively presented, it seems to involve the implication that the eternal substance of God in the three hypostases would necessitate that they were identical, inseparable and undifferentiated. Thus there is little point in speaking of them as three.

He then argues that if the Son is identical and shares the eternity of His Father, he would be similar in His self-subsisting entity (essence). This means that as the Father has a Son who is called His knowledge and Word (Kalima), the Son in the same way would require also another Son that would be called his knowledge and word (kalima) in an infinite series.⁴ The same is the case with the Spirit. This argument is one of logical casuistry and really adds nothing to the discussion, except for scoring neat points of argument.

He follows this with an argument of a similar kind. He points out the fact that the hypostases are of one substance (jawhar) requires that, as in the previous argument, they must each be the same. Therefore Fatherhood and Sonship refer inevitably to the subsistent being of God. Nor can the terminology of knowledge and the Word, when used of the Son, exclude from God the Father (i.e. the one God), these attributes.⁵ This again brings him back to a comparison with the doctrine of the Kullābiyya on God's attributes.

A second difficulty raised by the earlier theologians is that each hypostasis must be a separate deity since they are identical through being eternal. Thus the Father is a deity, then like Him the other hypostases must have their own hypostases and another infinite series is established.⁶

². Ibid., P. 86
³. Ibid., P. 87
⁴. Ibid., P. 86-87
⁵. Ibid., P. 86-87
⁶. Ibid., P. 87
Again he accuses the Kullābiyya of tendencies which are to him as logically erroneous as the Christians. At this point in his discussion, he becomes so involved in the inter-Islamic dispute about the attribute (ṣifāt) that he accuses the Kullābiyya of being worse than the Christians.  

‘Abd al-Jabbār then presents the Christian defence of their position that God is one by declaring that there are three hypostases and one substance with the stress for unity of God on one substance. He proceeds to take on this argument in terms of meaning and use of language with the implication that the three hypostases cannot be one when it has been demonstrated that they are three subsisting entities. He goes on to show that the Christians who maintain that the hypostases are different but not different in substance are just like the Kullābiyya. 

He then pursues the argument by maintaining that to say that three is one and one is three (in reality) is irrational. To him the doctrine of Trinity is illogical and inconceivable. Even though a single man may be part of a set of ten and one man may be identified with the total in general speech, in reality he is separate from the total, since he is characterised by his own attributes. If Christians refer to their doctrine in this way, they must admit that the distinct hypostases are characterised by separate attributes. 

‘Abd al-Jabbār removed the objection that Arabs can speak of one thing as identical to the set to which it belongs, or of a man being composed of many parts because these are mode of expression. According to him, the Christian cannot escape the contradiction in their doctrine.

He has repeated the same argument in his Sharḥ, in which he argued that the intention behind our statement that someone is one man is that he is a member of the group of the people. Similarly, when we say one house or one group, it is in contrast to what they are saying about God. They are making Him one thing in reality of three things in reality. Therefore the contradiction is confirmed.

7. Ibid., P. 88
8. Ibid., PP. 88-89
10. Ibid., P. 89-90
11. Sharḥ, P. 293
He goes on to declare that the doctrine is as contradictory as saying that a thing is existing and non-existent at the same time, or claiming that a substance is white or black at the same time. According to ʿAbd al-Jabār this is so unreasonable that there is no need to refute it.\textsuperscript{12}

He argues that they cannot say that the hypostases are the same in their subsisting entities but different in attributes which do not refer to the subsisting entities but to elements which entitle them to attributes.\textsuperscript{13} What ʿAbd al-Jabbār intends by this argument is that when Christians define each hypostasis as a dhāt to which a particular attribute (ṣifa) applies, e.g. the Son is knowledge and therefore "Knowing" applies specially to him, at the same time they have to apply other ṣifāt to the hypostases which are not their specific attributes. In this way they would be involved in the contradiction of all such attributes which are specific to each hypostases being applied to all three hypostases. Thus they have to admit in their own doctrine that the Father is a living knowing Father. Similarly, they would have to admit that the Son is a living knowing Son and the Spirit is a living knowing spirit. Therefore what they are in fact saying, according to Abd al-Jabbār is that the hypostases are the same and different.

In another argument ʿAbd al-Jabbār made a similar objection by maintaining that if the substance of three hypostases is one substance, it means that each hypostasis is entitled to the same attributes, because they have the same substance.\textsuperscript{14}

In his Sharḥ he argued in another way, that in this case they must confine themselves to one hypostasis, because where these hypostases share in eternity, they must resemble one another and in terms of what refers to their entities one of them could be the other. This would require that one of them could dispense with the rest. So that it could be said that God is one substance and one hypostasis.\textsuperscript{15}

He suggests that to say the Father and the Son are different but of one substance is to say that each could sometimes be one substance and other times

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Al-Mughni, P. 90
\item \textsuperscript{13} Ibid., P. 91
\item \textsuperscript{14} Ibid., P. 95
\item \textsuperscript{15} Sharḥ, P. 295
\end{itemize}
not be of it. To 'Abd al-Jabbār this is nonsense. Consequently he argues that they would have to admit that the hypostases were different for the same reason as they were the same. Again to 'Abd al-Jabbār this is logically irrational. 16

He further explained that if they argue that the hypostases are different because of their entities and substances, then, if their substance is the same, their entities must be the same. Otherwise the hypostases would be different also in substantiality as they are different in hypostasy and it is totally against the doctrine of Melkites and Jacobites. 17

Here 'Abd al-Jabbār seems to be deliberately distorting the doctrine of aspect as put forward by Yahyā b. 'Adī when he maintained that they were the same from one aspect and different from another. 18 'Abd al-Jabbār chooses to understand "aspect" here and referring to either substantiality or hypostasy. He further argued, that, when the substance of the Son is same as the Father, so the Son can become a Father. So they must affirm the Son as a Father because the substance is common. He further extended his charge, that such an affirmation is necessary because according to them the Fatherhood is an attribute of God and one of the things which must be without imperfection. Consequently, the Son must be called as Father, otherwise the Son who is God would be incomplete. 19 Here 'Abd al-Jabbār has again misrepresented Christian doctrine. The doctrine is that, the Father is perfect God, the Son is perfect God and the Holy Spirit is perfect reference, but they are not three Gods but one. 20 However 'Abd al-Jabbār interprets this as the statement that, "Fatherhood is one of the things which must be without imperfection." He is perhaps anticipating an argument that he will present about the idea of Fatherhood requiring a Son to complete its meaning.

'Abd al-Jabbār then turns to the Melkites doctrine that the hypostases are the substance yet the substance is different from the hypostases. 21 To him again this is a series of total contradictions. In putting forward this Melkite doctrine at the beginning of the section, 'Abd al-Jabbār stated that they claimed there

16. Al-Mughnī, PP. 95-96
17. Ibid., P. 96
18. Yahyā b. 'Adī, Maqālāt, P. 28
19. Ibid., P. 96
20. Cheikho, Vingt Traites P. 56
was no fourth (entity) involved. He now proceeds to demonstrate that when they say that the substance is different from the hypostases, they are automatically involving four (entities).\footnote{22}

If they tried to argue, contrary to their own belief, that the substance was one of the three hypostases, then they would be guilty of declaring that one thing was different from itself by virtue of their doctrine that the substance was different from the hypostases.\footnote{23} This argument has been constructed by ‘Abd al-Jabbār and is not held by the Christians. It is a good example of ‘Abd al-Jabbār's polemical style of setting up arguments in order to rebut them. It in fact adds nothing to the discussions.

‘Abd al-Jabbār presents Christianity with three options, each of which undermine the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Elaborating this argument, he goes on to declare that if God is a substance which has three hypostases, then these would be things added to God which were not God.\footnote{24} He does not present this argument clearly but it seems that he is trying to make Christians admit that the hypostases are eternal manifestations of attributes, for he goes on to suggest that this would be like the Kullābiyya who hold this view.\footnote{25}

He further argued, that for the Melkites, the true deity is either substance or the hypostases, that three plus one cannot make four. There must be a substance for the hypostases since they are identical with the substance and a separate substance since it is distinct from them making two substances. ‘Abd al-Jabbār switches his attack to numbers and presents us with the same arguments presented in the logic of arithmetic.\footnote{26}

Using an argument which he repeats later,\footnote{27} he demands that if they maintain that God is one substance in three hypostases, the reverse is possible that He is three substances of one hypostasis. Especially as they maintain that nothing which is not a substance can exist by itself. Therefore if the hypostases are

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{22. Ibid., P. 96-97}
\item \footnote{23. Ibid., P. 96}
\item \footnote{24. Ibid., P. 97}
\item \footnote{25. Al-Mughni, P. 97}
\item \footnote{26. Al-Mughni, P. 97}
\item \footnote{27. Al-Mughni, P. 104, tran, P.47}
\end{itemize}}
independently existing entities, they must have their own substance. Thus if there is an eternal substance for the hypostases and one for the substance, a kind of dualism emerges. This argument does not seem really effective. Perhaps the reason is that ‘Abd al-Jabbār totally rejects the Christian concept of God being a substance, and therefore does not give proper understanding to the Christian view.  

In an argument either directly taken from, or at least based upon, Abū 'Alī al-Jubbālī, he argues against the hypostases in terms of being attributes. He is using a rigidly Mu'tazilite framework and is attacking the Kullābiyya, whom he mentions specifically as much as the Christians. By describing the Son as Knowledge and the Spirit as Life, they would have to affirm many hypostases for each of the attributes that they associate with God, e.g. Power, hearing, seeing etc. If they deny these attributes to God, why should they associate Living and Knowing with Him? On the other hand, if they maintain that God has Power and the other attributes as an integral part of His subsisting entity, why should the same not apply to Life and Knowledge? If they try and limit the attributes by saying that Life is Power, hearing, seeing etc, then why not say Life is Knowledge as well and thus limit God to two hypostases, the Father and Life. 

***************

The Christian identification of the Son as the eternal Word of God immediately bears on the inter Islamic debate of whether the Word of God is eternal and uncreated. Therefore, in arguing against the Christian doctrine, ‘Abd al-Jabbār is also to some extent attacking Muslim theologians who maintained the doctrine of the eternal uncreated Word of God. In his view speech belongs to the genus of accident i.e. sound (sawt) is an accident and consequently cannot be a substance. So God cannot be called speaking from eternity, because speech is created.

When Christians identify the Son, who is according to them God, as the Word and Speech, they are in effect, identifying Him with something which is created, namely speech. If God the Father is the Speaker, then God the Son must be created speech. However paradoxically if the Son is God, He must also be a Speaker, which must involve him also in having another who is speech. 

***************

28. Al-Mughnī, P. 104
29. Al-Mughnī, PP. 91-92
30. Al-Mughnī, P. 98
In stating that Christians are forced to admit that God is subject to division into three because they maintain that He is body subject to change and is created, 'Abd al-Jabbār is bringing together two of his arguments against Christianity in a rather confused way. It has already been pointed out, that 'Abd al-Jabbār refused to understand substance as being anything but body (jism) using this, he refers to concept of the Trinity as implying discussion of the substance and then proceeds to add the argument that the Father must logically cause the Son to exist. Thus for him, a doctrine emerges which not only denies the Unity of God, by virtue of Him being subject to division, but also denies the eternity of God. 31

In his hostility to the Kullābiyya, he proceeds to attack the Christians for a doctrine that is, in fact, a doctrine of the Kullābiyya. He accuses the Christians of maintaining that "the Eternal is knowing and living because of an element which requires an attribute (ma'na)." We know that this is a Kullābiyya doctrine and not a Christian. However, what 'Abd al-Jabbār seems to be suggesting is that in identifying the Son as Knowledge by which the three hypostases know and the Spirit as life by which the three hypostases live, the Christians have in fact identified the Son and the Spirit as almost equivalent to ma'ānî and the sifāt of the Kullābiyya. In doing this they cannot then claim that there is no cause for God's existence, there must also be a cause or ma'na for that. If they refuse to accept that then why do they need the Son and the Spirit for God to be knowing and living. 32

*************

In the last part of his discussion of the Trinity, 'Abd al-Jabbār turns to the concept of Son of God. Surprisingly as he is discussing the Trinity, he does not discuss God the Son as second person or hypostasis of the Trinity. He allows himself to be diverted for his Trinitarion refutation. Although there are allusion to that kind of sonship and brief allusions to the Holy Ghost, he is not really dealing with matters related to the Trinity. This becomes clear when we see that he begins his argument against sonship in terms of the adoptionist theory, a theory that one would have expected him to have some sympathy for. However, so involved has he became in his polemic against Christianity that he also attempts to sweep their arguments away as linguistically unsound.

