

LEONTIUS OF JERUSALEM, A THEOLOGIAN OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY

ACCORDING to the manuscript tradition, 'the all-wise monk lord Leontius of Jerusalem' is the author of two theological treatises called 'Against the Nestorians' and 'Against the Monophysites'.¹ As these titles indicate, Leontius was one of those post-Chalcedonian theologians who saw their task as defending the Christology defined at that council against both Nestorian and Monophysite attacks.

Attempts to establish a more precise date for Leontius of Jerusalem are hampered by the lack of references to him in other sources and by the absence of clear indications in his own texts. This explains why the two scholars who have dealt with this question in greater depth could arrive at widely differing answers. In 1887, Friedrich Loofs argued that 'Against the Monophysites' was written in the years between 580 and 620 or 640.² His arguments were dismissed by Marcel Richard who, in an article of 1944, proposed a date between 536 or 538 and 544 instead.³ During the last fifty years Richard's conclusions have been accepted by all scholars writing about Leontius.⁴ The reason for

¹ *Contra Nestorianos*, PG, 86, 1399-7681 (CPG 6918), *Capita triginta contra Monophysitas*, PG, 86, 1769-901 (CPG 6917), cf the titles in PG, 86, 1390 and 1769 *Τού πανσόφου μοναχού κύρ Λεοντίου τοῦ Ἱεροσολυμίτου*

² F Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz und die gleichnamigen Schriftsteller der griechischen Kirche*, Texte und Untersuchungen, vol 3 (Leipzig, 1888), pp 1-2

³ M Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem et Léonce de Byzance', *Mélanges de Science Religieuse*, 1 (1944), pp 35-88, reprinted in M Richard, *Opera Minora*, 3, (Turnhout, Leuven, 1977), no 59

⁴ The *communis opinio* is expressed by A Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, 2/2 *Die Kirche von Konstantinopel im 6 Jahrhundert* (Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 1989), p 289 'Das Schrifttum des Leontius von Jerusalem muß in die Jahre zwischen 536 (538) und 543/544 verlegt werden', cf note 14 with a reference to Richard and a list of secondary literature up to the 1980s including the works of Helmer, Moeller, and Basdekis who all follow Richard's dating of Leontius This has not changed in the most recent secondary literature G Rowekamp, 'Leontius von Jerusalem', in S. Dopp and W Geerlings (eds), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur* (Freiburg, Basel, Wien, 1998), pp 394-5, esp p 394 P Gray, 'Through the Tunnel with Leontius of Jerusalem. The Sixth-Century Transformation of Theology', in P. Allen and E. Jeffreys (eds), *The Sixth Century End or Beginning*, Byzantina Australiensia, 10 (Brisbane, 1996), pp 186-96, esp p 186, where Leontius is dated to before the Council of Constantinople 553 K-H Uthemann, 'Definitionen und Paradigmen in der Rezeption des Dogmas von Chalkedon bis in die Zeit Kaiser Justinians', in

this success is obvious. When Loofs dated the two treatises he considered them to be mere revisions of texts of the early sixth-century author, Leontius of Byzantium. His elaborate theory about the relation between the two Leontii was, however, convincingly refuted by Richard who finally established Leontius of Jerusalem as an author in his own right.⁵ The new date proposed by Richard was therefore regarded as part and parcel of this refutation and has since not been subjected to a closer scrutiny.⁶ Thus, it has been overlooked that Loofs' case for a late date of the two treatises is not automatically invalidated when we accept Richard's conclusion that they are not just later rewritings of earlier texts. In this article I shall attempt to reassess the arguments used by both scholars and finally introduce new evidence which may allow us to come to a more definite conclusion about the date of Leontius of Jerusalem.

As it is more sensible to treat Loofs's hypothesis together with Richard's attempts to refute it, I shall begin with the discussion of the arguments brought forward by Richard in favour of his own dating. Richard starts from a passage in the florilegium of 'Against the Monophysites', where Leontius quotes from a text which his adversaries had attributed to Pope Julius but which 'John the bishop of Scythopolis, who busied himself with the very old writings of Apollinaris (sc. the bishop of Laodicea), found there word for word'.⁷ Having pointed out that John is mentioned

J van Oort and J Roldanus (eds), *Chalcedon Geschichte und Aktualität Studien zur Rezeption der christologischen Formel von Chalcedon* (Leuven, 1998), pp 54-122, esp p 59, where Leontius is dated to the reign of Justinian I have not seen L Abramowski, 'Zwei Entwürfe nachchalcedonischer Christologie Leontius von Jerusalem und Leontius von Byzanz', in J van Oort and J Roldanus (eds), *Die Rezeption der christologischen Formel von Chalcedon* (Kampen, 1995) Cf, however, L Abramowski, 'Ein nestorianischer Traktat bei Leontius von Jerusalem', *III Symposium Syriacum, 1980*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 221 (Rome, 1983), pp 43-55, esp p 43, where Abramowski accepts Richard's date

⁵ M Richard, however, also could not resist identifying our author with one of the numerous Leontii mentioned in the sources of the period, cf 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p 88 Since such identifications are mere guesswork they will be left aside in this article.

⁶ Even those authors who accept Loofs's general hypothesis that the writings of Leontius of Jerusalem are merely revisions of a work of Leontius of Byzantium seem to concur with it, cf S Otto, *Person und Subsistenz Die philosophische Anthropologie des Leontius von Byzanz Ein Beitrag zur spatantiken Geistesgeschichte* (Munchen, 1968), p. 15 'Die scharfe Kritik, die dem Werk von Loofs in der Vergangenheit zuteil wurde, hat ohne Frage chronologische Unklarheiten aufgehellt'

⁷ PG, 86, 1865C1-4 'Ἰωάννης δὲ ὁ τῆς Σκυθοπόλεως ἐπίσκοπος φιλοπυνησίας ἐν τοῖς παλαιωτάτοις Ἀπολιναρίου συγγράμμασιν εὔρεν ἐπὶ λέξεως τὴν χρῆσιν

as bishop between 536 and 550, Richard then asserts that Leontius must be dated to these years.⁸ This argument presupposes that John was still alive at the time of the composition of 'Against the Monophysites'. In Leontius' sentence, however, John's discovery is merely referred to as belonging to an indeterminate past. This means that we can only deduce from it that John had already been consecrated bishop when Leontius wrote his treatise but not how much time had passed since then.⁹ Consequently, Richard's first *terminus ante quem* for Leontius of Jerusalem is without foundation.

