Cyril of Alexandria and Julian the Emperor in Dialogue for the Ancient Greek Philosophy and Paganism

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Abstract

In the 5th century, Cyril of Alexandria wrote a large apologetic work, as a response to Julian the Apostate's anti-Christian work Against the Galileans. Aside from the obvious divide of one being a Christian and one a pagan, Cyril's religious views were very different from Julian's. Julian's arguments against the Christian doctrine do not greatly differ from those used in the second century by Celsus and by Porphyry in the third, and he regarded the relations between Neoplatonic criticism of Christian Word. As a pagan, Julian had adopted the Platonic and Neoplatonic conception of the one God. Cyril doesn't stack up against the Platonic one. Cyril's goal in responding to Julian is, therefore, to help the skeptical reader to find the real faith. Cyril invokes precisely the evidence of Platonist philosophers in favor of the Trinitarian doctrine. Cyril shows, unlike Julian, that the Greek philosophers accept the three principal hypostases and using the term triad, they agree with Christian teaching. So, ancient philosophers as Porphyry supported that the substance of the divinity has proceeded towards three hypostases. Cyril doesn't only confront Julian's view against Christian, but he also confirms something that Justin the Martyr supported centuries ago about the "spermatic logos." In this paper, we will examine this two works, "Against the Galileans" of Julian and "Against Julian" of Cyril, not only from their theological opinions but as arguments using the "common images" (εἰκότα), the possible logical arguments, in supporting the positions of Julian and Cyril in a legal struggle.

Keywords: Cyril of Alexandria, Julian the Apostate, Trinitarian Doctrine, Greek Philosophy

Julian Emperor, the Apostate
and his polemic against Christianity

Flavius Claudius Julianus who is best known as Julian the Apostate was the last pagan emperor of Rome from 361[1] to 363. He is characterized as "eloquent" by Socrates Scholasticus.[2] Julian had adopted as his religion, both paganism and philosophical theories of Neoplatonism; he viewed the traditional myths as allegories, in which the ancient gods were aspects of a philosophical divinity. As nephew to Constantine the Great – the first Roman emperor who converted to *Christianity*[3] – he was obliged to hide his passion for paganism. When Julian became emperor, he didn't only reject Christianity. Still, he also worked for the restoration of Hellenistic polytheism as the state religion, had encouraged support for the original pagan imperial cults and ethnic religions of the Empire, and he removed many privileges from the Christian and the Church.[4]

Julian, like the stoic philosopher Epictetus,[5] always named Christ as "the Galilaean" and the Christians as the Galilaeans, because he wanted to underline that this new religion was a local creed, "the creed of craftsmen and fishermen," from a poor place of Judaea and perhaps to remind his readers that "out of Galilee arises no prophet";[6] with the same intention, he gave the name "the Nazarene" to Christ.[7] All these were worthy of being disdained by respectable and well educated Hellenes.[8]

Julian wrote his polemic treatise "Against Galilaeans"[9] in 362/363,[10] after he confronted the Christians in Antioch. This text was his response to the

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[1] Socrates Scholasticus, *Church History,* 3.1.2-3, PG 67, 368A.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Constantine's life,* PG 20, 944D-945A, 1001B, 1040A.

[4] Socrates Scholasticus, *Church History,* 3:11.1-11, PG 67, 409B, trans. and ed. Philip Schaff, *Socrates and Sozomenus Ecclesiastical Histories,* NPNF2-02 (New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886), 140-1.

[5] Epictetus the Stoic, *Discources* 2.9.19-21; 4.7.6. Niko Huttunen, "Epictetus' Views on Christians: A Closed Case Revisited," *Religio-Philosophical Discourses in the Mediterranean World* 1 (2017): 306.

[6] Jn 7:52.

[7] Julian the Apostate, "Against the Galileans," in *Julian the Apostate: Against the Galileans,* ed. Wilmer Cave Wright, (Cambridge and London, 1923), http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/ julian_apostate_galileans_0_intro.htm, 313. Julian the Apostate, *Letter 55 – To Photinus,* in *The Works of the Emperor Julian,* 3 (1913) Loeb Classical Library, "But Diodorus, a charlatan priest of the Nazarene." Facundi Hermianensis episcopi, *Pro Defensione trium capitulorum concilii Chalcedonensis Libri 12 - Ad Justinianum Imperatorem,* PL 67, 573-4.