He argued that adoption is possible for those who must be from the same

31. Ibid., P. 95
32. Ibid., P. 95
species and Christ is not from the species of God. Otherwise every prophet could have the same status and since there is no difference between calling someone son and calling him brother in this sense, then both are theoretically possible for God. But since it is inconceivable that He should make anyone His equal, then both brotherhood and sonship are not to be used of him. His teachers agree that the relationship between son and father is only possible between beings who can be related naturally in this way. Since God is essentially different from His creature, so the relationship is impossible in any sense.

Through reference to the New Testament, where Christ is called Son of God, 'Abd al-Jabbār like his early scholars argued that the literal interpretation of such verse is not permitted, since scriptural passages must be taken in accordance with rational principles. In classical Arabic, according to 'Abd al-Jabbār it is not acceptable to attribute a son to god, even though it may be possible in another language in which metaphors have different meaning. Therefore the work of translation must be carried out with great sensitivity and by experts in language. 'Abd al-Jabbār also argued against the idea of Christ as Son of God through the reference to the Gospel, "I am ascending to my Father and Your Father" (John 20:17), and Christ saying to his disciples "You are my brother" (Matt 12:49). In this way God would be Father or uncle of disciples. A similar argument is used by Ibn Ḥazm about the verse of John, that all Christians are therefore Children of God, then he asked what preference Christ have over them, if he is the Son of God and they are also Sons of God.

In his Tathbit, he further pointed out, that in Hebrew, which was the language of Christ (in fact it was Aramaic), son is applied for a noble and obedient servant or a sincere friend (al-walī al-mukhlīṣ). In the same way the word father is used as lord, master and organiser (mudābir). By referring to Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where there is the statement, "For all who are led by

33. 'Abd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol. V, PP. 105-6
34. 'Abd al-Jabbār meant his Mu'tazilite scholars especially al-Jāhīz and Abū 'Alī
36. Ibid., P. 110
the Spirit of God are Sons of God." 38 He accused the Christians of believing that God is a man, human being and person when they attributed a Son to Him in reality through birth and sexual reproduction. He pointed out that among the three sects (Melkites, Nestorians and Jacobites) there is no one who believed that Christ is Son of God in terms of respect or metaphor. 39

Thus he is confusing the adoptionist theory with the more orthodox Christian view of Christ as the Son of God and attacking both ideas at the same time. If he had been a little bit more systematic, his arguments would have been clearer and had more force.

In addition to, he in his al-Majmū' fi al-Muhīt, criticised this doctrine again, by saying that to describe the Eternal as Father and attribute to Him a Son, is a mistake in expression. In classical Arabic father as eternal and the son in terms of Word is irrational. The real meaning of the father is that which gives birth to a child and he is product of his sperm. 40 So Christ cannot be Son of God in any sense.

Here we are getting closer to some kind of Trinitarian discussion. What he should really be concerned with is discussing the relationship of the Hypostasis of God the Father with God the Son who is also termed Word of God.

He further pointed out in his Tathbit, that as the Christians praise God through birth or generation, on the other hand the Muslims eliminate such anthropomorphic elements as generation from the concept of deity. 41 However this is not a view shared by all Muslims. Some of them are prepared to accept the term Father and Son as applied to God and Christ in a metaphorical sense as al-Ghazālī has done. 42

************

As has already been pointed out Christian theologians divide all existence into substance and accidents. On the other hand neither of these terms is acceptable to Muslim theologians to use of God. For the Muslim theologians

38. (Rom 8:14) In fact 'Abd al-Jabbār slightly misquotes Paul as he says, "The Holy Spirit itself witnessed to our spirits that we are Sons of God".
39. 'Abd al-Jabbār, Tathbit, PP. 120-1
41. Tathbit, vol. I, P. 96
42. Al-Ghazālī, al-Radd al-Jamīl, PP. 242-3, 287
substance (jawhar) implies body (jism) and body cannot be used of God. The Christians understood the meaning of the term differently. ʿAbd al-Jabbār takes up the Christians division of things into substance and accidents and their claim that God is a substance which is not a body, a substance which is living and speaking. Using his own definition of substance, he then argues that if that is the case, then all substances must be living and speaking. He wants the Christians to admit that God is neither substance or accident, as the Muslim maintains, for without the concept of one substance, the Christians would be left with three Gods.

He then shifts his argument back to the attributes maintaining that if substance is characterised by life and speech only, because it is a substance, then every substance must be something like that. Consequently they have to admit that life and speech have become characteristic for a third characteristic. Then he argues that if God would be incomplete without these characteristics, they must add further attributes as moving, eating and drinking etc, otherwise He would be incomplete, like a living body who has not such qualities. He further argued that, according to their argument, He became God because He is living and speaking, it does indicate that every living and speaking person must be God. Then the angels and human being would be God, because they can speak.

ʿAbd al-Jabbār then turns to a Christian argument which is presented also by the Christian writer al-Kindi.43 The argument is that the number (3) consists of both even and odd. So whatever includes both these categories would be a perfect number. ʿAbd al-Jabbār argued that that is wrong because this would have to be applied to the Father who if He was perfect, would have to encompass both categories of number (i.e. 3). The same would apply to the hypostases of the Son and Spirit individually. Then the number of hypostases would be nine because everyone of them is entitled to three.

Along with that he charged that according to them, God is not three in its substantiality, but only in His hypostasy. So according to this argument, He must be incomplete, because it could not include the two categories of numbers. He criticised that in this way God would be created and not as an Eternal because He is incomplete.44

43. Al-Kindī, Risāla ʿAbd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī, P. 30
44. Al-Mughni, PP. 98-103
‘Abd al-Jabbār turns to the well known Christian analogies used to demonstrate the oneness of God while there still being three hypostases. The comparison is given in its most complete form by Paul of Sidon who say: "When we say the reason of man, the speech of man and the spirit of man, we do not have to admit that there are three men. (Similarly) when we say, "the flame of the fire, the light of the fire and heat of the fire," we do not have to admit that there are three fires. (Similarly) when we say "the orb of the sun, the light of the sun and the heat of the sun," we do not have to admit there are three suns. This analogy is also used by Christians to describe the generation of the Son from the Father. Where they describe speech being produced by reason and the light of sun coming from the orb of the sun and the heat of the fire from the fire.

‘Abd al-Jabbār answers the Christian comparison of the relationship of the Father and the Son being like reason producing words, by a series of neat derating points. First he shows that this statement is not true because ignorant can produce words without any reasoning being involved. When the defence is made that by word is meant knowledge, he brings up the two kinds of knowledge, necessary knowledge (ilm darūri) and acquired knowledge (ilm muktasab). Necessary knowledge is knowledge which is established in the mind through no effort by the subject. ‘Abd al-Jabbār argues that if the Christians mean that kind of knowledge, it is the same as reason and what they are saying is reason that is produced by reason, which is nonsense. However, when he comes to acquired knowledge, which is generally defined as knowledge produced by reason, ‘Abd al-Jabbār contradicts this and at this point is clearly inconsistent.

As far as the heat and fire analogy are concerned, he points out that they are of the same substance, then heat is produced from its own substance, which is nonsense.

His rejection of the light and sun comparison is based on his understanding of physics. He seems to regard light as being a body that is independent of the sun but is reflected by the surface of the sun.

45. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP. 21-22
46. Ibid., PP. 2, 5, 14
47. Al-Mughni, PP. 102-103
He made it clear that he was fully aware that Christians always avoid using Father in terms of offspring, because in this way He would be created. According to 'Abd al-Jabbār, if they affirm Him Father as the production of the word from reason, it is also confirm Him as created, because such things occur only in created bodies and God is beyond that.\(^{48}\)

**************

In objecting to the Christian description of Christ as Word of God, 'Abd al-Jabbār has to insist that this description can only be used metaphorically because Christ is also called Word of God (Kalimat Allāh) in the Qur'ān.\(^{49}\) This argument is also used by Ibn Ḥazm. However he believes non-Mu'tazilite "Word of God" i.e. the Qur'ān, to be eternal and uncreated.\(^{50}\)

It is interesting to note that some Christian apologists such as John of Damascus assert that Christ is Word of God and Word of God, according to Muslims, is uncreated and this is exactly the same as the Christian faith in Christ.

However, the Mu'tazilite 'Abd al-Jabbār accept neither Ibn Ḥazm's version of the uncreated "Word of God", nor that of John of Damascus.

---

49. Ibid., PP. 112-113  
CHAPTER V

The Theology of the Incarnation

The second main controversial problem between Islam and Christianity is the issue of incarnation and it covers such issues as the hypostatic Union and the problem of two natures and two wills in Christ. It is mainly concerned with the person and status of Christ in Christianity. In the introduction to this thesis, a general survey of the sects 'Abd al-Jabbār dealt with was given. However, in order to give a clear picture of his understanding or misunderstanding of the Christian doctrine of incarnation, it is necessary, at this point, to examine much more closely that Christian doctrine. This will inevitably involve some repetition but in the main, it is hoped that this section will make the views with regard to incarnation or inherence clearer.

Christianity is often described as an incarnational faith, for, according to some, Christianity has no meaning without the incarnation. If the Christian faith is to be true, the key to the salvation is only the relation of God to man, and it is to be found in the union of the Godhead and manhood in Christ.

The term 'incarnation' is applied to the act of a divine or supernatural being in assuming the form of a man or animal and continuing to live in the form upon the earth.

The Christian doctrine of the incarnation affirms that the eternal Son of God took human flesh from his human mother and historical Christ is at once fully God and fully man. In other words, God, in one of the modes of His triune being and without in any way ceasing to be God, has revealed Himself to mankind for their salvation by coming amongst them as a man. The man Christ is held to be the incarnate word or Son of God.

---

It seems that the Christian doctrine of incarnation is a result of a process of gradual revelation and thought. It is not easy to say that God incarnated in human being and that is all. There is a long series of debates and discussion within Christianity among the early Church Fathers, and everyone of them has tried to interpret this mystery according to his point of view.

Before going to describe the whole controversy and argumentation, it seems better to present the orthodox doctrine of the incarnation, which will make it easier to understand the entire dilemma.

Orthodox theologians held that the duality of natures entailed a duality of wills. They also emphasised that incarnation was an act of the whole Godhead, not of one person acting independently. 6

According to Wolfson, the early Fathers were not conscious of the problem before the time of Appollinarius (d. 390). They mentioned the soul of Christ, as consisting of both an irrational and rational soul. But when Appollinarius denied the existence of a rational soul in Christ, the Orthodox Fathers came out openly against him, maintaining that there was in Christ a rational soul in addition to an irrational soul. 7 However there were some other sects who held that Christ was a mere man. 8 They represented him as the son of Joseph and Mary according to the ordinary course of human generation. But any opinion which held that Christ was a mere man, was always condemned by the Church. 9

This study is concerned with the doctrine of incarnation as it was understood and interpreted by the Church Fathers and apologists and latter on the eastern sects of the Church such as Nestorians and Monophysites (Jacobites), because this discussion has direct relation to know about 'Abd al-Jabbâr's criticism of the Christological doctrines.

The critical theological question is, how could the eternal Son, who is equally God with the Father, so partake of our flesh as to become man as we are man, because the nature of God was something entirely alien to and remote from the nature of man? In trying to answer this question two different forms of

9. Ibid., P.343.
unorthodox teaching arose. One was the denial of the divinity of Christ and the other, denial of humanity of Christ.