This must be borne in mind when we now turn to Richard's second attempt to establish a *terminus ante quem*.¹⁰ It is based on Leontius' silence regarding the controversy about the 'Three Chapters'. Richard observes that the 'Three Chapters' are not mentioned even where one would expect a reference as in the section of 'Against the Monophysites' in which Leontius refutes the assertion of his adversaries that the Council of Chalcedon is invalid.¹¹ From this observation he concludes that Leontius' treatise must predate this controversy.¹² An argument based on inferences from what an author should or should not have said is, however, necessarily problematic.¹³ Therefore Richard tries to substantiate it by drawing attention to the way in which Leontius deals with the accusation that some of the participants

⁸ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 44

⁹ Unfortunately, Richard does not explain to his readers by what interpretation of Leontius' sentence he has arrived at his conclusion that John and Leontius were contemporaries. Therefore his readers are reduced to making guesses. The only argument I can conceive of would be based on the absence of epithets like *ἐν ἀγίοις* or *μακαρίτης* which would have explicitly characterized John as dead. Even this, however, cannot be considered a certain proof since there is no consistency in the use of these epithets by late antique authors and Leontius himself omits them even in cases where somebody is certainly known to have been dead in the sixth century. Just to give one example: a few lines further down, Leontius refers to the church historian Socrates without mentioning that he is dead, PG, 86, 1865C11-12. *Σωκράτης ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησιαστικῇ ἱστορίᾳ φησὶν οὕτως*

¹⁰ Richard also undertakes to find a second *terminus post quem*. He points out that Leontius refers to Severus of Antioch in a way which strongly suggests that the Monophysite patriarch was no longer alive, cf. Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', pp. 44-5, with a list of his arguments. Therefore he fixes the *terminus post quem* at 538 as the year of Severus' death. This conclusion, however, simply confirms the date he has already derived from the reference to John of Scythopolis.

¹¹ PG, 86, 1876D1-1889A9

¹² Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 46.

¹³ It is worth noting that Loofs had rejected an argument based on Leontius' silence about the 'Three Chapters' as inconclusive, cf. Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz*, p. 182.

of Chalcedon were discovered to be Nestorians.¹⁴ Leontius begins his reply with the words: 'Let us concede that to them for the sake of the argument ...'¹⁵ Then he argues that even if that were the case the validity of Chalcedon would not be jeopardized for there had also been heretical participants at the Council of Nicaea which was nevertheless accepted as valid by the Monophysites.¹⁶ From this reasoning Richard infers that 'Against the Monophysites' must have been written before 544 when Justinian first officially condemned Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret's polemics against Cyril of Alexandria, and the letter to Maris ascribed to Ibas of Edessa.¹⁷ He points out that in his edict Justinian maintained that the bishops of Cyrus and of Edessa had distanced themselves from their own heretical writings before 451 in order to prove that all participants of the Council of Chalcedon had been orthodox. Therefore it would be inconceivable that Leontius had made a concession to the Monophysites with regard to this question after the year 544 because he would then have gone against the official position and incurred the risk of imperial persecution.¹⁸

Against this conclusion, a number of objections can be raised. First of all, a careful reading of Leontius' argument shows that he does not accept the assertion of the Monophysites that heretics took part in Chalcedon. On the contrary, he stresses that it could be easily disproved.¹⁹ He only concedes it 'for the sake of the argument' to have an opening for a different reasoning which he considers to be more likely to convince his adversaries.²⁰ Secondly, it is questionable whether the situation of the simple monk Leontius of Jerusalem can be compared with that of a prominent figure like pope Vigilius to whose vicissitudes Richard refers as an example for the danger arising from an undecided position.²¹ The third objection is more fundamental. From the way in which Richard phrases his arguments it is obvious that

¹⁴ PG, 86, 1877B7-8

¹⁵ PG, 86, 1877B9-10

¹⁶ PG, 86, 1877B11-1880B7

¹⁷ For a discussion of the controversy cf Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus*, 2/2, pp 438-84

¹⁸ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p 46

¹⁹ PG, 86, 1877B10-11 τὸ γὰρ εὐκαθαίρετον τοῦ λόγου εἰδότες

²⁰ It is worth noting that the same formula appears in 'Against the Nestorians', cf PG 86, 1729B2-3 δεδόσθω γὰρ φασὶ κατὰ συνδρομήν Here it is used by the Nestorian adversary of Leontius who again makes his concession only for the sake of the argument

²¹ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 47, seems to have an exaggerated idea of the 'thought police' under Justinian.

he takes it for granted that Leontius wrote under Justinian.²² In doing this, Richard feels justified because he believes he has already dated Leontius to before 550 through the reference to John of Scythopolis.²³ As we have already seen, however, this *terminus ante quem* cannot be sustained. As a consequence, Richard's argument is no longer conclusive since we can now equally suppose that Leontius wrote at a considerably later time when the controversy had already calmed down.

This alternative explanation can be supported by a comparison between Leontius' 'Against the Monophysites' and the series of Monophysite *aporiai* in *actio* VI of the anonymous treatise *De sectis* which was written in the years between 581 and 608.²⁴ Among these *aporiai* we again find the accusation that some of the participants of the synod of Chalcedon were heretics.²⁵ Unlike Leontius the author of *De Sectis* undertakes to defend the orthodoxy of Theodoret and Ibas by stressing that both authors anathematized Nestorius. When we look at his subsequent argument, however, it is immediately apparent that he does not toe Justinian's line for he freely admits that Theodoret did not reject his own previous writings against Cyril and that Ibas did not condemn Theodore of Mopsuestia because nobody, not even Cyril, asked them to do so.²⁶ Justinian is only referred to in another *aporia* where the Monophysites argue that his condemnation of Theodoret and Ibas proves that Chalcedon accepted heretics as participants. Surprisingly, in his answer the author of *De Sectis* does not even bother to correct this obvious misrepresentation of Justinian's position.²⁷ Instead, he quite openly explains that this condemnation was not justified in itself but that it constituted a politically motivated and eventually abortive

²² This is especially obvious when Richard rules out that Leontius could have written 'some years later' than 544, cf Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 47 'or cette attitude, aisée avant 544 est devenue dangereuse dès la publication de l'édit contre les Trois-Chapitres et parfaitement intenable quelques années plus tard' After this he refers to pope Vigilius (+555)

²³ Indeed, he introduces the argument of the 'Three Chapters' expressly to narrow the timespan defined by John's episcopate, cf Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 44 This must be borne in mind when one reads Richard's very decided conclusion that it would be 'strictement impossible de descendre au delà de 548', cf Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 47

²⁴ For the dating of *De Sectis*, cf Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus*, 2/2, p. 517, cf PG, 86, 1232C

²⁵ PG, 86, 1236D1-3

²⁶ PG, 86, 1236D3-237B13

²⁷ Justinian only condemned writings of Theodoret and Ibas while at the same time contending that the two authors had distanced themselves from them

attempt to win over the Monophysites.²⁸ This shows clearly that at the end of the sixth century Justinian's actions regarding the 'Three Chapters' were already considered a dead letter.