[8] William Desmond, *Philosopher-Kings of Antiquity* (London, 2011), 134.

[9] Aryay Bennett Finkelstein, "Julian among Jews, Christians and 'Hellenes' in Antioch: Jewish Practice as a Guide to 'Hellenes' and a Goad to Christians", (doctorate's thesis, Harvard University, 2011), 12.

[10] Libanius, "Orations 18.178," in *Libanius, Opera 2: Orationes XII–XXV,* ed. Richard Foerster (Hildesheim: Olms, 1963), 313:9 – 314:5.

Christians' refusal to accept the "Hellenization" of the empire. It was a strict critique of Christians and Christianity of his era. Unfortunately, the full text of "Against the Galileans," which was written in three books, has not survived. The fragments preserved are almost entirely from the first book, and exist mainly in the book of Cyril of Alexandria "Against Julian."[11] Cyril wrote this polemical response against Julian the Apostate in 434 CE, many years after the death of Julian.

In this polemic treatise of Julian, the pagan emperor described what he realized to be understood as the mistakes and dangers of the Christian faith, and he attempted to throw a critical and unfavorable light on ongoing disputes inside the Christian Church. Julian accused Christians as apostates from Judaism, which he accepted as an ancient and, at the same time, established religion. Christians were neither Hellenes nor Jews but belonged to the sect of Galilaeans.[12]

Generally, Julian's text "Against Galilaeans" was a work of defense of Greek culture, of Greek religion and the Greek spirit and accused the non-Jewish Jews of distorting them in an unethical way. He employed the Timaeus of Plato against Genesis. His conclusion was that Jewish theology was inferior to the Greek one, but it deserved nevertheless worthy of respect. Julian used innumerable contradictions and absurdities of the Bible to criticize Judaism, while also criticizing the "Fathers" of the Church, such as the "wretched Eusebius" who argued that "poems in hexameters are to be found even among them, and sets up a claim that the study of logic exists among the Hebrews since he has heard among the Hellenes the word they use for logic."[13]

Julian didn't care about the religion of Christianity itself. He was afraid of Christian Universalism, which would throw away, and would supplant the Hellenic synthesis of culture and tradition. Celsus and Porphyry influenced him[14] in the opinion against Christian, although his treatise has more similarities to Celsus' text.[15] First, Julian turned to theurgic Neoplatonism and converted to Mithraism by a Neoplatonic theurgist philosopher named Maximus in Ephesus in 355.[16]

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[11] William J. Malley, *A Preliminary Specimen of a Critical Edition of the Contra Julianum of St. Cyril of Alexandria* (Manila, 1959).

[12] Julian the Apostate, *Against the Galileans*, 1, Wright, 319.

[13] Julian the Apostate, *Against the Galileans*, 1, Wright, 383. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Preparation for the Gospel,* 11.5.5.

[14] "Julian, like Porphyry before him, believed that Judaism's and Christianity's belief in more than one supreme god ran counter to Neoplatonic theology in which there was one supreme god", Finkelstein, *Julian among Jews,* 27, ref. 94.

[15] Julian the Apostate, *Against the Galileans,* Wright, 314-5. See Robert L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1984), 107-8, 118-21.

[16] Finkelstein, *Julian among Jews,* 2.

The pagan emperor tried to show that there is no connection between the Old Testament and Christianity. The latter was not the development of Judaism, was the "fabrication of the Galilaeans, a completely human fiction maliciously contrived."[17] Judaism's religion was lower than the Greek pantheon, and of course, Christian theology didn't worth anything compared with the theology of Judaism and Hellenism. He could not understand the Trinitarian teaching that was the central doctrine of the Christian religion. "The Christians believe in one God who has three persons. The truth that in the unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these Three Persons being truly distinct one from another. the idea of one and ad the same time Triune God is with God."[18] As a pagan, Julian had adopted Plato's conception of the one God. In his opinion, the God of Plato was supreme and transcendent, the definition of creativity and perfection, unchangeable and incorporeal.[19] This god was beyond good and evil and was the unique source of all knowledge. The god of Plato did not simply create matter, and it was the manifestation of His soul and provided an imperfect and incomplete vision of the pristine forms in His sublime mind.