Augustine (354–430) has expressed his views on the incarnation in the following words:

"Just as soul is united to the body in uniting of person so as to constitute man, in the same way, God united to man in unity of person so as to constitute Christ. In the former person there is a mixture of soul and body, in the latter there is a mixture of God and man."\textsuperscript{10}

Regarding the duality of nature and unity of person, the Creed of Chalcedon explains that one and the same Christ is in "two natures", and that these two natures have been joined to one another in one person and one hypostasis that is "God the Logos".\textsuperscript{11}

Christian theology was influenced by Greek philosophy and logic as it affected every phase of knowledge. It became necessary for the theologians and apologists to express their theological views in a philosophical manner. The same is the case with Islamic theology. The Church Fathers and apologists searched for an analogy from the various kinds of physical union discussed by Aristotle and other Greek philosophers. In the philosophy of Aristotle there are at least three kinds of physical union by which different individual objects may become united so as to form one individual object.

1. - Union of two things which are not reciprocally active and passive. In such a union the two constituent elements remain unchanged. Their unity being only an aggregate of two things as the wheat and the barley are called in mixture of the two. In fact each grain of the one is juxtaposed to a grain of the other. In such a union two original individual and their respective species or natures remain unchanged. That kind of union is called "composition".\textsuperscript{12}

2. - Union of reciprocally active and passive bodies which are easily divisible. In this union each of the constituents changes from its own nature towards the

\textsuperscript{10} H. A. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Father, P.371.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., P.372.
\textsuperscript{12} H. A. Wolfson, Philosophy of Church Fathers, P.374.
other. Both became intermediate and common, while the nature of each of the constituent changes, without being destroyed. This union is called mixture. There are two examples for this union.

i. As the bodies are formed out of the four elements, insofar as these have been mixed. The qualities of the mixed elements 'corrupt' the essence of each other.

ii. Honey and water are such a mixture.

Third kind of union, which Aristotle treats as a subdivision of the second one, is that of reciprocally active and passive bodies, which are easily divisible, but are of unequal power of action and passion.

There are four examples for this kind.

i. A drop of wine thrown into ten thousand gallons of water. It is not a mixture.

ii. Union of two solid bodies such as 'tin' and 'bronze' of which one is exclusively or superlatively passive, but the other is passive in a very slight degree.

iii. Mixture of wine with a little water.

iv. As fire and wood, if one adds wood to fire already burning, the wood will be changed into fire. No special name is given by Aristotle to this kind. He speaks of it as a mixture or a mixture in a very slight degree. For the sake of clarity, it can be called "predominance".

There is another kind of union, which the Stoics call "confusion" which is brought about by the corruption of all the original distinctive qualities penetrating one another at every point.

The Orthodox Fathers examined all these categories for their analogies in their

---

discussion of the union of incarnation. According to Wolfson, they could use an analogy, of the union of composition or mixture and less useful to them was an analogy based on the union of confusion. However, the one that was most suitable for their purpose seemed to be the union of predominance. Wolfson further suggested that there was no special term for the union for which he gave the term predominance, it was loosely described as a mixture or as composition.\textsuperscript{15}. So all these terms are used in the sense of predominance.

\textbf{Orthodox theologians and Fathers}

Before any examination of the Christological doctrines of the sects discussed by \'{A}bd al-Jabb\={a}r can take place, it would appear appropriate to give a brief outline of the major theological contribution of the early Fathers to the Orthodox position.

1. \textit{Tertullian}, the earliest of the Latin Fathers. His writings were produced between the years 190 and 225. He developed the idea of the two natures in Christ. According to him, there are two substances in one person. The divine nature is real, the human nature is real, and the conjunction of the two in one person is real.\textsuperscript{16} He means by two substances, flesh and spirit, as a kind of mixture. He further explained it and said that, "We see plainly the twofold state not confounded but cojoined in one person - Jesus God and man." In other words this analogy is called conjunction.\textsuperscript{17} (\textit{muj\={a}wara} in Arabic).

In another place, he referred to such a kind of union by the term 'association'. With regard to the question whether the flesh was a person before union? he answered, 'This Ray of God, as was always foretold in the past, came down into a certain virgin and being formed into flesh in her womb, is born man mixed with the Father. Answering another question, whether the flesh was considered a person after the union, \textit{\&\vats} replied in negative. Wolfson has suggested that the term mixture could have been used by him literally in an Aristotelian sense. According to him, he uses the term "conjunction" and "mixture" loosely in the sense of "predominance". So that after the union, the Logos is both a nature

\textsuperscript{15} H. A. Wolfson, \textit{Philosophy of the Church Father}, P.385-6.
\textsuperscript{17} Wolfson, \textit{Philosophy of the Church Father}, P.388-9.
and a person, whereas the flesh is only a nature.  

2. Origen, the great Alexandrian theologian who lived from A.D. 185 to 254. In an answer to a question, he was asked how the union of incarnation could be applied to the Godhead? The Son of God must be in his essence God, but if so he must be eternal, since the very essence of the Godhead is to be eternal. How then can he be a son, since a son is necessarily derived from and comes later in time than the Father.

He answered that the idea of Sonship implies fundamentally a relationship and not succession in time. This is the doctrine of the eternal generation. His generation is as eternal and everlasting as the brilliance which is produced from the sun. It is not possible to predicate a time of relationship to it. There was no time when the Son was not. The Son is co-eternal with the Father. It is not possible to think of God without His wisdom or assume a beginning of His begetting since that is a process lasting from eternity.

He further explained the union, with regard to Christ's mortal body and human soul by asserting that not only by their communion merely with Him, but by their union and mixing up, they receive the highest powers, and after participating in His divinity, were changed into God. The soul of Christ already united, of course, with the Logos, was united to a body which was superior to all other bodies and invested with all excellent qualities.

According to Wolfson, the term mixture used by origen is in the sense of predominance. He gave an example from origen where if a mass of iron was kept constantly in the fire, it would become wholly converted into fire, and incapable of admitting cold. In other words, the union of fire and iron is not a 'mixture' but rather a predominance. Origen also used the term compounded, but it is also seen to be in the sense of predominance.

3. - Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389). When dealing with the unity of person despite the duality of natures, he draws in several places upon the analogy of

---

"commixture" or "mixture". He explained it as the man below became God after he had become commixed with God and by the victory of that which were more potent he became one.  

4. - Gregory of Nyssa. (330-395). He explained the union and said that "we assert that even the body in which he underwent the passion, by being mixed with the divine nature, was made by that "permixtion" to be that which the assuming nature is .... being transformed into what is divine and incorruptible." Here the term mixture is used in the sense of a union of two elements of unequal power of which the weaker is said to have changed into the stronger, whereas the stronger remained unchanged. It would also seem to come under the term "predominance".

5. - Cyril, (315-386). Like other orthodox Fathers, he believed in what is generally spoken as "one person" and "two natures", though sometimes he used the term "nature" for person and the expressions like "natural property" and "natural quality" and "the quality of existence" for nature. He maintained that the union of Logos and the man in Jesus is "without confusion". Contrary to the other Fathers he explained the union without "commixture" and he said that he who used the term "mixture" merely meant by it that the union was of the highest kind.

He illustrated it by an example, in which he explained that we are composed of soul and body, which we consider as two natures, the one that of the body and the other that of the soul. Yet man is one according to union or composition. Regarding the union after the incarnation he said that the use of the word "one" is correct, when used not with reference to those things only which are simple according to nature but also with reference to those things which are conjoined according to composition, after which manner, man consists of soul and body.

According to Wolfson, he used the term "composition" in the sense of "predominance", because he explained the union of incarnation by the analogies of fire and wood, fire and iron. So all these examples show that he used the term "composition" in the sense of predominance.

21. Ibid., PP.376-7.
22. Ibid., P.397.
23. Wolfson, Philosophy of the Church Father, P.409.
6. - **Leontius of Byzantium** (6th cent). According to him, union and division are of a twofold meaning. Some things are united in species and divided in hypostases, other things are divided in species and united in hypostases.

Regarding the latter kind of union he proceeds to say that a union can be either of four simple elements or of things already composed of these four simple elements. When it is a union of things already composed of the four simple elements it is to be called as "interwining" or mixture, or whatever it pleases one to call essential cohesions of heterogeneous things.

The other kind of union is described by Leontius as that in which the constituent part even when united preserve their proper principle of subsistence. It is illustrated by him by the examples of the union of soul and body in man, of "flame" and "wick" in a lamp, of "fire" and "wood" in a torch. No special name is given by him to this kind of union.

According to the Leontius, the union of confusion cannot serve as an analogy for the explanation of the union of the incarnation. The proper analogy for it is to be found in that kind of union which he illustrates by the example of the union of soul and body. Accordingly, just as the union of soul and body is described by him as "mixture", so also the union of the Logos and the flesh is sometimes described by him as "pre-mixture". 24

7. - **John of Damascus** (675-740). Concerning the union, John of Damascus used a term enhypostatos. 25 He has explained it as that which is compounded with another thing different from it in substance in order to produce something whole and to make a complete and composite hypostasis. Thus man is composed of soul and body. Neither soul alone nor body alone is called hypostasis. They are enhypostatos, but that which results from the two is a hypostasis of the two.

He further says that enhypostatos could be said to be a nature which is assumed

24. Wolfson, Philosophy of the Church Father, P. 409-415.
25. Enhypostasis is a technical term for a theory concerning the relation between the divine and human natures in Christ. They maintained that there is no independent human personality of Christ but that he became fully personal with the incarnation. V. A. Harvey, A Handbook of theological terms, P. 68.
by another hypostasis and which has its existence in that hypostasis. Whence
the flesh of the Lord, never having subsisted by itself even for a moment, is not
a hypostasis but rather an enhypostatos. It has subsisted indeed, in the
hypostasis of God the word, by which it has been assumed, and it is this
hypostasis of God the word that it had and still has as its hypostasis.26 The
union of the Logos and the flesh in Christ described by John of Damascus as a
union in which only the Logos is a hypostasis, whereas the flesh is only an
ehypostatos.

************

Finally, according to the Orthodox Father, though the two natures in Christ, the
divine and human, are held to be distinct from each other, each of them having
its own properties, still these properties are said to interchange; so that when
Christ is spoken of as a divine being, he can still be described by his human
properties; and conversely when he is spoken of as a human being, he can still be
described by his divine properties.

This interchangeability of the properties, despite their being properties of two
distinct natures, is explained by the Fathers in two ways.

1. - That the natures underlying the properties, though distinct from each other,
are still one in person.

2. - That between the two distinct sets of properties as well as between the two
distinct natures underlying them there is what they call a pericharesis27 into
the other. The accurate translation of pericharesis is "a penetration at all
points" or a "total penetration" or a "thorough penetration". It means the union
of the divine nature and human nature in Christ, the two natures may be said to
form a "mixture" as it were, and to penetrate into one another, so that, if you
refer to Christ "the son of man" you may still attribute to him the properties of
the divine nature in him and describe him as sitting in judgement over the
nations; and similarly, if you refer to him as "the lord of Glory" you may still
attribute to him the properties of the human nature in him and describe him as

26. Ibid., P.415-16.
27. Pericharesis, is the term used in the doctrine of the Trinity to refer to the
mutual interpenetration of the persons of the Godhead, so that although
each person is distinct in relation to the others, nevertheless, each
participates fully in the Being of the other. The being of the Godhead is
thus one and indivisible.
V. A. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological Terms, P.155.
crucified. The Fathers warned that such analogies should not be taken too literally. There is no exact example each one contains some inappropriate expression. The incarnation always would be something unique and a mystery.

**The Christological controversies that are regarded as heretical by the Orthodox**

The two great Christological controversies of the fifth century, i.e., Nestorianism and Monophysitism have established permanent places for themselves in the history of the Church.

Before dealing with them, it is necessary to understand that the great school of thought placed different emphasis on their undertaking of the doctrine of incarnation. The school of Antioch which traced its beginning to Lucian laid greater stress on the human nature of Christ. On the other hand, the school of Alexandria tended to stress the divinity of Christ. Out these tendencies to emphasise particular aspects of the nature of Christ, these two heresies emerged.

1. **Nestorianism**: As it has been said, that Nestorius is said to be the founder of Nestorianism, because of his condemning the title Theotokos.