What is even more important, however, is that at one point the author of *De Sectis* states: 'But even if we concede that there were obviously heretics present they should not reject the synod'.²⁹ This is followed by the argument that there had also been heretical participants at Nicaea which was nevertheless universally accepted as valid.³⁰ It is obvious that this constitutes an exact parallel to Leontius' reasoning in 'Against the Monophysites'. In *De Sectis* this passage has its place after the rather tortuous demonstration of the orthodoxy of Theodoret and Ibas at the time of the council. Thus, it functions as a second line of defence on which the author of *De Sectis* can fall back if his first proof is not accepted. From there it is only one step to Leontius who only retains the second stronger argument and omits the previous discussion except for the statement that the Monophysite accusation could be easily refuted. Even that, however, is hardly more than lip-service for it is evident that he does not think the argument worth the trouble when he justifies its omission by saying that 'we do not want to draw out the defence unnecessarily'.³¹ The similarities between *De Sectis* and 'Against the Monophysites' are best accounted for when we assume that both authors were near contemporaries who had come to be equally disillusioned at the efficacy of the line of argument that had been defined during the reign of Justinian.³² Far from disproving it, Leontius' cavalier treatment of the question of heretical participants at Chalcedon therefore ties in well with Loofs's dating to which I shall now turn.

Loofs's first argument is based on the references to the 'heresy of the Jacobites' and to the 'beliefs of Jacob' found in the narrative of a miracle at the end of 'Against the

²⁸ PG, 86, 1237D7-16, cf esp 14 κατά τινα οἰκονομίαν

²⁹ PG, 86, 1237B14-15 εἰ δὲ καὶ δώμεν ὅτι φανερώς ἦσαν αἰρετικοὶ οὗτοι οὐδὲ οὕτως ὥφειλον ἀποβάλλεσθαι τὴν σύνοδον

³⁰ PG, 86, 1237C1-4, which corresponds to Leontius, PG, 86, 1880C

³¹ PG, 1877B10-11 τὸ γὰρ εὐκαθαίρετον τοῦ λόγου εἰδότες εἰς μῆκος τὴν ἀπολογίαὶν ἐκτείνειν περιττῶς οὐ βουλόμεθα

³² The similarities are not limited to this *aporia* but extend to the disposition of the material since in both texts we find the same distinction into 'logical', 'patristic', and 'historical' arguments Cf *De Sectis*, PG, 86, 1233C1-4 διέλωμεν δὲ αὐτὰ τριχῆ . . . ἱστορικά . . . ἀπὸ συλλογισμῶν ἀπὸ χρήσεων, which corresponds to the resumé in 'Against the Monophysites', PG, 86, 1876C ἀποδεικτικοὶ ἐπιχειρήμασι γραφικοὶς ἢ πατρικοὶς μαρτυρήμασι, which is followed by the last 'historical' section

Monophysites'.³³ As the name 'Jacobites' for the Syrian Monophysites only came into use with the establishment of a Monophysite episcopate by Jacob Baradaeus (+ 578), Loofs concludes that the text could not have received its present shape before the last two decades of the sixth century.³⁴ In his article, Richard has tried to refute this argument. He accepts that the passage containing the miracle must have been written in the late sixth or early seventh century. He does, however, question its relevance for the dating of the treatise by maintaining that the miracle was not part of the original text but was added to it by a later reader.³⁵

As Richard concedes, there is nothing extraordinary about the appearance of such a narrative in the context of the last section of 'Against the Monophysites'. There Leontius attempts to refute the assertion of his adversaries that the miracles of their holy men constitute proof of the orthodoxy of their beliefs.³⁶ As the *Plerophoriae* of John Rufus bear witness, the Monophysites used extensive collections of miracles to make this point.³⁷ Therefore Leontius could well have reinforced his refutation of such an assertion by appending a similar story.³⁸

This is, however, exactly where Richard finds fault. He argues that the particular narrative that appears at the end of 'Against the Monophysites' does not fulfil its function of illustrating Leontius' argument and that it therefore cannot go back to the author himself.³⁹ In order to understand this criticism it is necessary to give the gist of the story. A Chalcedonian actor is captured by Monophysite Saracens who mistake him for a priest and order him to perform the eucharist. God then sends a fire which consumes the altar so that the Saracens are reassured in their belief that the actor is a priest and set him and his fellow-captives

³³ PG, 86, 1900C14 ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ἰακωβιτῶν αἰρέσεως, PG, 86, 1901A1 οἶδε τοῖς Ἰακώβου φρονήμασιν προκατειλημμένοι

³⁴ Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz*, p 182

³⁵ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p 50 'il est aisé d'en expliquer l'insertion par un lecteur de la fin du VIe ou du début du VIIe siècle'

³⁶ PG, 86, 1806B12-C3

³⁷ Jean Rufus, évêque de Maiouma, *Plerophories Témoignages et révélations contre le concile de Chalcédoine*, ed and tr F Nau, *Patrologia Orientalis*, 8 (Paris, 1911), p 1

³⁸ A similar Chalcedonian refutation is found in the twentieth *Quaestio* of Anastasius of Sinai (dating to the late seventh century), where we also find a narrative of the miracles of a heretic, in this case a Macedonian bishop of Cyzicus, cf *Quaestiones et Responiones*, 20, PG, 80, 521D7-4A10

³⁹ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p 47: 'ce texte s'accorde si mal avec les données du reste de l'ouvrage qu'il suggère tout de suite que cette finale a été ajoutée après coup .'

free.⁴⁰ According to Richard, this story contradicts the conclusions found in the immediately preceding passage. There, Leontius had summed up his previous argument with the statement 'that the appearance of a miracle is not sufficient for the discernment of what is accepted and forbidden by Christ'.⁴¹ To underscore his point that the orthodoxy of the performer is not the only possible explanation for a miracle he then gives an exhaustive list of alternative reasons for a miracle: 'for this happens often, either for the purpose of (sc. bringing about) the more correct faith of him who will receive the benefit rather than for the purpose of (sc. bringing about) the (sc. more correct faith) of him who bestows (sc. the benefit), or for the reassurance of the onlookers in a simpler piety and sometimes also according to a more general benefit'.⁴² Richard's first argument that there is no 'more general benefit' in the narrative can be immediately dismissed since the liberation of the captives clearly constitutes such a benefit.⁴³ His next objection is less easily refuted. Richard points out that the story fails to illustrate the second and much more important case in Leontius' list i.e. that a miracle may lead to the more orthodox belief of those who benefit from it. He criticizes that the intervention of God rather has the effect of reassuring the Saracens in their heretical Jacobite faith and that consequently there is no 'moralité' in this story.⁴⁴ This is indeed startling, but nevertheless it can be shown to fit in with Leontius' argument. Richard has overlooked that Leontius distinguishes between two cases: he not only says that a miracle may be brought about to induce 'a more correct faith' in the beneficiaries, but also mentions 'a simpler piety' as an alternative.⁴⁵ In order to

⁴⁰ PG, 86, 1900A9-C11

⁴¹ PG, 86, 1897D7-1900A2 σαφές ἄρα ὡς οὐκ ἀρκεῖ πρὸς διάκρισιν τῶν ἐγνωσμένων καὶ ἀπεγνωσμένων Χριστῶ θαύματος ἐμφάνεια

⁴² PG, 86, 1900A2-7 πολλάκις ἢ διὰ τὴν τοῦ πεισομένου τὴν εὐεργεσίαν πίστιν ὀρθοτέραν μᾶλλον ἢ τὴν τοῦ ἐνεργοῦντος (sc τὴν εὐεργεσίαν πίστιν ὀρθοτέραν) γνομένου τούδε (sc τοῦ θαύματος) ἢ διὰ τὴν τῶν θεατῶν εἰς τὴν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἀπλουτέραν πληροφορίαν ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ κατὰ κοινωφελεστέραν χρείαν (after Richard, the edition in PG has χρείας instead)