On the other hand, God of the Old Testament and Christianity was a different God[20]. He refuted the Christian claim that Jesus, the Logos, is God, since the Bible recognizes only one God.[21] Then Julian tried to isolate Christianity, connecting Judaism with the pagan pantheon. He though the stories of Genesis as myths that were compared with the epic poems of Homer and the Platonic cosmogony.[22] Of course, he insisted on the idea that the religion of Hellenes and their religious tradition was superior to any view of godhood that Judaism expressed. In order to support the superiority of Greek paganism to the Jewish religion, Julian used the absence of lawmakers, philosophers, musicians, sculptors, great military leaders, historians, and many other important people in the Jewish nation. This was a huge disadvantage of Judaism comparing with Hellenism.

For the pagan Emperor, Yahweh is not the "Most High" God, but simply one of many national gods.[23] Additionally, as it is referred above, Christians

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[17] E.G. Burr, "Julian 'the Apostate', Against the Galileans," in *Religions of late antiquity in practice,* ed. Richard Valantasis (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 145.

[18] Eirini Artemi, "The Comparison of the Triadological Teaching of Isidore of Pelusium with Cyril's of Alexandria Teaching," in *Studia Patristica XCVI*, ed. M. Vinzent, (Leuven–Paris–Bristol, 2017), 22: 309-24, 311. Cyril of Alexandria, *Against Julian*, 8, PG 76, 904C; 9, PG 76, 952B: "Mastership and godhead is one of Father and of Son and of Holy Spirit· every person has the whole mastership and the divine nature."

[19] Plato, *Timaeus* 29a. Julian the Apostate, *Against the Galileans,* Neumann, 173, line 9-15.

[20] *Misopogon* 349d, Vol. 2. Rom. 3:29; Gal. 3:28. Julian the Apostate, *Against the Galileans,* 1, Wright, 343.

[21] Julian, *Against the Galileans,*1, Wright, 343, 345.

[22] Julian, *Against the Galileans,*1, Wright, 329, 331.

[23] The biblical term is "angels" or "sons of god", or "sons of gods", בני אל, בני אלים, or בני האלהים.

accepted the Jewish Yahweh as their Triune God, and based on the Hebrew Bible and writings to identify the qualities of their God; but there was another reason that Yahweh could not be the creator–demiurge-Hypsistos, with the same God with Christian's Creator because Yahweh had selected out only one tribe from among the myriads of peoples under His lordship;[24] for Julian, Yahweh was a subordinate tribal god, who was neither equated with the Most High *(*Hypsistos), nor to be the Creator (*demiurge*), nor to be identified with the God of Abraham, and was apportioning God of Deuteronomy 32:8-9.[25]

In order to be understood neither the opinion of Julian about the Christian God who was neither the begetter nor the creator of the universe nor did the One who had the authority to rule over the whole cosmos, it should examine what Julian meant with the term "demiurge." Here, it should be underlined that the philosophical usage and the proper noun of "demiurge" derived from Plato's Timaeus, where the demiurge was presented as the creator of the whole universe,[26] of the laws and heaven. Later, Plotinus identified the Demiurge as nous, mind, the divine reason, and the first emanation of "the One."[27] Julian insisted that the creator God of Moses and Galilaeans is an inferior god in the hierarchy of Gods.[28]

Julian claimed that God of the Old Testament, the jealous[29], angry, fearful god depicted in the Mosaic writings and was preached by the Jewish Prophets, could not be accepted by any logic man as the high God, because the jealousy is a sentimental completely strange to the real divine nature, according to Plato.[30] Moreover, Julian argued that this horrible god could not be thought of as the archetypal Moral Being held up, for example, by the followers of Jesus. On the other hand, it was quite infuriating Christians' attempt to substitute the real High God with a mere mortal,[31] and to replace Homer's, Hesiod's and Plato's writings with the gospels which were written by certain "anonymous" people.[32] Also, the Galilaeans had adopted the writings of Moses as authoritative in matters of doctrine and faith, despite their dangerous, disingenuous teaching about the true nature of the gods.