On the other hand the orthodox argued that as Christ who was born of the virgin Mary was truly the Son of God, therefore it was correct to say that she was the Mother of God. Nestorius maintained that it was true to say that God came forth from the virgin, but not that he was born of her. She brought forth a man who was accompanied by the divine Logos. This led to a controversy on the whole question of the two natures in Christ. Nestorius further argued that Christ was a man who grew up as other men. He asked: could you really believe that a child three months old was God? Could you believe that the man who lived on the earth as a child, a growing body, with human limitation of knowledge is God? Could you believe in a God who was dead and buried? So he drew a distinction between the divine logos and the man Christ.

Nestorius taught that there was a dual personality in Christ.

The divine Logos dwelt in the man Christ and therefore the man Christ was not God, but God bearing. Unlike the orthodox Fathers, to whom, after the union, while the Logos is both person and nature, the flesh is only a nature, Nestorius maintained that even the flesh is a person after the union. Still, though there are two persons and two natures, there is a difference between the union of the persons and the union of the natures. The union of two persons results in a new person, namely, the person of Christ of which the original two persons are merged whereas the union of the two natures does not result in a new nature. Accordingly to Nestorius Christ is one person made up of two other persons, the Logos and the man in him.

There is another point of difference between Nestorius and Orthodox Fathers. According to them, there can be a nature without a person and the humanity in Christ is only a nature, the humanity in Christ can be said to exist in the person of the divinity in him. On the other hand Nestorius maintained that every nature exists together with a person so that the humanity and the divinity in Christ are two natures as well as two persons. He further argued that these two persons in their union result in the one person of Christ. The humanity in Christ may be said to exist together not only with its own person but also with the person of the divinity in him. Similarly the divinity in him may be said to exist together not only with its own person but also with the person of the humanity in him.30

Finally, according to Nestorius, there were two persons with their respective natures before the union and these two persons with their respective natures continued to exist after the union, with the only difference being that while the two persons were united in one person, of which the two persons were component parts, the two natures remained distinct from one another in that one person.31

Since five kinds of physical union were known to the Fathers, four are rejected

30. Wolfson, Philosophy of the Church Father, P.457.
31. Ibid., P.461.
by Nestorius, as unsuitable for his purpose of providing an analogy of the union of incarnation. He rejected all other terms and preferred the term, conjunction.

**Monophysites (Jacobites)**

This sect was later than the Nestorians. Perhaps its doctrine should be seemed against the background of an earlier heresy. Its beginning can be traced by the heresy of Appollinarius, who believed that flesh or the body was not a complete man.

He maintained that it lacked a rational soul possessing only an irrational soul, which was conceived together with the body and was inseparable from it. Because of that denial of the rational soul, he not only denied the existence of two persons in Christ, but also two natures. He said that there was in him only one nature or ousia (substance) and that Christ was one incarnate nature of God the Logos.\(^{32}\)

Appollinarius has described the union of incarnation by the term "mixture" or "commixture" or as a "composite nature".

In the face of this heresy, the orthodox fathers tried to prove that in the union of Logos and the man, man as the weaker member is a nature without a person. On the other hand Appollinarius maintained that in the union of Logos and the irrationally animated body, body as the weaker member, is only a property without its being either a person or a nature.

One has reason to believe that Monophysite tendencies are already found in Alexandrian theology and certainly in Appollinarius' theology.

According to Wolfson, the monophysitism of Appollinarius and his followers arose in the fourth century and flourished, only to decline and disappear during the same century. However a new kind of Monophysitism made its appearance in the fifth century under Entyches (d. 454) and Severus (early fifth century). The new kind of Monophysitism differed from Appollinarius and accepted the

---

orthodox point of view that Christ had a rational soul i.e., that the union in Christ was between the Logos and complete man. However, they departed from the Orthodox Fathers on the question of whether in a union of "predominance" the weaker member was a nature or a property. Adopting Appollinarius' view that in such a union the weaker member was only a property, they argued that the man in Christ was only a property and not a nature.

So like Appollinarius they spoke of only one nature in Christ. There is an interesting dialogue between the orthodox and the Monophysites. The orthodox questioned them,

"Explain to us, however in what sense do you assert one nature after the union. Do you mean one nature derived from both, or that one nature remains after the destruction of the other?"

The Monophysites answered:

"We maintained that the Godhead remains and the manhood was absorbed by it."

In other words they accepted the analogy of "predominance" which they described as "absorption".

The orthodox find it difficult to understand and asked again. How could a nature absolute and uncompounded, comprehending the universe; unapproachable and uncircumscribable, have absorbed the nature which it assumed?

The Monophysites illustrated their point by a concrete example, like the sea receiving a drop of honey for straight way the drop as it mixes with the sea's water vanishes.

The orthodox refused to accept this analogy, while absorption is possible between two corporeal substances, such as honey and water, it is not possible between the incorporeal divinity and corporeal humanity. They illustrated it by examples that there are several instances of substances which are mixed without being confounded and remain unimpaired.

33. Ibid., P.444-5.
The orthodox produced two analogies.

1. - At the rising of the sun, all the light seems to penetrate through all the air. This penetration of all the light through all the air is, therefore, to be called mixture, for the mixture penetrates through all that is mixed. Now, the "illuminated air" is seen as light and is called light. And yet when the light is present in the air, the air still retains its nature, as is evidenced by the fact that it can be moist or dry, hot or cold. Similarly, after the departure of the light the air afterwards remains alone by itself.

2. - When iron is brought in contact with fire, it is fired, and the fire penetrates through its whole substance. And yet, though it is a "mixture totally penetrating" and the iron has the active power of fire, still the iron continues to be called iron and is put on the anvil and is smitten with a hammer and the nature of the iron was not damaged by its contact with the fire. 35

Christological Doctrines argued by Christian Scholars during the Islamic period

There were three main Christian theological trends during the early Islamic period. The Melkites represented the orthodox but the Nestorians and the Jacobites also had prominent scholars in the Islamic world during this period.

Eutychius of Alexandria (877-940) who himself was a Melkite patriarch presented his viewpoint in his Kitāb al Burhān, which is devoted to exposition of the orthodox faith with refutations of the Nestorians, Jacobites and more guardedly of the Muslims. Its first part deals with Christian doctrine of the incarnation.

He started his argument as he said,
"Then came down the creative word of God with His abiding, eternal and immovable hypostasis, who has never ceased nor will cease to be. He became incarnate from Mary the virgin - so that (the Holy Spirit) made her worthy of the indwelling of the consubstantial word of God within her." 36

He goes on to argue,
"The creative word of God became one with a created man who He created for Himself with the concurrence of God the Father and the Holy Spirit as a new creation without human seed. - He was perfect man in his body, his animal soul and his rational, logical spirit which is the image and likeness of God in man. The spirit was the most worthy of God's creation for God's taking up His abode in it, His indwelling and His veiling Himself. - Therefore it was the worthiest of God's creation for veiling God. It acted as a veil for him, the animal soul acted as a veil for it, and the solid body was a veil for what was more tenuous (altaf) than itself."37

He further explained the mystery of union.

According to him, the creative word of God mingled with the substance of the man complete with its body and blood, and rational, logical spirit. The word of God with His hypostasis became a hypostasis of that humanity whose substance became complete by the hypostasis of the word of God constituting it. The humanity was not created nor was anything except by the hypostasis of the word of God who created it and constituted it out of no previously existing thing in the womb of Mary, and not out of a cause through which it had a beginning seed from anything else, except the hypostasis of the creative word which is one of the divine Trinity.38

He carries on to express his views,
"That hypostasis is a hypostasis enumerated and known among men through the substance of man which (God) joined to (Christ) and created for Him and made one with Him (Christ) by the unity of that single hypostasis, the hypostasis of the creative word of God, which is one in the Trinity by the substance of His divinity and one in mankind by the substance of his humanity. He is not two but one with the Father and Spirit - He is likewise begotten of Mary the virgin at a later time without separation from the Father or from the Holy Spirit."39

He then illustrated it by two examples to try to explain the problems of the

37. Ibid., PP.68-69.
38. Ibid., P. 69.
39. Ibid., P.69-70.
incarnation, specially to none Christians. He says "just as the sun which is generated from the sun's disc whose illumination fills what is between heaven and earth, enters same house and become truly there by light and warmth, without however separating from the sun's disc whence it really originated, because it has not been cut off from the sun's disc or from the illumination; so likewise the son of God dwells in humanity without separating from the Father. He was truly in humanity and truly with the Father and Holy Spirit. For example a man's word generated from his intellect, is written on a sheet of paper, so that all of it is really on the paper, yet it is not separated from the intellect from which it was generated nor is the intellect separated from it; the intellect is known by the word, because (the intellect) is in it and all the word is in the intellect which has generated it, and all of it is within itself and all of it is on the paper with which it is united."40

In order to try to remove any doubt about incarnation, he said, "The indwelling of the creative word of God and His union with the substance of humanity does not come about by transference or change or transformation of one of the two substances from what it is; the divine substance is not transformed from being divine and creative, nor the human from being human and created."41

He categorised the mixture into three kinds (as it has been mentioned before different types of physical union) and then he criticised and accused Nestorians and Jacobites of not understanding fully the nature of the union of incarnation.

According to Eytychius of Alexandria, mixture comes about only in three ways. 1. - A mixture (may be produced) by the mingling of two different elements and their transformation and corruption, for example, the mixture of wine and water, of vinegar and honey, of gold and silver, of silver and copper. All this and like is a transformation and corruption. The mixture of wine and water is neither wine nor water, each of them is transformed from its nature, their mingling is accompanied by corruption, and they have been changed from their original state.

41. Ibid., P.71.
2. - It is a mixture where two different natures and their hypostases remain separate so that the two natures, each distinct from the other by its hypostasis and appearance, can be recognised in that mixture, for example, oil and water in a single lamp, and linen and silk in a single garment woven from linen, ribbed with silk and an idol of copper whose head is gold.

Such things ought not to be called mixtures, because of the separateness of the two natures and hypostases. Likewise, with regard to the water and oil there is no mixture together of two. According to Eutychius these two kinds of mixture are never found except in the case of corporeal, solid, material things. 42

In respect of these two kinds (of mixture) Nestorius and his associates and Jacob (Baradaeus) and his partisans fell (into error). Jacob adhered to (the idea of) the mixture of transformation and corruption, and asserted that the divine nature and the human nature became mingled in one Christ, so that he had one hypostasis and one mingled nature (composed), of two different natures, the divine and the human. Through their union they had been transformed, and transformation is corruption. According to his blasphemous doctrine, they made the nature of God subject to accidents and death, and made Christ neither a true God nor a true man, just like the ingot of gold and copper.

Nestorius, on the other hand, adhered to (the idea of) the mixture of separateness and severance, and asserted that the one Christ had two different natures, a divine and a human and two known hypostases, a divine and a human. Hence he made the mixture (one of) separateness, because the necklace made of two intertwined strands, one gold and the other copper, or the garment with a lining whose outside is silk and its inside is cotton, involve no mixture of the two in nature or hypostasis. According to this belief, necessity compels them not to believe in one Christ, because the intertwined necklaces is two necklaces, and the garment with a lining is two garments, and Christ likewise is two Christs, are divine by his nature and hypostasis like the golden strand in the intertwined necklace and like the silken outside of the lined garment, and the other human like the copper strand in the necklace and the cotton inside of the garment.

Eutychius accused these sects of not being able to understand the nature of both these mixtures and then he mentioned another kind of mixture which is suitable for this analogy.\textsuperscript{43}

He argued,

"This is the third kind of mixture that is the true one, without the mixings of transformation and corruption or of separation and severance, it is a mixture in which the immaterial and spiritual nature penetrates into the material and corporeal nature so that it becomes spread out through the whole and mingles with all of it.