⁴³ This is especially odd as Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 50, has just called the liberation 'un avantage concret'

⁴⁴ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 50. Richard further states that the actor is a murderer, but this is not certain as we only hear that he was accused of revolt and murder, cf. PG, 86, 1900A11. Moreover, it would not contradict Leontius' point that a miracle can be independent from the personal qualities of its performer

⁴⁵ There is a clear opposition between πίστιν ὀρθοτέραν and εὐσέβειαν ἀπλουτέραν. This meaning is not conveyed in the translation given by Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 48 'car souvent il (sc le miracle) a lieu soit pour le bien de celui qui doit être convaincu surtout en vue d'une foi plus droite ou par celui du

understand the meaning of this distinction, we need to go back to an earlier chapter of the treatise where Leontius deals with the problem of heresy. There he expresses his belief that only those heretics to whom the 'word of truth' has shown itself and who have then intentionally closed their ears to it will be condemned at the last judgement whereas 'those who have been led astray will not be judged as impious even if they adhere to a wrong belief'.⁴⁶ There can be no doubt that Leontius refers to this latter case when he mentions 'a simpler piety' as one of the reasons for miracles. And this point duly finds its illustration in the miracle itself when we are told with great insistence that neither the actor nor the Saracens had a clear knowledge of their brand of Christianity and that they were therefore not capable of making judgements about theological correctness.⁴⁷ We can conclude that the absence of the kind of 'moralité' which was expected by Richard is in fact the best proof that the miracle is part of the original text, since it is in keeping with Leontius' general broadmindedness regarding Christian beliefs. Indeed, the correspondence of the last passage of the miracle with the previous discussion about heresy is so close that these remarks must have been added by Leontius himself even if he made use

thaumaturge ou encore pour celui des témoins, en vue d'une plus franche assurance dans la piété' Oddly enough, Richard translates Leontius' *τοῦ πεισομένου* with 'de celui qui doit être convaincu' as if it were the future of *πείθεσθαι* and not of *πάσχειν* although the latter meaning is required by the juxtaposition with *τοῦ ἐνεργούντος*. As a consequence in his translation *τοῦ πεισομένου* is dependent on *τὴν εὐεργεσίαν* (which then in turn refers directly back to *διὰ*). All this is, however, clearly impossible as the correct sequence is *διὰ τὴν πίστιν ὀρθοτέραν τοῦ πεισομένου τὴν εὐεργεσίαν* followed by the parallel but very elliptical *διὰ τὴν <πίστιν ὀρθοτέραν> τοῦ ἐνεργούντος <τὴν εὐεργεσίαν>* the two elements being linked through *μᾶλλον ἢ* "more than" (which Richard wrongly translates as 'surtout ou') Because of these fundamental mistakes, Richard has not seen that *εὐσέβειαν ἀπλουστέραν* is introduced as an alternative to *πίστιν ὀρθοτέραν* and therefore has wrongly translated *ἀπλουστέραν* with "plus franche" and not with 'plus naive', besides relating it to *πληροφορίαν* and not to *εὐσέβειαν* (although in his summary of the miracle he stresses the 'naive bonne volonté' of the Saracenes, whom he calls 'des gens pieux')

⁴⁶ PG, 86, 1892C2-D3 *οὕτως τολμῶμεν λέγειν ὡς εἰ καὶ κακῶς ταῦτα ἐκείνοι φρονοῖεν οἱ συναπαγόμενοι οὐ κατακριθήσονται ἀσέβειαν.*

⁴⁷ The Saracens were not only ignorant themselves but had been proselytized by equally ignorant Jacobites, PG, 86, 1900D3-5 Cf also the case of the actor who belonged to the Chalcedonians only insofar as he attended their services, PG, 86, 1900C11-13 Moreover, there is a strong similarity between the phrase used in the miracle and the point about the 'naive piety' in the list of possible reasons for miracles, cf PG, 86, 1900A5-6 *πρὸς θεατῶν. πληροφορίαν*, and PG, 86, 1900C5-7 *καὶ τούτω ὀφθέντι τῷ τερασίῳ πληροφορηθέντες*

of an already existing story.⁴⁸ As it is in this context that the two references to the Jacobites appear, Loofs's assertion that they are an integral part of the treatise is completely vindicated.⁴⁹

On the strength of these references, Loofs then argues that 'Against the Monophysites' must be dated to the time after 580.⁵⁰ In favour of this argument one can point out that only from the early seventh century onwards the name 'Jacobite' came to be preferred to 'Severite' by the Chalcedonians.⁵¹ Nevertheless, there are indications that it had already been coined in the decade prior to the death of Jacob Baradaeus in 578.⁵² Even

⁴⁸ PG, 86, 1900C11-1A2 All the other arguments brought forward by Richard to prove his point are hairsplitting, e.g. when he argues that there is a clear break in the text, cf Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 47, 'le point de suture saute immédiatement aux yeux (1900A9)' This refers to the end of the list of possible reasons for miracles in PG, 86, 1900A6-9 ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ κατὰ κοινωφελεστέραν χρείας τῆς κατὰ καιρὸν ἢ τόπον ὑπὸ θεοῦ καὶ διὰ τοῦ οἰουδήποτε τῶν παρόντων ἐπιτελουμένου, and the beginning of the narration which immediately follows it in 1900A9-10 ἐν τοῖς γούν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἰστόρηται χρόνοις καὶ τόποις The transition could not be more natural and Richard can only call this a 'phrase de transition artificielle' because he has already made up his mind that the miracle cannot belong to the original text

⁴⁹ These references are phrased in such a way that they underline the same idea of unreflected adherence to a creed, cf the verb προκαταλαμβάνεσθαι 'to be caught before', which Leontius uses to describe how the Saracenes had become Jacobites, PG, 86, 1091A1 οἶδε τοῖς Ἰακώβου φρονήμασιν προκατειλημμένοι, which has the same meaning as συναπάγεσθαι in the earlier passage, and also the following adverb 'without testing', PG, 86, 1091A1 ἀβασανίστως, which takes up the previous discussion about the 'testing' of the various faiths, cf PG, 86, 1896A6 βασανίσωμεν

⁵⁰ Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz*, p. 182 'Die Erwähnung der Ἰακωβιτῶν αἵρεσις und ihres Begründers Jacobus (Baradaeus, Bischof von 543-573) weist, da Jacobus Baradaeus hier weit eher als eine Große der Vergangenheit erscheint, denn als ein Haretiker der Gegenwart, mindestens in die letzten beiden Jahrzehnte des sechsten Jahrhunderts' On Jacob Baradaeus, cf W. Hage, 'Jakobitische Kirche', *Theologische Realenzyklopedie*, 16 (Berlin, New York, 1987), pp. 474-85, with secondary literature

