



The Case Against Diodore and Theodore (Oxford Early Christian Texts)

John Behr

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This is a landmark work, providing the first complete collection of the remaining excerpts from the writings of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia together with a ground-breaking study of the controversy regarding the person of Christ that raged from the fourth to the sixth century, and which still divides the Christian Church. Destroyed after their condemnation, all that remains of the dogmatic writings of Diodore and Theodore are the passages quoted by their supporters and opponents. John Behr brings together all these excerpts, from the time of Theodore's death until his condemnation at the Second Council of Constantinople (553) - including newly-edited Syriac texts (from florilegium in Cod. Add. 12156, and the fragmentary remains of Theodore's *On the Incarnation* in Cod. Add. 14669) and many translated for the first time - and examines their interrelationship, to determine who was borrowing from whom, locating the source of the polemic with Cyril of Alexandria.

On the basis of this textual work, Behr presents a historical and theological analysis that completely revises the picture of these 'Antiochenes' and the controversy regarding them. Twentieth-century scholarship often found these two 'Antiochenes' sympathetic characters for their aversion to allegory and their concern for the 'historical Jesus', and regarded their condemnation as an unfortunate incident motivated by desire for retaliation amidst 'Neo-Chalcedonian' advances in Christology. This study shows how, grounded in the ecclesial and theological strife that had already beset Antioch for over a century, Diodore and Theodore, in opposition to Julian the Apostate and Apollinarius, were led to separate the New Testament from the Old and 'the man' from the Word of God, resulting in a very limited understanding of Incarnation and circumscribing the importance of the Passion. The result is a comprehensive and cogent account of the controversy, both Christological and exegetical together, of the early fifth century, the way it stemmed from earlier tensions and continued through the Councils of Ephesus, Chalcedon, and Constantinople II.

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