Yet there is no transformation of the spiritual from its immaterial and spiritual nature, nor any transformation of the material and corporeal from its solid and material nature, nor any change or corruption in either of them. Examples are the mingling of soul and body, and the mingling of the fire and the piece of iron into the hypostasis of a single glowing mass, it is a glowing mass, one in the hypostasis (consisting) of the nature of fire united with and pervading the nature of the piece of iron, without the separation of severance and without the mingling (or confusion) of transformation and corruption. The fire has spread itself all through the iron and invested it all, and has conveyed to the iron some of its strength and brilliancy, and has heated it until the iron has glowed and become red-hot with the heat yet because of the iron's feebleness, it has conveyed nothing of its blackness and coldness to the fire."\textsuperscript{44}

Then he concluded his theory by saying that,

"According to this kind of mixture that the creative word of God has arranged His mixture with human nature. He is one Christ, the son of God. He, it is who is the son of Mary the virgin, begotten of her at a later time, with one hypostasis, the hypostasis of the unique Son of God, combining both natures, divine and human. He is one Christ by one pre-eternal hypostasis with two natures, a divine, which is always God and a human which He created for him and with which He became united through Mary the virgin with that hypostasis of the divine and the human nature, combining them both without any mixing as

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., PP. 74-75.
\textsuperscript{44} Kitāb al-Burhān, Vol. I. PP. 75-76.
transformation or corruption or separation of severance.  

He explained that,

"If the two natures had been mixed together in a confused mixture till they had become one nature, Christ would not have been part of the substance of the Father and the Holy Spirit after His incarnation, because the substance of the Father and the Holy Spirit is an immaterial simple substance, a creative light in which no compounding appears. How would it be right for the incarnate son to be counted with the Father and Holy Spirit after He had left their substance, seeing He was invalid in the confusion of compoundness; or how would it be said for him to be one God with the Father and Holy Spirit seeing that confusion has come upon His substance?"  

Concerning the will, he argued, "that the will belongs to the genus not to the particular. Everything the Father wills, the Son and Holy Spirit will, and everything the Son wills the Father and the Holy Spirit will, and everything the Holy Spirit wills the Father and the Son will. There is no difference or division between them."  

From all this argumentation and discussion he finally concluded that, Christ (in this way he used the Qur'anic expression) is perfect God by His performing the acts of divinity. He is Creator of what He wills (khāliq limā yashā'ū) for examples He created from clay two eyes for a blind man. He is ʿallām al ghuyūb (Knower of things hidden) and ghaffār li-dh-dhunūb (forgiver of sins). Christ will raise to life through His own power all those in the tomb on the day of Resurrection. He is Mālik yawmid-dīn (Lord of the Day of Judgement).  

Then he made another analogy concerning the death and pain of Christ, "that his suffering, crucifixion and death were by his humanity, because suffering and death belong to the human essence, not to the divine essence. He illustrated it by an example, as the suffering of being cut with the axe does not affect sunlight, because being cut down does not belong to the sunlight's essence. Therefore the tree may be cut down by the axe, whilst the sunlight is resting

45. Ibid., P.77.  
47. Ibid., P.89.  
48. Ibid., P.91.
upon it, but the sunlight is not cut down with the tree, because the iron's cutting affects wood but does not affect sunlight."

2. - Yahyā ibn 'Adī, a tenth century Jacobite scholar has lived in Baghdad and had a close relation with Muslim friends.

In Ibn 'Adī's tract on the incarnation, he seems to be dedicated to the defence of the basic doctrine of the Jacobites with regard to the mode of incarnation. The fact of the incarnation, the relation of two natures, and certain metaphysical considerations distinguish the Jacobites from the Melkites. According to Ibn 'Adī none of three Christian sects believed that the divine nature of Christ was subjected to his birth, suffering, crucifixion, death and atonement. They rather believe that the union occurred before birth and Mary bore the babe possessing the two natures.

Ibn 'Adī in discussing the Monophysite thesis is judged by Perir to be maintaining a single nature. Yet Ibn 'Adī and Monophysites of his day say that the word is eternal in his divinity and created in his humanity. Yahyā maintains that the Jacobites do not deny the doctrine of a single nature, when they affirm that the word is of composite nature, divine and human. Ibn 'Adī maintained that the Jacobites understand by that conception that the human nature arrived at the moment, it is united to the word. The Jacobites affirm that Mary cannot beget God, the substance of the creator. However when they refer to Mary as mother of God, they do not mean by this that she has begotten the substance of the Creator, but rather that Mary is the mother of Christ who is God. This nature is one of the two constitutive nature of Christ. Ibn 'Adī contends that the divine nature though united to the embryo, does not have to go through successive increases like the human nature. Physical growth does not necessarily mean divine growth. Pain and privation in the body may not be experiences of the Word. Yet Ibn 'Adī wishes to attribute all actions, even being born, to Christ who is God. He insisted on the credal statement "He

49. Ibid., P.101.
50. Yahyā b. 'Adī, Maqālāt, PP.96-97.
died". He accused other two sects for omitting the phrase "He died". He alleged that since Christ is divine, he cannot die. Therefore, he lives. Yet it is true that Ibn 'Adi wishes to affirm that he was crucified and he died.\(^{52}\)

Fakhry, while discussing the philosophical differences in tenth century, has evaluated Ibn 'Adi's polemical views. He quoted from his treatise, that according to him, "God in His infinite goodness was driven to communicate his essence, just as fire and the other active elements communicate their essences to other things, or just as the mind, in apprehending an entity, assumes the form of that entity or appropriates it and in so doing becomes identified with it. Thus God has assumed the human form in Christ, without thereby forsaking his identity or his Godhead, and Christ, as the son of man has become identified with God without destroying his unity."\(^{53}\)

Yet Ibn 'Adi is reluctant to say that the divine nature suffers or dies. The two natures concur in making a single nature in which the union is substantial similar to that between soul and body.

In this respect, I would like to mention Ibn 'Adi's famous pupil Ibn Zur'a (tenth century Jacobite Christian), whose approach toward union of incarnation is totally different from his teacher. Like his teacher he was a Jacobite and wrote four treatises to affirm the Christian doctrines against the Jews and Muslims.

According to Ibn Zur'a, the unity of the divine essence with the human essence is like an intermediate nature, which is neither purely divine or purely human. He described three members of the trinity as intellect (\(\text{aql}\)) the act of intelligence (\(\text{aqil}\)) and the object of the act of intellect (\(\text{ma'qul}\)), as they are symbolic expressions of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. According to him, the original substance become united to man, because the hypostasis is the substance with an attribute.\(^{54}\)

---

\(^{52}\) Ibid., P.92.

\(^{53}\) Fakhry, A History of Islamic Philosophy, P.225.

3. - Timothy I, he was a Nestorian patriarch in the time of Mahdi (775-785). There was a debate between Mahdi and Timothy I which took place for two days, later on discussion was written down in its present form by the Christian protagonist.

In discussing the nature of Christ, he argued that Christ is not two beings - nor two sons, but Son and Christ are one; there are in him two natures, one of which belongs to the word and the other one which is from Mary, clothed itself with the Word God. 55

The expression "clothed itself" is pointed out by the translator as a semi Nestorian expression. 56

The patriarch goes on to argue, "we do not deny the duality of natures nor their mutual relations, but we profess that both of them constitute one Christ and Son. He illustrated it by an example, a man is one, while in reality he is two: one in his composition and individuality, and two in the distinction found between his soul and his body; the former is invisible and spiritual, and the latter visible and corporeal. In the same way the word of God, together with the clothings of humanity which he put on from Mary, is one and the same Christ, and not two, although there is in him the natural difference between the word God and his humanity; and the fact that he is one does not preclude the fact that he is also two. The very same Christ and Son is indeed known and confessed as one, and the fact that he is also two does not imply confusion or mixture because the known attributes of his natures are kept in one person of the Christ. 57

Then he explained this mystery by another example, "as the tongue and the word are one with the voice with which they are clothed, in a way that the two are not two words nor two tongues, but one word, together with the tongue and the voice, and in them one does not expel two. This is also the case with the word God. He is one with his humanity while preserving the distinction between his invisibility and his visibility and between his divinity and his humanity.

56. Ibid., P.155. Footnote 1.
57. Ibid., P.155.
Christ is one in his sonship and two in the attributes of his natures. 58

Timothy used the illustration of man as body and soul. Man is living and rational only by the nature of his soul which has indeed been received from God, but he is said to be living and rational in his body, through its association with this living and rational soul. In spite of all this, however, he is called one living and rational man and not two. In the same way God is called, and is, Christ's Father by the nature of the union of word God with our human nature, and on the other hand He is called His God by the nature of his humanity that he took from us in union with the word God. 59

When Timothy considered the death of Christ, he said, "the Son of God died in our nature, but not in his divinity. Refuting the Jacobites and Melkites, he argued that the Jacobites and Melkites say that God suffered and died in the flesh, but the Nestorians not only do not assert that God suffered and died in our nature, but that He even removed the possibility of our human nature, and its mortality and His immortality, and He made it to resemble divinity that a created being is capable of resembling his Creator." 60

58. Ibid., P.156.
59. Ibid., P.156.
60. Ibid., P.223.
CHAPTER VI

A Comparative Analysis of 'Abd al-Jabbār
Critique of Christological Doctrines

'Abd al-Jabbār has devoted about eight sections to discussing and criticising the doctrine of union of incarnation.

He first outlines the different aspects of the Christological doctrines that come within his assessment of being rational and therefore capable of rational refutation. He sets out these doctrines as a prelude to his attempt to refute them. However, even in setting them out he is guilty of confusion. In particular he seems to suggest that the term ḥalla (inherence or incarnation) excludes the doctrine of conjunction (mujāwara). This is clearly incorrect as it was in fact a term used to try to explain inherence or incarnation. Also at this point, it seems appropriate to draw attention to the fact that, while in the section on the Trinity he did not use dhāt as in any way synonymous with jawhar and thereby forced one to translate dhāt in rather strained English terminology, he now uses dhāt to mean "essence" and takes it as about a synonym for jawhar "substance". 1

His next section takes up the argument about which mentioned in the outline. It is taken out of place and this may indicate 'Abd al-Jabbār's desire to deal with this problem. The one will theory had been put forward by Heraclius to try to solve the dispute in his empire. It had not, however, gained much support because although the one will was acceptable to the Monophysites, it still did not alter the fact that the Melkites still held the doctrine of two natures.

If the wills are separate, they would have to concur according to 'Abd al-Jabbār. He finds this to be totally unacceptable, though his argument against it is on the basis of rational probability which completely ignores the nature of the topic he is dealing with. He develops his argument by using the argument about the attribute of knowledge. If they are separate, then their attributes of knowledge will be separate. If man can never have God's attribute of knowledge, then how can he have His attribute of will. In this argument 'Abd

al-Jabbār completely ignores the Mu'tazilite theology of attributes which he has so strenuously advocated elsewhere. He should know, as he has said it frequently enough in al-Mughnī, that knowledge is a sifā li-dhātihi whereas will is a sifāt al-fiḥ. Thus will is secondary to knowledge and a created attribute. His whole Mu'tazilite structure has come crumbling down because of his over-enthusiasm to attack the doctrine of union through will.

However, he does present a reasonable argument that if will is to the basis of this union, then there seems no need to exclude such a union from all the prophets.²

**************

He carries on his discussion of union through will by claiming that the will of God could not be the will of mankind. He does not indicate the sect, but in his Sharḥ³ he mentioned that the Nestorians believed in the union through the aspect of will (mash'ā). A Father R. Shadyaq, in his preface to al-Radd al-Jamil by al-Ghazālī, alleged that the union of will which is often attributed to the Nestorians, is in fact a false interpretation of their doctrine. He also admitted that they used to say that in the beginning.⁴

He first argued that God does not need any location for his will whereas man does. However, such a union of wills occurred, the will of God would become an accident by being located in Christ.

He then suggests that that doctrine could be applied of Christ, it could be applied to all creatures. As a result all mankind could not will evil and differ in wills from God and from one another. Consequently, there would be no distinction between Christ and the rest of mankind concerning the union.⁵ This argument is a rather ineffective debating argument and contributes little of value to the discussion.⁶

**************

He further contradicted the union of wills by three more arguments. He

---

2. Ibid., PP.117-118.
3. 'Abd al-Jabbār, Sharḥ, P.296.
4. R. Shadyaq, preface of al-Radd al-Jamil, P.217. There is some doubt about it.
6. Here 'Abd al-Jabbār has repeated the same argument, as he has applied before in section 4. See al-Mughnī, Vol. V, PP.117-18.
suggests that a union of wills implies locating God in Christ, as of course does any facet of the doctrine of incarnation. To 'Abd al-Jabbar this would involve all the attributes of Christ becoming God's. For him this is simply impossible.