Julian thought the story of the dialogue between Eve and the serpent as total fault. He wondered in what language they spoke. So if Galilaeans believed in this incredible and unbelievable story, why did they accuse the

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[24] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* 1, Wright, 397.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Plato, *Timaeus* 41a.

[27] Plotinus, *Enneades,* 5.8, 5.1–2; Julian, *Against the Galileans,* 1, Wright, 329, 331, 333.

[28] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* 1, Wright, 355.

[29] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* Neumann, 188, lines 12-16.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* 1, Wright, 403, 405.

[32] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* 1, 329, 343.

myths of Hellenes about Kronos who swallowed his children, Zeus, who had incestuous relationships with his mother and daughters?[33]

Julian analyzed the account of the tower of Babel. That time God should have to come down to Earth to sort out things in the world that he had created. Men decided to build a very tall tower in order to get into Heaven. God became furious, and in order to hinder the fulfillment of people's co-operation, He gave them many languages. So they could not manage to realize each other so the co-operation would not be fertile not only that period but in the future, too.[34] Judeans and Christians accepted the story about the different languages and disbelieved Homer's narrative of "the Aloadae, namely that they planned to set three mountains one on another, 'that so the heavens might be scaled.'[35]"[36]

Julian the Apostate expressed his objection to term Theotokos as a mother of God and doubted her virginity. Mary could be Virgin before her pregnancy. The latter was a result of her sexual relations.[37] After all, Theotokos could not give birth to a child who was man and God at the same time.[38] She had born a human who had the same nature as her.

To sum up, Julian supported that "Hypsistos" God of Deuteronomy[39] was not the same either to the Jewish Yahweh or to the God of the Galileans. Julian interpreted this passage from Deuteronomy,[40] used the distinction of Moses between the Great God "Hypsistos," the God who bestowed nations according to the number of the tribal gods who were his own children, and Yahweh, who was clearly one of the subordinate clan gods receiving his inheritance from his Most High father.[41]

Cyril of Alexandria and his polemic teaching against paganism as an answer to inaccuracies of Julian the apostate for Christians in Julian's treatise "Against Galilaeans"

Cyril of Alexandria had to confront the hatred and assaults on Christological dogma that Celsus and Porphyry had raised in the previous centuries. That era, Origen had taken the burden of defending Christianity against the accusations of Celsus. He had written his treatise "Against Celsus." Now it was

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[33] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* Neumann, 167, lines 1-8.
[34] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* Neumann, 181, lines 16-22.
[35] Homer, *Odyssey* 11:316.
[36] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* Neumann, 182, lines 10-15.
[37] Ibid., 214, lines 8-10.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Deut. 32:8-9.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Julian, *Against the Galileans,* 1, Wright, 397.

Cyril of Alexandria the turn to confront the accusations of the pagan emperor Julian against Christians. Julian had composed a treatise against Christianity. It was his writing "Against the Galilaeans," which appeared to have been highly influential among pagans and had provoked the strong interest of them and had strengthened their dislike against the Christians. The bishop of Alexandria, who had managed to refute Nestorius' teaching about the two natures of Christ and the term Theotokos for Holy Virgin Mary, felt compelled to answer Julian's polemic arguments. Although Julian was dead more than a half a century, his polemical text "Against the Galilaeans" continued to remain a threat to the raise of the anti-Christian feelings. There was a continuing debate between Christians and pagans in the fifth century.[42] So Cyril wrote a text "Against Julian." In order to prepare the suitable text, he should have read widely in such works as Porphyry's History of Philosophy, the Hermetic Corpus, and a treatise of Alexander of Aphrodisias on providence.[43]