⁵¹ In the first half of the seventh century, Leontius of Neapolis speaks in his *Life of Symeon of Emesa* only of Severites, cf Léontios de Néapolis, *Vie de Syméon le fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre*, ed. A. J. Festugière and L. Rydén (Paris, 1974), 80.21 αἰρετικὸς τῶν ἀκεφάλων Σευηριτῶν The earliest reference given in Lampe's *Patristic Lexicon* is that to the *Pandektes* of Antiochus Monachus (written after 614) where both terms are used side by side, cf *Homilia* 130, PG, 89, 1848C Σευηριανοὶ καὶ Ἰακωβίται Later on the term also occurs in Anastasius of Sinai, *Viae dux*, and John of Damascus, *Contra Jacobitas*

⁵² According to the spurious life of Jacob Baradaeus which was later appended to the *Lives of the Eastern Saints* of John of Ephesus, the term Jacobites for the Monophysites of Syria first came into use in the 570s with the schism between them and the Monophysites of Egypt (the 'Theodosians') Cf John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, ed. and tr. E. W. Brooks, part 3, (*Patrologia Orientalis*, 19, 2, 1925), 256 [602]. Moreover, one can point out that although Jacob began his mission to ordain Monophysite bishops in 542, he only became a prominent figure after c. 550 since the vast majority of these ordinations are dated to the years

so, however, the reference to the Jacobites still suffices to disprove Richard's *terminus ante quem*.

Loofs's second argument is also based on a passage from the last section of 'Against the Monophysites'. This passage is found at the beginning of Leontius' discussion of miracles and therefore belongs to a part of the text whose authenticity is not questioned by Richard.⁵³ In order to refute the Monophysite assertion that miracles are a valid criterion for orthodoxy, Leontius points to the existence of wonderworkers among those Christians who were considered heretics by both Monophysites and Chalcedonians and says that 'Arians perform miracles .. until now among the Lombards, and Nestorians among the Persians'.⁵⁴ From this statement, Loofs concludes that 568 must be the *terminus post quem* for Leontius since in that year the Lombards first entered Italy. Then he adds the further surmise that a date after c 580 is even more likely, as the reference to wonderworkers suggests that the Lombards had already permanently established themselves in Italy.⁵⁵

In his article, Richard has eschewed a proper discussion of this point so that one can easily overlook that it is in fact an even stronger argument against his dating of Leontius than the mention of the Jacobites. He merely points to a remark made by Loofs that a reference to the Lombards would already have been possible during the reign of Justinian. This allows him to state that such a reference does not contradict his own *terminus ante quem* of 544.⁵⁶ A comparison with Loofs's text shows clearly that Richard can only come to this conclusion because he has misrepresented a very cautious statement in which Loofs only considers the very last years of Justinian.⁵⁷ Moreover, Loofs was hardly justified in casting doubts on his own previous conclusions. While it is true that Justinian's diplomats forged links with the Lombards as allies against the Ostrogoths it is highly unlikely

between 553 and 566, cf E Honigmann, *Évêques et évêchés Monophysites d'Asie antérieure au VIe siècle* (CSCO, 127, Subsidia, 2, Louvain, 1951), p 172

⁵³ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p 48

⁵⁴ PG, 86, 1806C9-11 'Ἀρειανοί . μέχρι νῦν ἐν Λογγοβάρδοις καὶ Νεστοριανοὶ παρὰ Πέρσας ποιοῦσι τὰδε θαύματα

⁵⁵ Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz*, p 183

⁵⁶ Richard, 'Léonce de Jérusalem', p. 51 'Loofs ajoute encore que la mention dans le *Contra Monophysitas* des Lombards, quoique explicable au temps de Justinien, évoquent cependant une date plus tardive Il nous suffit qu'il reconnaisse que cette mention ne constitue pas une difficulté insurmontable pour notre thèse '

⁵⁷ Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz*, p 183 'Die Erwähnung der Franken und der Longobarden passt, obwohl sie *allenfalls* auch schon in Justinian's Zeit erklärlich wäre, dennoch entschieden besser in die Zeit nach ca 580 '

that they would have come into the view of an ordinary citizen like Leontius of Jerusalem while they still lived in what is now Hungary and Northern Yugoslavia.⁵⁸ In the 530s and 540s a much more obvious choice for Leontius to make his point would have been the equally Arian Vandals or Goths.⁵⁹ Therefore, the arrival of the Lombards in Italy in 568 must be retained as *terminus post quem* for 'Against the Monophysites'.

Loofs has also attempted to establish a *terminus ante quem* for Leontius of Jerusalem. He first draws attention to the narrative at the end of 'Against the Monophysites' in which we are told about the encounter between the Chalcedonian actor and the Jacobite Saracens in the deserts near the 'barbaric limes'.⁶⁰ From this scenario he infers that the narrative must predate the conquest of Palestine by the Arabs in 638 or even that by the Persians in 614. Since Leontius states that the story happened 'in our time', Loofs then proposes 640 or possibly already 620 as *terminus ante quem* for 'Against the Monophysites'.⁶¹ Of these two dates, the earlier one must be definitely ruled out since after the retreat of the Persians in 628–30, the Eastern provinces saw a return to the old order and there is no reason why this event could not have taken place in the early 630s.⁶² It is less likely that the story could have happened after the end of that decade, as Christianity among the Arab nomads does not seem to have survived the Muslim conquest.⁶³ However, the year 640 cannot be regarded as the latest possible date for the adaptation of the narrative by Leontius since the statement 'in our time' is too indefinite to allow such a conclusion.

⁵⁸ Cf F E Wozniak, 'Byzantine Diplomacy and the Lombard-Gepidic wars', *Balkan Studies*, 20 (1979), pp 139–58, esp p 148, where the entry of the Lombards into Roman territory in the Balkans is dated to 545/6. One can also point out that in the 530s the Lombards had only just been converted to Christianity.

⁵⁹ It is worth noting that only after 587, when the Visigoths in Spain were converted to Catholicism, the Lombards were the only Arians Leontius could point to.

⁶⁰ PG, 86, 1900A10–11 *ἐν ταῖς κατὰ τὸ βαρβαρικὸν λεγόμενον λιμίτων ἐρήμοις*. Leontius probably means the limes of Palestine because he speaks of it as 'in our area', cf 1900A8.

⁶¹ PG, 86, 1900A7–8 *ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς χρόνοις*. Cf Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz*, pp. 182–3 'daher sind die Schlussausführungen in die Zeit zwischen ca 580 und [640 oder vielmehr] ca 620 zu setzen'.

⁶² Cf. I Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, vol 1 (Washington, D C, 1995), p 650. In his book Shahid does not mention the narrative at the end of 'Against the Monophysites'.

⁶³ I Shahid, 'Art *Ghassân*', in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol 2 (Leiden, London, 1965), p 1021.

