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**The Chalcedonian Formula
“Without Confusion and Without Separation”
in the Light of the Documents
Issued by the International Theological Commission**

Summary

The Council of Chalcedon stated that a divine and a human nature are united “inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably” in the one Person of Christ. In theological literature we most often come across two of these adverbs: inconfusedly and inseparably. Polish translators prefer “without confusion and without separation” and this translation is used in the title of the doctoral dissertation. The latter considers whether it is possible to apply the Chalcedonian formula “without confusion and without separation” outside the initial Christological context. The paper is based on the documents issued by the International Theological Commission which consists of renowned theologians who are aware of their responsibility for the faith of the Church. Therefore, the fact that the Commission used the Chalcedonian formula means a suggestion that is intended for all theologians and can not be ignored.

The dissertation sorted out theological issues, which were dealt with by the International Theological Commission, from the perspective of the Chalcedonian formula. In order to achieve the assumed goal a mixed theological method, which combines elements of both positive and speculative method, was used. The structure of the paper reflects the possibility of applying the Chalcedonian formula in specific theological areas. In the beginning the author outlines a historical and theological context of the genesis of the dogma dating back to 451 (chapter I) and its significance in Christology (chapter II). Then, he sets forth possible ways of applying the Chalcedonian formula in Ecclesiology, Anthropology and Eschatology (correspondingly chapters III, IV and V). Chapter VI focuses on a theological methodology examined from the perspective of the Chalcedonian formula.

According to the International Theological Commission the Chalcedonian formula states the unity of two polars: transcendence and immanence of the Word. In this way the dogma shows an infinite transcendence of the Incarnate Word in relation to people, the world

and history. At the Third Council of Constantinople the Chalcedonian formula was applied to describe the unity of two wills in Christ (that was the first application of the formula outside its initial context). A synthesis of two standpoints, which was attained in Chalcedon, can serve as a model for overcoming a permanent tendency of a human brain to dangerously separate and confuse. That is how the Chalcedonian formula will protect all the mysteries of faith by ensuring bipolarism of every mystery. It will therefore contribute to apophatic dimension of theology.

Chalcedon pointed out which place Christ's humanity had taken in the work of salvation. The dogma became a guide post directing not only to the mystery of God becoming a man but also to a man becoming God. In dyophysite Christology a potential is concealed which enables one to search for solving dilemmas pertinent to the relation between the divine and human. The dogmatic formula provides a human element. Owing to the formula describing the mystery of the Incarnate one can set forth a relation between Christology and other theological tractates (that is the second application of the Chalcedonian formula by the Commission). The International Theological Commission uses the criterion "without confusion and without separation" to illustrate the relation between Christology and Trinitology, as well as between Christology and reflection about God. In Soteriology the Chalcedonian formula points out the inseparability of Redemption and the Person of Redeemer. Both separation and confusion would make salvation, which must be a work of God and a man, impossible. It is only due to unity and at the same time distinction between divinity and humanity in Christ that deification, which is identified with the highest humanization of a man, is possible.

Though there is an analogy between the Church and the Incarnate Word, we can only talk of moderate possibility of applying the formula "without confusion and without separation" while describing the mystery of the Church. The Chalcedonian formula allows one to characterize the co-existence of two inseparable aspects of the Church: mysterious and historical. By analogy with humanity of Christ united with the Person of Word, social and hierarchically organized organism of the Church serves to Christ's Spirit enhancing the growth of the Body. One may observe divine and human elements being knit together by analogy with the Chalcedonian description of how natures of Christ are united. Inseparability of Christ and the Church does not mean an identification of mysteries of Christ and the Church. The formula can in an approximate way describe unity and at the same time distinction between the reality of the Kingdom of God and that of the Church.