A more critical and crucial argument based on will is that, God is willing from eternity by an unlocated act of will. In the same way He will continue to do so, because there is no change in his nature.\(^7\) How then can God's will be located in Christ's? While criticising the union of incarnation, 'Abd al-Jabbar's three arguments with the reference of the union of will are very similar to Abū ʿIsā in the second part of his al-Radd\(^8\) and contain a number of arguments which were applied in the earlier works. But there is a difference between 'Abd al-Jabbar and Abū ʿIsā. Abū ʿIsā tries to find out contradiction in his opponent's arguments, while 'Abd al-Jabbar depends mostly upon pre-established principles laid down by his predecessors.

***************

By referring to the Nestorian doctrine of conjunction (mujāwarā) with its illustrative example of Christ's body being a temple, 'Abd al-Jabbar seems aware of the theological basis of this argument.

Wolfson has suggested\(^9\) that such language is found in the writings of St. Paul and was generally accepted by most of the Orthodox and particularly the Nestorians.

For 'Abd al-Jabbar this is impossible as he maintained that God was not substance (jawhar) or body.\(^10\) We have already noticed that, at times, he relaxes this Mu'tazilite doctrine by admitting that jawhar can be equivalent to dhāt. However, here he emphasises his understanding of jawhar as in some sense corporeal and therefore impossible to be applied to God. To accept this doctrine would mean that God should have the essential qualities of a body and bodies should have the essential qualities of God. Because if two things have one essential quality in common, they must have all essential qualities in common. According to 'Abd al-Jabbar both conjunction and also mixture are

\(^7\) Al-Mughni, Vol. V, PP.121-22.
only possible among substances (jawāhir not presumably dhāt) and bodies. He rejects any attempt to exploit the Muslim creed that God is everywhere. According to 'Abd al-Jabbār it is a metaphorical phrase, but the Christian formula must be taken literally. Any argument for inherence based on divine miracles is unacceptable to 'Abd al-Jabbār, because the other prophets also performed such kinds of miracles.

He further argued, that the performance of miracles by Christ does not affirm that these occurred through conjunction because God is able to do that without any location.

He again criticised that, if the appearance of Christ's miracles such as raising dead body, or healing blind person, could be affected by other without uniting with God, then the same can apply to Christ.

He then asked whether during the union God has cojoined him in all his atoms or only one of them. The former was unacceptable, because it would require that God consisted of many parts. To 'Abd al-Jabbār that was obviously impossible. If it was only some atoms, it would indicate that such atoms which took part in union would be characterised as Christ and Son of God. The nature of union discussed by 'Abd al-Jabbār, is based on the materialistic explanation of the act of union, and has similarities with Abū Ḥūṣayn's al-Radd. Such analogies concerning the union of incarnation can also be seen in al-Tamhid by Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī. Al-Bāqillānī's argumentation is not extensive but it is clearer and more comprehensive than 'Abd al-Jabbār's criticism.

---

11. Ibid., P.123.
13. Ibid., P.124.
14. McDermott confirms that 'Abd al-Jabbār does believe in miracles, subject to certain conditions. They must be professed by the prophets. For detail, see M. J. McDermott, The Theology of al-Shaik al-Mufīd, PP.84-86.
In a long discussion, 'Abd al-Jabbār examines the implications of the meaning of the verb 'halla' i.e., God's coming in Christ to inhere in him. According to the Jacobites, union is through the essence (ittihād al-dhāt) as 'Abd al-Jabbār described it in his Sharh. 18 Ordinarily in Arabic, 'Abd al-Jabbār alleges that the word 'halla' indicates materialistic qualities of a thing. On the basis of that he argued that it can be applied to describe how accidents and substances can combine. If one admits that God can inhere in Christ, it will demand the createdness of the divinity. So 'Abd al-Jabbār devoted a long polemic to disprove this theory that God cannot inhere in physical body in any circumstances. 19

He maintained that 'halla' (that one thing is said to inhere in the other) in first instance applies spatial limitation upon Him and He would be like a substance or it would make Him a created being. In this argument 'Abd al-Jabbār has interpreted the verb 'halla' in its literal sense and is not ready to accept any other explanation or interpretation. 20

'Abd al-Jabbār puts in the mouth of opponent an argument that according to Abū 'Alī speech (kalām) comes to exist on a writing tablet, sound or tongue without moving from one place to another for its existence. 21 In order to understand this argument, it is necessary to examine the meaning of sound (sawt) and its relation to speech. Sound is the last of the five "act of the limbs". Sounds are not direct acts, but they are produced by means of a cause which generates the sound. - Sound is an accident that does not remain. If it remains, it would cause great difficulties for the hearing subject. Sound is a perceptable subject. Human beings and other living beings need the instrument of the ear to perceive it. - Like the other "act of the limbs" sound in order to exist only needs a location (mahall) to inhere in. 22

Abū 'Alī held that sound could exist in every location, but always needed movement. To explain the latter half of this statement, he gave the illustration that if we knock on a brass basin, it gives a sound, if we stop its movement,

18. 'Abd al-Jabbār, Sharh, P.296.
22. Peaters, God's Created Speech, P.139.
sound ceases also.

No one can say that as according to Abū 'Alī sound can exist in every location in the same way God is existing and inhering in Christ as sound.

Although 'Abd al-Jabbār himself does not agree with Abū 'Alī's viewpoint, he said that such analogy cannot apply here, because it requires a location in which it inheres. Consequently to use the verb ḥalla (inheres in a non-materialistic thing) is inconceivable. 23

The Christian scholars had supported their viewpoint with two famous analogies as it is described by their apologists, but 'Abd al-Jabbār attempted to refute these by his own logical argumentation. The first analogy for inherence was that of man's reflection in mirror and the second was the engraving of the seal in clay or wax. 24

'Abd al-Jabbār asserted that since reflection is not a physical entity and not actually produced by the man, looking to it, there is no connection between him and the mirror. On the other hand, such reflection changes and is affected by the light of the sun. He insisted that the mirror is an instrument like an eye to recognise different things. This explanation seems to be concerned with 'Abd al-Jabbār's views of the physical world.

As far as the engraving of the seal was concerned, 'Abd al-Jabbār alleged that such an analogy indicated accidental impression. If it is so, then God would be an inhering accident. 25

To the argument that if we admit that God is existing without any location, we must assume His existence in Christ without any inherence and conjunction, 'Abd al-Jabbār replied that even though we admit that God is not like physical substances, He would have to obey the natural laws if he was going to inhere or occupy a place in Christ.

---

24. Ibid., P.129.
25. Ibid., P.132.
He again repeated his previous argument that Christ would have to follow a new characteristic after the union has occurred, and ultimately God would be affected through the qualities of contagents such as death and so on.  

Repeating arguments about God's inherence in one atom or many atoms, and the argument about miracles, he then goes on to suggest in polemical style that if inherence in Christ was possible, so would this inherence in any inorganic being be possible.

The two analogies mentioned by 'Abd al-Jabbār, are criticised by early Muslim polemicists, for example by Abū ʿIsā in his al-Radd. They are also discussed by al-Bāqillānī in his al-Tamhid.

From Christian side, Elias of Nisibis tried to explain how the incarnation could take place, by arguing that this inherence was neither like the inherence of an accident in the substance, nor the inherence of the body in another body, nor was it completely nor partial. His inherence in Christ is like the inherence of dignity, conciliation and will, not the inherence of essence and substance because His essence and substance are everywhere equal. He can inhere in one place not the other, in one person, not the other. For example His inherence in the heaven not the earth, or His inherence in the places of worship, in the prophets and chosen people.

In order to explain the difference between Christ and the prophets, Elias of Nisibis claimed that the noun of inherence is a common noun that can be applied to everywhere, just as the noun of existence is applicable to God, human beings, even to the earth, soul, fire etc. As a human being cannot approach God even though the noun of existence is applicable for him, in the same way, other prophets cannot achieve the position of Christ through Mary, through such an application of inherence in them. But the difference is that the inherence in Christ was through union. On the other hand, in the prophets, there was no

26. Ibid., P.132.
27. Ibid., 135. 'Abd al-Jabbār has repeated this argument in section 7, P.124.
union of incarnation or complete union. If we concede that, then Christ's disciples would be able to participate in his prophethood, because they are entitled to be called prophets. 31

Elias differentiated Christ's union for certain reasons.

1. - The eternal Son that is the Word of God, united with Him. So he is one Messiah. We call him the Messiah and you call him Word of God. There is no other prophet that can be called Word of God. It was only because of his union.

2. - He was born without sexual relation, and he himself never had intercourse.

3. - He had signs and miracles which the other prophets did not have.

4. - God has raised him to heaven and he is living there.

5. - He was unfamiliar with any kind of sin. 32

*************

'Abd al-Jabbār repeats the same heading as he had used for the previous section. However in this section there is a more wide-ranging discussion. He based his critical position on the principle that he had maintained in earlier volume of al-Mughnī where he argued that two distinct entities cannot become one and in the same way one cannot become two. 33

He went on that if we admit the doctrine of the Jacobites, it will entail two substances become one, or substance may have more than one accident inhering in it (resulting in possibility of many accidental forms). All these options are impossible for 'Abd al-Jabbār to accept as this would change the physical nature of the world as 'Abd al-Jabbār understands it. 34

In his discussion he repeats the arguments which have already been analysed and introduced as being material. All these arguments refer not only to the Jacobites but to the Christian teaching in general, although he himself put this

31. Ibid., P.37.
32. Ibid., PP.38-39.
33. 'Abd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, P.137.
34. Ibid., 137.
under the heading of a discussion of the Jacobites issues implicit in the Trinitarian conception of the deity. If only one hypostasis united with Christ, then the other two would appear to be independent and this would seem to entail three independent Gods. 35

In this discussion ʿAbd al-Jabbār seems to be relying on statements had been made earlier by Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾi.

From Christian side Timothy I explained to al-Mahdī, the caliph, as the word of the king clothes itself with the papyrus on which it is written, while his soul and his mind cannot be said to do the same, and as his soul and his mind while not separated from his word, it cannot nevertheless be said that they clothe themselves with the papyrus. So also is the case with the Word of God, because although He put on our human body without having been separated from the Father and the Spirit, yet the Father and the Spirit cannot be said to have put on our human body. 36

He moves on to discuss the nature of deity when Christ died. He points out that God either ceased to be united with man or suffered death. 37 This was indeed a problem which was discussed by Christians. The Nestorians maintained that only the humanity of Christ suffered and died while the divinity of Christ was unaffected. The Melkites on the other hand, while saying that God died, they in fact limit death only to the humanity of Christ. Thus there seems some contradiction in their doctrine. The Monophysites were also troubled by this problem and an extremist sect of them, the Julianists, went so far as to maintain that all the suffering and death of Christ were only apparent and not real.

This criticism of ʿAbd al-Jabbār has some similarities with Abū ʿIsā's al-Radd. 38

***********

ʿAbd al-Jabbār then turns his attention to the sources of Christianity i.e., the Gospels and their procedure of transmission. He attempts to subject this to an

---

35. Ibid., P.140.
37. ʿAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughni, P.139.
38. Abū ʿIsā, al-Radd, PP.1-9, Paras I-VI and XXVI.
analysis on the basis of reason ('aql) which is a distinctive feature of the Mu'tazilites.

'Abd al-Jabbār argued that revelation (sam') is not a source of knowledge for the attributes of God unless it is capable of being interpreted in accordance with the requirements of reason.39

What 'Abd al-Jabbār is saying here is that it is impossible for true revelation to say anything about God which cannot be supported by reason. Therefore if any so called revelation does say anything about God, which contradict reason, that revelation must be rejected. This opens the way for an attack on the Gospels, who according to 'Abd al-Jabbār, have been responsible for putting forward the irrational doctrines that Christians accept. He argued that their books could not be established as authentic because of the limited number of them and because of the clear indications that they altered and forged facts.40

On the other hand, Muslim revelation was transmitted by a large majority and did not contradict the sense or reason.