Loofs's second argument is based on Leontius' silence regarding the discussion about Monenergism and Monotheletism. He concludes that this suggests a date not much later than 633/4 when Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem started the controversy. To this conclusion one could, however, object that Leontius may have consciously avoided mentioning the debate.⁶⁴ Therefore a certain *terminus ante quem* can only be derived from Leontius' reference to the existence of Arian wonderworkers among the Lombards. Such a reference would no longer have been possible after the end of the seventh century, when the Longobards were converted to catholicism.⁶⁵

Through a vindication of Loofs's arguments, we have thus been able to establish the years between 568 and c.680, or possibly those between c.580 and c.640, as the time during which Leontius could have written his *Against the Monophysites*. In the remainder of this article, I shall introduce new evidence which may allow us to narrow this timespan. I shall discuss two passages from Leontius' second and much more unwieldy treatise *'Against the Nestorians'*, which has not been used for establishing a date so far.⁶⁶

Before we can embark on the interpretation it is, however, necessary to make some remarks about the structure of this text. In its present condition it consists of seven books which are in turn divided into chapters. In each chapter Leontius quotes a statement from a Nestorian treatise and then pits his own Chalcedonian interpretation against it.⁶⁷ The first of the passages which I shall discuss is part of one of these quotations. Consequently the information we can extract from it will first give us a date for the Nestorian treatise from which it is taken and then also provide a *terminus post quem* for Leontius' text in which it is quoted.

The passage is found in the eighth chapter of the third book of *'Against the Nestorians'*.⁶⁸ There, the Nestorian explains how the name of 'son of God' must be understood when it is applied

⁶⁴ After all, in his *Typos* of 648, the Emperor Constans had forbidden discussion of the question Cf G Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaften, 12, 1, 1 (Munich, 1963³), p 99

⁶⁵ J Jarnut, *Geschichte der Langobarden* (Stuttgart, 1982), pp 66-71.

⁶⁶ I am grateful to Prof F Tinnefeld for having alerted me to the significance of this passage for the question of dating

⁶⁷ This structure was recognized by L Abramowski, 'Nestorianischer Traktat', pp 43-4

⁶⁸ It must, however, be noted that the quotation found in the eighth chapter of the third book is untypical. Usually Leontius starts each chapter with a clearly marked statement from the text of his adversary. Here, however, he loses patience with the strait-jacket he has thus imposed on himself and deviates from this

to the human being Christ. He states that the sonship of Christ is effected through 'adoption' and that it is therefore not fundamentally different from the sonship of all other Christians, which is based on a conferral of divine grace.⁶⁹ At the same time, however, he stresses that in the case of Christ this title indicates an honour which is far superior to that of all other Christians. The point of his argument is to show that even if one accepts that the man Christ has a privileged position, it is not necessary to assume a 'natural composition' with the divine Word to account for it as the Chalcedonians do.⁷⁰ In this context we are told that Christ 'has some other gifts of his own which is why he is called only-begotten by the Father' and that 'these are firstly that he was separated and chosen from all visible and invisible creatures when, at the moment of his coming to be, he also received the dignity of being son through grace'.⁷¹ This statement is illustrated by a comparison: 'As a son of an emperor (sc. is chosen) when, after he has been born "in the purple" or while he is still in the womb, he is crowned (sc. in which latter case) the mother is girded with the crown, as often happens'.⁷²

Although the grammar is somewhat awkward, the meaning is easily understood. The text refers to the fact of a son being crowned emperor during the reign of his father as one with which Leontius' readers would be familiar. This immediately rules

practice. In the middle of his refutation, he complains that his adversary does not limit himself to making his own case but continually anticipates possible objections and thus deliberately confuses his opponents, PG, 86, 1625D1-10. Leontius then proceeds to remedy this problem by presenting the Nestorian position in a more 'coherent' fashion, PG, 86, 1625D11-15. For the following reasons we can, however, conclude that he faithfully represents the text of the Nestorian treatise and merely omits those parts which he considers unnecessary: (a) The contents of his summary is in keeping with the Christology of his adversary, cf esp the quotation in PG, 86, 1621C8-11. (b) The summary is followed by Leontius' refutation where he refutes the christological statement which is illustrated by the example, cf esp PG, 86, 1632D1-7.

⁶⁹ PG, 86, 1628D1-9C4.

⁷⁰ Therefore he concludes that 'even those who speak about a coming to existence of Christ through a composition between the Word and the Man cannot give more to him' than the privileges he mentions, cf PG, 86, 1629B9-11. *τούτων δὲ οὐδὲν πλέον αὐτῷ ποτε παρέξουσιν οἱ συνθέσει λέγοντες τοῦ λόγου καὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸν Χριστὸν ὕφεσάνα*.

⁷¹ PG, 86, 1629A1-5. *ἕτερα ἔχει ἴδια χαρίσματα ἐξ ἧν καὶ μονογενῆς τῷ πατρὶ ἐρρήθη ἔστι δὲ ταῦτα πρῶτον μὲν ὅτι ἐκ πάντων ὄρατων καὶ ἀοράτων κτισμάτων ἀφώρισται καὶ ἐξείλεται ἅμα τῷ εἶναι καὶ τὴν τοῦ εἶναι υἱὸς ἀξίαν λαβῶν χάριτι*.

⁷² PG, 86, 1629A5-8. *ὡςπερὶ τις υἱὸς βασιλέως (sc. ἐξείλεται) ἐπὶ πορφύρα τεχθεὶς ἢ ἔτι κρούμενος ἐν μήτρᾳ στεφθεὶς διαζωννυμένης τὸν στέφανον τῆς μητρὸς ὅπερ γίνεται πολλάκις*. Despite the aorist participle *στεφθεὶς*, the present tense is used in the translation as it is required by *ὅπερ γίνεται*.

out the text having been written in the reigns of Anastasius I (491–518), Justin I (518–27), Justinian (527–65), Justin II (565–78), and Tiberius II (578–82), as these emperors were either childless or only had daughters.⁷³ Only in 590 do we find a case that fits the description given by the Nestorian. In that year the emperor Maurice (582–602) crowned his first son, the ‘purple-born’ Theodosius, who was then four years old.⁷⁴ But 590 cannot be regarded as *terminus a quo* since the Nestorian also states that these ceremonies were something ‘which often happens’.⁷⁵ This statement presupposes that in his time the honour must already have been conferred on a number of children. Of Maurice it is known that he had five more sons.⁷⁶ If it could further be shown that he had them crowned we would be justified in establishing c.600 as *terminus post quem*. This, however, is not possible as the sources only inform us about the coronation of his eldest son.⁷⁷ Only with Heraclius (610–41) are we on safe ground since it is well known that he crowned not only his first-born, Heraclius the New Constantine, but also his older sons by his second wife Martina.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, a dating to the end of Maurice’s reign cannot be ruled out

⁷³ An earlier date can be excluded as the Nestorian repeatedly refers to the ‘Severites’ as a well-defined christological faction, cf e.g. his criticism in the twenty-second chapter of the first book that the Chalcedonians speak about a ‘natural union’ and therefore are not different from ‘those around Severus’, PG, 86, 1488C4 τοὺς περὶ Σεβήρον. Thus, the Nestorian was writing after Severus became Patriarch of Antioch in 512. See also Abramowsky, ‘Nestorianischer Traktat’, p. 46, who argues that the Nestorian was a contemporary of Leontius.