According to the International Theological Commission, the formula “without confusion and without separation” can be applied when describing the relation between two ways of the Holy Spirit’s activity: a particular one in the Body of Christ and a universal one. The Church and the gospel are “incarnated” in all the cultures analogically to the Incarnation of the Word. However, the Word adopted a human nature not flawed by sin while cultures are submitted to sin. The Chalcedonian formula referring to the relation between the Church and the Word suggests, on one hand, exceeding a contrast between a spiritual mission and a service to the world and, on the other hand, it keeps one from mistaking the mission of passing a supernatural grace for building a more human world. The Church’s relation to politics is based on the distinction between two orders: a religious (supernatural) and a political (natural) one.

The International Theological Commission stands out against a “storied” understanding of relation between grace and nature which could suggest the possibility of separating nature from grace instead of distinguishing them. One can conclude from the formula of Chalcedon that a supernatural life is the most consistent with the nature of man. A relation between a natural law and a New Law of Gospel is derived from the relation between nature and grace. As far as deification is concerned, the Chalcedonian formula allows one to describe a union of the Creator with the creation which is modelled on the Mystery of Incarnation. A connection between a mystery of man and a mystery of Christ also arises from the formula, as well as supremacy of the Christological polar over an anthropological one. “Without confusion and without separation” prevents incorrect comprehension of cooperation of a man with God. Salvation, which is possible only owing to the grace of God, is not “solely grace”.

One can conclude from the limited possibility of the Chalcedonian formula application in Eschatology that history of salvation and secular history should neither be monistically identified nor dualized. The International Theological Commission not only noticed unity between a human progress and salvation in Christ but also emphasized the distinction between them. Eschatological salvation will take place beyond the boundaries of history and beyond the human activity. A temptation of confusing time and eternity made itself visible in earthly messianisms. Due to “an event of Christ” one can illustrate the relation between time and eternity with the help of Chalcedonian “without confusion and without separation”, though this connection will be accomplished in a different manner at different phases of history of salvation. The Commission referred to the Chalcedonian formula directly when interpreting the relation between a universal (cosmic) revelation and a personal one which is connected with the history of salvation (historical revelation).

The possibility of applying the formula “without confusion and without separation” in a theological methodology area results from the nature of “science of faith” referred both to reason and faith. Coexistence of faith and reason is true of the whole theological reflection process, though Chalcedonian “arrangement tool” must be relevantly adapted in every single area where reason and faith cooperate.

One can use the adopted Chalcedonian formula in order to describe both Godly and human character of the Scriptures, as well as ways of interpreting inspired books that stem from this two-dimensionality. Scientific methods should be used in obedience to faith. Two levels of Bible studies are always correlated. As regards hermeneutics of the Magisterium’s statements, the Chalcedonian formula prevents one not only from identifying the form of expression with the truth of dogma, but also from separating them. In a way the revealed contents are “incarnated” in a dogmatic formulation. A process of dogma interpretation should be perceived as a spiritual event rather than an intellectual one.

The Chalcedonian formula in theology emphasizes an inseparable connection between a rational reflection and faith of the Church that is for a theologian a source, context and norm for doing theology. The formula points out the irrevocability of integrating scientific theology with denominational one. One can also apply “without confusion and without separation” criterion to relation between theological and mystical wisdom. The most relevant relation between reason and faith is expressed in doxological theology, which combines cataphatic and apophatic dimensions of theology. The Chalcedonian formula also protects both correlation and the necessity of distinction between theology and philosophy. Chalcedonian “without confusion” guarantees respect for mutual autonomy while “without separation” suggests the need for renewing the relation between them.

To sum up, the Chalcedonian formula transferred from the mystery of Christ to other theological areas loses its explication ability. Nevertheless, it turns out useful in solving many particular theological problems or even in systemizing the whole tractates. Still, every theological area needs numerous additions and great flexibility in applying Chalcedonian measure. In some cases the formula fulfils the function of an arrangement tool – “without confusion and without separation” sets out a framework within which one should make a theological research. Owing to that theologians will be carrying out a search within orthodoxy. One should postulate such a kind of theological cognition which will take into account both distinction and unity brought about in accordance with the Chalcedonian algorithm. It means that only “without confusion and without separation” sort of thinking

corresponds to revealed and accepted by faith reality. Only “a narrow way” (Mt 7, 14) leads to truth, even if remaining orthodox is the most difficult.