On the basis of above mentioned argument, he further attacked the Christian concept of crucifixion of Christ. He sought to demonstrate that they could have been confused in their understanding of event. He argued that crucifixion after the killing distorts the features of the victim, and it caused a confusion between him and the other person. He claimed that is surely possible, because such incident occurred in the time of a prophet (i.e. Christ) and the substitute took Christ's resemblance as a miracle of the prophet. He supported his position about such possibility by the Qur'ān.41 This interpretation of the verse is one that was (4:157) well-established by most of the commentators in such a way.

However, 'Abd al-Jabbār fails to investigate why the substitute of Christ was crucified. The crucifixion of Christ is a central and permanent feature of the Christian faith and connected with the doctrine of Redemption. However, it had not been universally recognised and it may well be that the Muslim

40. Ibid., P.143
41. Ibid., P.143.
understanding of it was influenced by Docetism.

'Abd al-Jabbār accused the Christians of following their religious leaders blindly as Nestorius and Jacob and so on. While their original sources such as the Gospels are far away from such doctrines as the Trinity and incarnation. Along with that their doctrines do not fulfil the requirements of a rational thinking. 42 In this way he quoted a dialogue that one of his companions asked a Christian, "Why do you explain 'ilm (knowledge) as Son not the life (hayāt)". The Christian answered, "That knowledge is masculine in gender." His follower argued that now he must affirm about life that it is a daughter of God, because hayāt (life) is feminine in gender.

He also reported an explanation of Theodore Abū Qurra (d. 820) the Melkites, who claimed that God must have an eternal Son on the basis that God must have mastery. So this quality must be eternal and have an object. This object cannot be inferior to God. Since He has to express His mastery, so it could not be superior or inferior, it must be the same nature as Him, since the mastery could not be a form of subjugation, so it must be like the father's authority over the son. Consequently He must have a Son, that would be like Him.

'Abd al-Jabbār mocked such an argument and argued that in this way God must have a wife, because there would be complete and effective mastery. 43

Theodore Abū Qurra in his Arabic work that was edited and published by Cheikho, seems to be involved in applying the mastery (raʾāsa) in the reference of God's mastery over Christ. He argued that Adam and God seem to be equal in some qualities, but there is no comparison between them. In the same way there are some excellent qualities by which Adam resembles God, i.e., generation, procession and mastery. As Adam was born and proceeded from

42. Ibid., P.144
43. Ibid., PP.144-145

Him, He too became a Father and Master of those who were born from Him.\footnote{Cheikho, (ed) Maymar li-Tadārus Abū Qurra, Al-Machriq, Vol. XV (1912) PP. 825-26.}

‘Abd al-Jabbār's criticism of the evangelists and his argument that Christians are involved in blind initiation of their early leaders, is taken from al-Jāhiṣ in his Risāla.\footnote{Al-Jāhiṣ, Risāla, PP. 24-25.} Al-Jāhiṣ criticised the four evangelists and asserted that the reason behind their faith is incritical acceptance of the doctrines of their leaders and consequently belief in anthropomorphism.

***************

‘Abd al-Jabbār then turns to criticism the possibility of the adoration and worship of Christ. He maintained that Christ is not entitled to become God and worshipped. ‘Abd al-Jabbār tried to show the inconsistency which existed among the different Christian sects. He asked what parts of Christ are divine and therefore be worshipped?\footnote{Ibid., P. 146.} We have already seen other such trivial debating points being used. More systematically, he goes on to argue that Christ as a corporeal body cannot perform any divine action that entitles him to be worshipped. Only God is entitled to that. Again he seems to be using the point that the Christians regard Christ as God. Julianists who maintained that Christ in his human nature was God. He argues that then Eternal God would be something like human being.\footnote{Ibid., PP. 146-47.}

He goes on to point out that Christ himself worshipped God and called others to do so. He died and suffered pain. Such a person cannot be an adored one as it would lead to an anthropomorphism and contradiction.

Those sects who maintained two natures in Christ according to ‘Abd al-Jabbār, must restrict themselves only to worshipping the divine subject. They cannot say that they worship Christ as he is in both natures. ‘Abd al-Jabbār criticised those who alleged that Christ should be worshipped, by arguing that other prophets and all who had done good for human beings would be entitled to worship and adoration.\footnote{Ibid., PP. 146-47.}
This is not a new criticism and has already been applied earlier (on the grounds of humanity), as Imām Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm argued that the Christians alleged that His Son praised Him and worshipped Him while the Son is equal in divinity and eternity like God. In this way they made the adored like the worshipping person. That was regarded as an impossible to be used about the Eternal God.49

This problem is discussed by Timothy I. He answers similar argument to 'Abd al-Jabbār's in the following way.

"Christ did not pray and worship as God, because as such he is the receiver of the worship and prayer of both the celestial and terrestrial being, in conjunction with the Father and the Spirit, but he worshipped and prayed as a man, son of our human kind. - He further worshipped and prayed for our sake, because he himself was in no need of worship and prayer."50

*************

'Abd al-Jabbār's critique of the incarnation (or inherence) is totally influenced by his Mu'tazilite background. As he regards the doctrine as ridiculous, he is quite prepared to use trivial arguments to ridicule it.

However, it is clear that 'Abd al-Jabbār as Mu'tazilite was unable to understand the philosophy behind the doctrine of the union of incarnation. It is obvious that oriental Christian apologists did not use the arguments which 'Abd al-Jabbār put into their mouth to defend the union of incarnation. But one must realise that according to Muslim polemists in general and to 'Abd al-Jabbār in particular, Christian formula of incarnation is self contradictory. It characterises Him both mortal and immortal, possible and impossible.

However, L. E. Brown, who especially discussed the presentation of the oriental Christian scholars of their doctrines, has accused them, not understand the real union between God and man.51 He also pointed out the reason and said, "There was in Asia an old myth of the divine soul coming down to earth, and

51. L. E. Brown, The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia, P.72.
being clothed with the garment of humanity, and eventually freeing itself from this encumbrance and finding its way back again to its heavenly home.  

He further said,
"With this sort of idea in the air, and also the belief in the absolute gap between the Creator and creature, it was very difficult for oriental writers to believe in a real union between God and man."

In the same way, John of Damascus criticised the Nestorians for failing to believe in the unity of Christ, when he said,
"They (the Nestorians) attribute the humbler things wrought by the Lord in the days of His sojourn with us solely to His manhood; while the loftier and divine actions they attribute to God the Word, and they do not attribute both together to one and the same person."

L. E. Brown concludes his criticism by saying,
"We find in many of these oriental writers that, however much they tried to express the perfect union between the divine and the human in Christ, they could scarcely get away from the idea that there were two sets of actions in Christ, some of which could be attributed to Him as divine, and some to Him as human."

One has reasons to believe that it is true that oriental Christian scholars writing in Arabic were facing difficulties to present their ideas to their fellow Christians who were brought up under the Muslim rule. One of the reasons for this may have been that they had to discuss their doctrines with Muslim scholars who believed in pure unity of God without attributing anything to God that may make Him something like His creatures.

In order to understand 'Abd al-Jabbār's critique and understanding of the incarnation, it might be useful to look at the some of the Christian presentations of that doctrine which 'Abd al-Jabbār may have been familiar with.

52. Ibid., P.70.
53. Ibid., P.70.
55. Ibid., P.72.
It is noticeable that compared with the Trinity, oriental scholars discussed the union of incarnation with less detail.

It would seem appropriate to examine the philosophy behind the union of incarnation as it is described by oriental scholars. It is surprising that 'Abd al-Jabbār while criticising this doctrine did not refer to its philosophy. Christians held the doctrine of incarnation because they believed that it was necessary for their salvation. According to them there are few reasons to believe in the union of incarnation.

Abū Qurra, a Melkite scholar maintained that the philosophy behind the incarnation is that it is will of God to honour us through the person in which He inhered. He illustrated it by an example, that suppose a king made an engagement for marriage for his son to one of the families of his kingdom, and wished that this family would be moved to his house and finally he mixed them with his family. In the same way, the Creator honoured us through the incarnation and mingled with us, lived within us in a way that was suitable for us. He came down from heaven and manifested Himself in our substance and called us as brothers, sons and friends, and lived within us for many years and demonstrated from Himself the laws of goodness. Then He raised His humanity towards the heaven and He will come again with His blessing.56

Abū Qurra further explained, "that God incarnated Himself, so that we may be able to know His Trinity and His love and affection. He illustrated it by an example of a rational person willing to serve a person who was deaf and dumb. So he gave him a signal through his hands. In this way he benefited the handicapped and he himself was not losing anything.

In the same way, God Almighty who is well organised, manifested Himself in the image of a man like one of us and He did what we used to do and struggled like us and addressed us through our speech and showed a signal, as a rational man does for the deaf. So He characterised Himself with what was not in His nature."57

56. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP.110-111.
57. Ibid., P.113.
Abū Qurra further said, "that the philosophy behind the incarnation is to free the human being from slavery and keep away from the curse in which they were living. He expressed it by an illustration, that a man hired out himself from the end of the day up to the night. The person could work only during the day, then he would become tired. When his master saw that he was unable to work, he worked instead of him for the rest of the time and gave him full wages.

In the same way, our Lord Christ who is very compassionate with his servants worked instead of them and freed them from slavery and curse by his crucifixion which was without any sin."58

Abū Qurra maintained, "that His incarnation creates in our heart absolute knowledge about life after death and saves us from Satan who gained power over Adam. He described the conquest of Satan, and the delivery of His people from him as being, like a man who had some sheep and there was near to them a wolf, an enemy, who continually tore them and seized the sheep. The man took a sheep's fleece from his flock and put it on, and then stood in the midst of the sheep as one of them, indistinguishable from them, till the wolf came, according to its custom. The disguised sheep jumped on the wolf and drove him a long way, separating him from the flock. When the wolf saw what the strength sheep showed, the wolf supposed that the sheep had changed their nature and became powerful like wolves. Therefore the wolf turned to flight."

Such is the wisdom and craft of the creature and God is wiser and craftier. Abū Qurra pointed out the philosophy "that Satan used to regard the people without stability and determination. Because of that our Lord did not come through a great birth or by an extraordinary birth. It was through a pregnancy and then born through Mary the virgin and brought up as a man and participated among them in eating and drinking, sleeping for the rest of the world life."

Abū Qurra concluded, "that it is the Christian faith that since divinity united with humanity, it never vanished and disappeared. In the same way, it was in the womb, the crucifixion and in the grave up to the time with end."59

58. Ibid., P.114.
59. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, PP.116-117.
Yahyä b. 'Adî was not only a theologian and Christian polemist, but also a philosopher and disciple of famous philosopher al-Farâbî. While arguing about ta'anns (incarnation) he explained that it means to become a man. Like 'Abd al-Jabbâr he presented a long argument to establish his point of view, in which he said, "that there is a possibility of one being able to conceive of God through human image and His union with it. One can know God Almighty and comprehend Him through his reason. When that is affirmed, one can say that his reason (while knowing Him) can illustrate His image. As a matter of fact, God is without primordial matter (hayûlâ), so His image would be His essence. Consequently, His essence would be in our reason. That requires that when our reason comprehends His essence, it must be united with Him."60

Finally, he concluded that there is a possibility of union between human nature and God's essence through reason. It is not impossible and a discordant theory.61

While describing the distinction of Christ, he said, "that there is no other except Christ who was characterised from his early existence with the divine actions and clear signs and miracles. In the same way, nobody was conceived without sexual relation. So we distinguish Him through the characteristic of complete union. When there is a union, there would be two combined things as one thing, and one thing when it is continuously one, cannot leave its parts or separate from the other one. When they are not one, they will not be united."62

Again contrary to 'Abd al-Jabbâr Ibn 'Adî seeks to prove that infinite can unite with the finite.63

There is another expression and explanation by Paul of Sidon, a famous Melkite scholar (d.1366). He maintained that, "the Eternal Son that is the Word has become incarnate as a complete human being through the Holy Spirit and Mary, without transferring from divinity and separating from His essence, as the word

60. Yahyä b. 'Adî, Maqâlat, ed A.Perier, PP.74-75.
61. Ibid., P.75.
62. Ibid., PP.84-85.
or speech of a human being is produced from his intellect and becomes a letter, which then is taken to another city. In terms of paper and ink, it can be torn, or burnt, but in terms of word or speech, there is no interference of accidents. It is intellect which is the source of production without there being any separation from it.