⁷⁴ For the birth and coronation of Theodosius, cf Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 1, ed C de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), 254 24–5, 267 26–8. The only previous cases of sons of Byzantine emperors who were born ‘in the purple’ and then crowned during the life-time of their fathers were those of Honorius (born 384, crowned 393) and of Theodosius II (born 401, crowned 402), cf Dagron, ‘Nés dans la pourpre’, *Travaux et Mémoires*, 12 (1994), pp. 105–45, esp. pp. 108–9. These cases could, however, hardly have been referred to as contemporary by the Nestorian author.

⁷⁵ PG, 86, 1629A7–8 ὅπερ γίνεται πολλάκις.

⁷⁶ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 1, ed de Boor, 290 1–2.

⁷⁷ For the coronation of Maurice’s first son Theodosius cf G Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates*, p. 68.

⁷⁸ Birth of Heraclius the New Constantine on 3 May 612 and coronation on 25 December of the same year, cf Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 1, ed de Boor, 300 7–8, 14–16. Heraclius’ first son from his second wife Martina, who was also called Constantine, was made caesar (καίσαρ) in the year after his birth in 613, cf Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 1, ed de Boor, 301.6–7, 18–19. Significantly, Heraclius also had his eldest daughter Epiphania, his first child by Eudocia, crowned empress (ἀγούστα) a few months after her birth, cf 299 19–20, and 300 12–14.

with certainty because the scarcity of the evidence precludes an *argumentum e silentio*.⁷⁹

There is, however, another aspect of the example which may yet allow us to overcome this impasse. The author of the Nestorian treatise not only speaks about coronations which take place after the child has been born, but also mentions a strange procedure by which the crown is put like a belt around the womb of the pregnant empress.⁸⁰ The choice of this ceremony again finds its explanation in the exigencies of the comparison. It has the advantage of being even closer to the moment of conception and is therefore especially suited to illustrate the belief that in the case of Christ the dignity of being son was conferred at the time of his creation. For this second ceremony there are no parallels in the historical sources for Maurice and Heraclius, which only mention coronations taking place some time after the birth of the children.⁸¹ This may, however, not create an insurmountable obstacle to the proposed date as the two kinds of rituals are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The Byzantine historians record official acts performed by patriarchs whereas a prenatal crowning is clearly something provisional, since the child could always have been a girl in which case the ceremony would have been invalid. Therefore it may well have been followed by a later 'proper' coronation.

When we consider the case of Maurice, we are in the fortunate position of possessing a detailed account of the birth of his first son Theodosius by the contemporary author John of Ephesus.⁸² In this text no prenatal crowning is mentioned. This is significant as John gives special attention to the strategies by which the emperor tried to establish his son's claim to the succession. From John's account it is obvious that these strategies were exclusively based on the fact that Theodosius had been born

⁷⁹ A coronation of his younger sons might be inferred from the testament of the year 597, in which Maurice divided the empire among his sons, cf. Theophylactus Simocatta, *Historiae*, ed. C. de Boor, corr. P. Wirth (Stuttgart, 1972), 7.11.7-10, 305.25-306.13. Cf. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates*, p. 68.

⁸⁰ The participle *διαζώννυμένης* in combination with the preceding *ἐν μήτρῃ* implies the use of a 'belt' (*ζώνη*) or 'loin-cloth' (*διαζώστρα*).

⁸¹ There seem to be no references to prenatal coronations in any other Byzantine text. For ceremonies at the birth of sons of emperors in the Middle Byzantine period, cf. Treitinger, *Ostromische Kaiser- und Reichsidee*, pp. 108-9.

⁸² Johannes Ephesenus, *Historiae ecclesiasticae pars tertia*, tr. E. W. Brooks, CSCO, 106, Scriptorum Syri, 55 (Louvain, 1952), 5.14.199.30-200.5.

'in the purple'.⁸³ In such a context an additional prenatal coronation would have had no place and we can therefore be reasonably sure that it was not performed.⁸⁴

Turning to the question of whether Maurice's younger sons could be regarded as candidates for such a coronation, we are again confronted with the complete lack of data about them. Therefore the only possible approach is to make inferences from the available information. As we have seen, Maurice eventually had his eldest son crowned. But even then he only gave him the title but not a share in the power.⁸⁵ All this implies that Maurice made a very restricted use of the institution of co-emperorship. If one wanted to maintain that he had his younger sons crowned in the womb one would therefore have to assume a complete volte-face within the last ten years of his reign. This would be difficult to explain as the succession had already been secured through the existence of a crowned heir and there was no need for such an extraordinary measure. Thus we can conclude that, even if they had been 'officially' crowned at a later date, the younger sons of Maurice must be ruled out as candidates for a prenatal crowning.

When we consider the evidence for Heraclius, we find that the source material is very scanty and that it does not even give us detailed information about his first-born, Heraclius the New Constantine. It is, however, significant that, unlike Maurice, Heraclius waited less than eight months after the birth of his eldest son to have him crowned.⁸⁶ As this is also the case with his younger children, a pattern can be discerned to move the coronation ever closer to the birth.⁸⁷ It is obvious that these

⁸³ John states that this even determined the choice of the name, since the last emperor who had been born in the purple was Theodosius II, cf Johannes Ephesenus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, tr Brooks, III 5 14 200 5-16 See above, note 79

⁸⁴ Moreover, it would be inexplicable why Maurice should then have waited more than four years until the official coronation

⁸⁵ Cf *Chronicon Paschale*, 1, ed L Dindorf (CB, Bonn, 1832), 691 14-15 See also the contemporary chronicle of the Spanish abbot John of Biclaro, who distinguishes between an earlier ceremony in which Theodosius was made caesar and a later one in which he was made emperor, cf Th Mommsen, *Chronica minora, saec IV V VI VII*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 11 (Berlin, 1894), 217 34, and 218.17 There is something experimental about the use of this ceremony which is not surprising as it was an innovation of Maurice. Maurice himself had only been acclaimed caesar shortly before the death of his predecessor Tiberius II, cf. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 1, ed de Boor, 252 10-12

⁸⁶ Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates*, pp 89-90

⁸⁷ See above, note 78 Cf. G Dagron, 'Nés dans la pourpre', p 112, and note 35

shortened intervals provide a much more plausible context for a prenatal crowning.

This interpretation can be substantiated when we take into account that between the reigns of the two emperors the political context had radically changed. The sixth century had been a period of stability in which all rulers up to Maurice had been lawfully appointed by their predecessors. When Heraclius tried to found a new dynasty the conditions were much more precarious, for he had just ousted his predecessor Phocas, who had himself been an usurper. The strange crowning in the womb referred to by the Nestorian would tie in well with the situation at the beginning of Heraclius' reign, as it suggests a considerable anxiety about the succession.⁸⁸ Thus we can conclude that the birth of Heraclius' first son in 612 constitutes the most likely *terminus post quem* for the composition of the Nestorian treatise.