In this way, we can say that the Lord Jesus Christ in terms of the Word of God is Eternal, and in terms of son of Mary, is created and temporal. So He performed miracles through His divine nature and showed his weakness through his human nature. Both acts are by one Christ. Similarly a piece of iron when it becomes hot through fire, in terms of fire, it can burn and light, and in terms of iron, it can be broken, fold up and cut. Nothing can enter the nature of fire. So such/piece is one that consists of two natures, i.e. simple nature, where is no interference of any accident and the other is physical nature which is able to carry the accidents.

Our doctrine, that the Lord Jesus is God, comes into being when divine (latif) substance unites with physical nature.

It dominates the physical as fire dominates wood. Nobody says fire and wood, but only fire. Since this is applicable to the union of the created things, the Creator is more appropriate to be called something like that. 64

64. Cheikho, Vingt Traites, P.14.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has been concerned with two of the major Christian doctrines which were unacceptable to the Muslims, namely the doctrine of the three hypostases of the Trinity and the incarnation of Christ. In his polemical treatise on these two aspects of Christianity, ‘Abd al-Jabbār has been able to rely on a considerable number of earlier works in Arabic mostly written by Muslim scholars. The authors of such works were influenced by the gradual development of Muslim theology. Such scholars naturally addressed these subjects in terms of their own theological school of thought. However, it seems clear from their approach that every Muslim polemicist was fully aware of such Christian doctrines that may contradict his basic belief.

This attitude towards Christian theology was reinforced by the general Muslim belief that Christian scriptures had been corrupted and no longer reflected the true teaching of Christ.

In the late third century/ninth century and early fourth century/tenth century writers of anti-Christian literature developed their approach in a more systematic manner. They usually began their works with a summary of Christian doctrines and differences among Christian sects. ‘Abd al-Jabbār has also followed their method.

However, the attitude and approach of Mu'tazilites towards Christian doctrines is even less sympathetic than others because they were even more rigid in their doctrine of Unity of God. Thus for them the doctrine of the Trinity is an even more central issue between Islam and Christianity. They give it first priority in their criticism.

They saw the doctrine as totally contrary to the Unity of God. In their attack upon it they also attacked other Muslim theologians like the Kullābiyya and Ash'arites, who in their views, had also compromised the Unity of God.

Both in criticising Trinitarian doctrines and in attacking the Kullābiyya they used arguments about the attributes of God. This can be seen in ‘Abd al-Jabbār's presentation of Abū 'Alī's arguments and also even more precisely in ‘Abd al-Jabbār's further discussion. Abū 'Alī and ‘Abd al-Jabbār described the Trinity in terms of similar arguments used by Kullābiyya in explaining the doctrine of divine...
attributes. The Kullabiyya's doctrine of attributes influenced Abū 'Ali and 'Abd al-Jabbār's understanding of the Trinity.

The study of 'Abd al-Jabbār about these two doctrines seems to indicate that his knowledge of these doctrines was not first hand. In his refutation of Christian doctrines, he depended on his early teachers from Mu'tazla, such as Abū 'Ali al-Jubbāi, Abū 'Isā al-Warrāq and al-Jāhiz. During his discussion he often referred to them. It seems that the intention behind his study of Christian doctrines was not an independent and impartial analysis of such doctrine. In other words his main purpose was only to affirm the first principle of the Mu'tazilites, i.e. tawhīd. Evidently he was unable to investigate the real points of differences, but continued to rely on his own teachers for information.

'Abd al-Jabbār discussed Christian doctrines within a Mu'tazilite framework. There were some scholars before him, such as Abū 'Isā al-Warrāq who tried to concentrate on the internal contradiction in Christian doctrines. In the later period Ibn Ḥāzm not only concentrated on the doctrinal issues as a traditional way of criticism, but also he extended his study to the textual criticism of the Gospels.

However, one can say that up to the time of 'Abd al-Jabbār, there had not been a single scholar who had investigated the historical origins of the Christianity. This credit goes to 'Abd al-Jabbār only, inspite of the fact that its authentication is not fully confirmed. In his Tathbīt, he put forward a detail discussion of how the Christians have diverted from the pure and true teaching of Christ that was originally imparted to them.

Clearly 'Abd al-Jabbār cannot conceive of the doctrine of the Trinity and incarnation as anything but polytheism and for this reason, he included his discussion of Christianity in volume five of al-Mughni, devoted specially to polytheistic religions and in sharḥ al-usūl-al-Khamsa under the chapter of tawhīd.

Inspite of that there are some inadequacies in 'Abd al-Jabbār's arguments while presenting his criticism. He was in the habit of establishing a principle and then he himself did not apply the principle he established as one can see in the case of jawhar and dhāt. In the same way he has applied such arguments which were only applicable to the Kullabiyya sect, especially in the case of the word maḥānā. He sometimes attributed to Christians doctrines which they never held. He was also in the habit of repeating the same arguments again and again, and sometimes he seems to be inconsistent about arguments as he leaves the basic discussion and
jumps to another one as he has done particularly in the section on the incarnation.

In the case of the sects and their doctrines, 'Abd al-Jabbār sometimes is quite right and sometimes he is unable to differentiate the doctrines of these sects.

'Abd al-Jabbār's critique of the incarnation is made easier for him by the Christian disputes on the person and nature of Christ. The fact that Christian was arguing with Christian on this subject, may have led 'Abd al-Jabbār to be less systematic in his polemic. For in the main his argument rejects the doctrine of incarnation as illogical, irrational and impossible. He fails to discuss the Christian reason for the incarnation and their belief that the crucifixion were necessary for the salvation of man. This omission puts the Christian doctrine in an unjustifiably ridiculous position and he should have dealt with it in order to have made his argument stronger.
APPENDIX

Recent Studies on 'Abd al-Jabbâr and his work

1. Books:


2. Doctoral thesis:


3. Articles:


11. Hourani, George F., "The Rationalist Ethics of 'Abd al-Jabbār" in S. M. Stern and other (eds) Islamic Philosophy and the
12. Bouman, J.,
"The Doctrine of 'Abd al-Djabbâr on the Qur'ân as the Created Word of Allah," in: *verbum*, essays on some aspects of the religious functions of words, dedicated to Dr H. W. Obbink, (Utrecht 1964) PP.67-86.

13. Brunschvig, Robert,

14. Khodeiri, Mahmoud el.,
BIBLIOGRAPHY

'Abd al-Jabbar, Qadi al-Qudat al-Hamadani, Sharh al-Usl al-Khamsa, ed. A. K. Uthman. (Cairo, 1965)

Idem, Al-Mughni fi Abwab al-Tawhid wa al 'adl, Various eds. 16 vols. (Cairo, 1958-65)


Athwater, Donald., The Christian Church of the East, (London, 1961)

Al-Baghdadi, al-Khatib, Tarikh Baghdad, 14 vols. (Cairo, 1931)


Al-Baqillani, Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Tabiyib, Kitab al-Tamhid, ed. R. J. McCarthy, (Beirut, 1958)

Bakri, Hamdi, Muhawara al-Mahdi ma'Timutawis, Majalla Kulliyya al-Adab, Vol. XII, (1950), Part 2, PP.41-47. (Cairo)

Baker, Bethune, F. N., Nestorius and his Teaching, (Cambridge, 1908)

Brown, L. E., The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia, (Cambridge, 1933)


Celebî, Kātib, Hajjī Khalīfa., Kashf al-Zunūn, 2 vols. (İstanbul, 1941)

Cheikho, P. L., (editor) Vingt Traités Théologiques, (9th-13th centuries) Arabic (Beirut, 1920)

Idem, Trois Traités Anciens, Arabic (Beirut, 1923)

Idem, Maymar li-tadārus Abī Qura, Al-Machriq, Vol. XV, (1912) PP.825-842


Al-Duwayhi, Mār Istifān,, Tārīkh al-Ta‘īfa al-Mārūniyya, (Beirut, 1890)


Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, 13 vols, (Edinburgh, 1908-1926)


Fakhry, Majīd., A History of Islamic Philosophy, (New York, 1970)


190


Harvey, V. A., A Handbook of Theological Terms, (London, 1964)

Headlam, A. C., Christian Theology, (Oxford, 1934)


Ibn al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. 'Alī., Kitāb al-Fihrist, (Egypt, 1348/1928)


Idem, Mināj al-Sunna, 4 vols, (Beirut, n.d.)

Idem, Al-Radd ʿalā al-Manṭiqīyyīn, (Bombay, 1942)


Idem, Il-Irshād, ed. J. D. Luciani, (Paris, 1938)


Lane, W. W., Arabic English Lexion, 2 vols, (Cambridge, 1984)

Loof, Friedrich., Nestorius and his Place in the History of Christian Doctrine (Cambridge, 1914)


Muir, W., The Apology of al-Kindī, (London, 1887)


O'Leary, De L., The Syriac Church and Fathers, (London, 1909)


Peters, J. R. M. T., God's Created Speech, (Leiden, 1976)


Rāwī, ʿAbd al-Sattār., Al-ʿAql wa al-Hurriyya, (Beirut, 1980)


193

Al-Shahristānī, Abū al-Fath Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm, Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Nihal, (London, 1846)

Subkī, Tāj al-Dīn, Abū Naṣr ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿyya al-Kubrā 6 vols. (Cairo, 1906)

Seelye, Kate Chambers, Moslem Schisms and Sect, (New York, 1906)


Al-Ṭabarī, ʿAlī b. Rabbān, Kitāb al-Dīn wa al-Dawla, ed. A. Mingana, (Manchester, 1923) tr. A. Mingana, The Book of Religion and Empire, (Manchester, 1922)


Thānawī, Muḥammad ʿAlī b. ʿAlī, Dictionary of Technical Terms, various eds,2 vols ( Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1862)

ʿUthmān, ʿAbd al-Karīm, Naẓriyya al-Taklīf, Ārar al-Qaḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Kalāmiyya, (Beirut, 1971)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idem</td>
<td>Islamic Philosophy and Theology</td>
<td>(Edinburgh, 1962, 1985)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idem</td>
<td>The Formative Period of Islamic Thought</td>
<td>(Edinburgh, 1973)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wensinck, A. J.</td>
<td>The Muslim Creed</td>
<td>(London, 1965)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolfson, Harry A.</td>
<td>The Philosophy of the Kalam</td>
<td>(Harvard University Press, 1976)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idem</td>
<td>The Philosophy of Church Fathers</td>
<td>(Harvard University Press, 1956)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright, David F.</td>
<td>&quot;Council and Creeds&quot;, in Robert D. Linder and John H. Y.</td>
<td>Briggs (eds) The History of Christianity, (Bristol, 1977) PP.156-178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yāqūt, b. 'Abd-Allāh, al-Rūmī al-Ḥamālī, Kitāb Irshād al-Ārīb ilā maʾrifat al-
Adīb, ed. D. S. Margoliouth, 7 vols, (Egypt, 1923-30)

Idem,

Muʾjam al-Buldān, 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1866-73)

Yahyā b. Ḥadī.,

Maqālāt, ed. tr. A. Périer (Paris, 1920)

Al-Zarkaly.,

Al-Āʾlām, 8 vols. (Beirut, 1980)


1. Devalve, Robert Henry.,

The Apologetic writings of Yahyā b. Ḥadī, (tenth century), The Hartford

2. Griffith, Sidney Harrison.,

The Controversial Theology of Abū Qurrah, The Catholic University of
America, Ph.D., 1978.

3. Thomson, Jr Herbert Fergus.,

Four Treatises by ʿIsā ibn Zurʿa, Tenth Century Jacobites Christian of
Baghdād, Columbia University, Ph.D., 1952.