At this point, however, a caveat is necessary. Although we have only considered the two cases of Maurice and Heraclius, it must be admitted that Heraclius is only the first possible candidate and that his successors Constans II (641–68) and Constantine IV (668–85) would also qualify because they also had sons who were born and crowned while they were in office.⁸⁹ Only then do we reach the time which we have established as the latest possible date for 'Against the Monophysites' and which must therefore also be the *terminus ante quem* for the Nestorian treatise.

To corroborate the *terminus post quem* 612 and possibly also to find a more definite *terminus ante quem*, I shall therefore discuss a second passage from 'Against the Nestorians' which, unlike the previous one, has Leontius himself as author. It is found in the tenth chapter of the seventh book where Leontius tries, rather ineffectually, to explain how one can say that God suffered when only the human part was capable of suffering.⁹⁰ Using the

⁸⁸ It has been remarked in secondary literature that Heraclius used the instrument of co-emperorship in an unprecedented way, cf Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates*, p 90, and P Schreiner, 'Herakleios', *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 4 (München-Zürich, 1989), pp 2140–1

⁸⁹ Constans was only eleven years old when he became emperor. He had his first-born, Constantine, crowned in 654 and his younger sons, Heraclius and Tiberius, crowned in 659, cf Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, pp 95, 101 In his case, however, the evidence is even more scanty and we do not possess certain information about how much time had passed between the birth and the coronation of the sons The date of c.650 for Constantine's birth found in the secondary literature is not more than a guess, cf. A N Stratos, *Τὸ Βυζάντιον στὸν 7 αἰῶνα*, 4 (Athens, 1972), pp 7, 10 Constantine IV (668–85) had two sons, cf Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, p 108

⁹⁰ PG, 86, 1768hA10–D3.

analogy of the human compound of body and soul, he distinguishes between the following cases: (a) one can name one part of the human compound to make a statement which can only refer to the whole compound; (b) one can name the compound and mean only one part; (c) one can name one component and mean the other one.⁹¹ All these cases are illustrated by examples. The passage that is relevant to the question of dating is the example for the last case: 'As we say "How many souls have been slaughtered during the conquest of Jerusalem!" while only the bodies (sc. have been slaughtered)' ⁹² It is not immediately apparent which conquest of Jerusalem Leontius has in mind. As the first two examples adduced by him can be identified as quotations from the Bible,⁹³ one may first think that he refers to the conquest by the Babylonians mentioned in the Old Testament or to that by the Romans referred to in the Gospels. Such an interpretation, however, causes problems as one would then expect the conquerors to be identified. Moreover, it must be pointed out that only at the beginning of his argument Leontius quotes verses from the Bible. Then he changes his strategy and starts to appeal to the experience of his audience. This is especially evident in the example which immediately precedes the mention of the conquest of Jerusalem: 'As we say... that such and such a human being is conceited although (sc. he is thus) only regarding his soul'.⁹⁴ Here Leontius invites his readers to substitute a fitting name from among their own acquaintances. The change in the choice of examples is clearly marked through the switch from the impersonal formula 'as it is said' with which Leontius introduces the quotations from the Bible to the personal 'as we say' which he uses to identify what follows as statements of his contemporaries in their everyday conversations.⁹⁵ Therefore we can conclude that Leontius refers to the conquest of Jerusalem as an event of his time. This also explains why he does not specify what conquest he means, for this would have been understood by all his readers if it were the 'talk of the day'. Within the timespan which we have established for Leontius, the city of Jerusalem was

⁹¹ PG, 86, 1768hB10-12

⁹² PG, 86, 1768hC8 ὡσπερ λέγομεν πόσαι ψυχὰι κατεκόπησαν ἐν τῇ ἀλώσει Ἱεροσολύμων καίτοι τὰ σώματα μόνον

⁹³ These are Isa. 40:5 and Gen. 19:17, quoted in PG, 86, 1768hB13-C2. The statement about the conquest of Jerusalem, however, is clearly not a quotation.

⁹⁴ PG, 86, 1768hC3-6 ὡσπερ φημέν ὅτι ἰψηλόφρων ἄνθρωπος ὁ δεῖνα καίτοι μόνῃ τῇ ψυχῇ. This example is introduced as an illustration of Leontius' second case.

⁹⁵ Cf. ὡσπερ τὸ λεγόμενον (B13) and <ὡσπερ> τὸ εἰρημένον (C1) on the one hand and ὡσπερ φημέν (C3) and ὡσπερ λέγομεν (C7) on the other.

conquered twice, first in 614 by the Persians and then in 638 by the Arabs. As the city surrendered to the Arabs without bloodshed it must, however, be excluded that Leontius refers to the later event⁹⁶ The Persians, on the other hand, had been extremely cruel and it is significant that in the account of the conquest of 614 by the Sabbaite monk Strategius, we find a statement which is very similar to that made by Leontius: 'And who could count the number of the dead who were killed in Jerusalem!'⁹⁷ Thus we arrive at a *terminus post quem* which almost coincides with 612 as the year of the birth of Heraclius' first son Constantine, whom we have identified as the first probable candidate for a prenatal coronation.

Moreover, it can be argued that the reference to 'the' conquest without any further specification as to the conquerors suggests a date before 638, since after that year it would have been necessary to distinguish between the Persians and the Arabs. This would fit in well with the *terminus ante quem* 640 suggested by Loofs. To such a conclusion one could, however, object that the conquest by the Arabs was not bloody and that even after 638 it would therefore still have been clear to a reader which of the two events Leontius had in mind. Consequently, we can only repeat the result of the discussion of Loofs's arguments and state that the last years of the seventh century constitute a certain *terminus ante quem* for Leontius.

At the end of this article the discussion can be summed up as follows. A reassessment of the arguments brought forward by Loofs and Richard has led to a vindication of Loofs's dating of Leontius' 'Against the Monophysites' to after 570. New evidence has then allowed us to date the Nestorian treatise quoted by Leontius to after 612 and Leontius' 'Against the Nestorians' to after 614. Consequently Leontius of Jerusalem does not belong to the era of Justinian, as was proposed by Richard and as has been taken for granted by the scholars of the last fifty years. Instead, he must be seen in the completely different context of the seventh century. This opens the way for a new interpretation which should concentrate on the innovative traits of Leontius'

⁹⁶ Cf Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, p 92

⁹⁷ *La prise de Jérusalem par les Perses en 614*, tr. G Garitte, CSCO, 203, *Scriptores Iberici*, 12 (Louvain, 1960), 196-8. *Et quisnam poterit computare multitudinem mortuorum qui interfecti sunt in Ierusalem* Cf also Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, p 86

theology rather than stressing the elements he has in common with the authors of the mid-sixth century.⁹⁸

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⁹⁸ The 'modernity' of Leontius has already been recognized in secondary literature, cf Uthemann, *Definitionen und Paradigmen*, pp 59-60 'Seine (sc Leontius von Jerusalem) Christologie ist der erste Schritt in jene Richtung, die zu Beginn des 7 Jahrhunderts als reichskirchlicher Monenergismus und dann als Monotheletismus auftritt'