Before his writing "Against Julian," Cyril used a metaphorical language and images in his texts rather than with the systematic development of philosophic ideas.[44] Of course, it was undoubted that the bishop of Alexandria had studied Aristotelian and Porphyrian logic. Any researcher of Cyril's writings could observe the traces of Aristotle's Organon, Topics and Categories, and Porphyry's Isagoge on Alexandrian bishop's early writings.[45] He adequately employed technical Aristotelian terms, as a result of his studies in the Alexandrian philosophical.[46] Also, this text *Against Julian* showed the extent of Cyril's knowledge of the ancient philosophical heritage; although, at the beginning of composing the polemic text against Julian, Cyril probably used references against paganism through Christian writers like Clement of Alexandria,[47] Eusebius of Caesarea,[48] Didymus the Blind,[49] Pseudo- Justin[50] and the anonymous text with the title "De Trinitate,"[51] Many scholars like Wickham thought Cyril's use of philosophy

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[42] Wolfram Kinzig, "Zur Notwendigkeit einer Neuedition von Kyrill von Alexandrien, Contra Iulianum," *Studia Patristica* 29 (1997): 488–9.

[43] Norman Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 5

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid. Marie - Odile. Boulnois, *Le paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie. Hermuneutique, analyses philosophiques et argumentation theologique* (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Augustiniennes, 1994), 186-8.

[47] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*, Books 1-8, PG 8, 685-1381. Idem, *Protrepticus,* PG 8, 49-245. Idem, *Pedagogue,* PG 8, 247-681.

[48] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Proof of the Gospel,* 1-15, PG 21, 21-1408.

[49] Didymus the Blind, *On Holy Trinity*, PG 39, 269-992.

[50] Justin Martyr and Apologetic, (pseudo – Justin), *Hortatory Address to the Greeks,* J.C.T. Otto, *Corpus apologetarum Christianorum saeculi secundi* (Wiesbaden 1879), 3:18-126 (PG 6, 241-309).

[51] R.M. Grant, "Greek Literature in the Treatise *De Trinitate* and *Cyril Contra Julianum*", *JTS* 15 (1964): 265-79.

very shallow and without technical arguments agreed to science.[52] On the opposite side, there is the opinion of Siddals, who supports that the bishop of Alexandria had a "firm grasp of key logical concepts." Moreover, he "has absorbed the principles of the elementary logic."[53]

First of all, Cyril insisted that although Moses was talking about a God in His divine essence, he knew, somehow, that there were three Hypostases with common divine nature, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are not to be confused and mixed with each other.[54] In this way, the Jewish writings were the real base on Christianity, and there was a strong bond between Jews and Christians, which was the existence and revelation of the Triune God. According to Cyril, Christian espousal of the Hebrew Bible led naturally to the acceptance that both Testaments of the Christian Scripture presented the same God, even if what was known of God may have developed from one testament to the other because of God's plan to reveal Himself to people. Moreover, Cyril underlined that the Triune God is the God of the Hebrew Bible and explained that it was merely difficult for patriarchs, prophets and holy people of Bible in the time of the Old Testament to talk about a God in three Persons because the human mind could not grasp such a dogmatic truth. Anyhow, in a period when polytheism was the dominating motive of the religions, it was incomprehensible for Moses to refer to the same and Triune God and, much less, to support this opinion to the people of Israel, who defended the existence of one God. Of course, here, Cyril did not make any reference to specific facts by which he could support his words about the faith and knowledge of god-bearing Moses in the Triune God.[55]

It was underlined above that the emperor had adopted the opinion that the Christians borrowed some of the basic principles of Greek philosophy and ancient Greek traditions of cosmogony and theology, and by distorting them or altering their content; they created the Christian tradition and Moses' laws. Cyril opposed a victorious argumentation to the blasphemies of Julian:

> If there is a plot, it is a plot of the Greeks: it is they who undertook to use the fantastic to guarantee the truth, and not in all simplicity of spirit, but indeed with impious intentions and the satisfaction of wrongdoing! It is they who gathered against the inexpressible glory of all-powerful God this hateful "fiction,"

[52] Steven A. McKinion, *Words, Imagery, and the Mystery of Christ: A Reconstruction of Cyril of Alexandria's Christology* (Brill: Leiden – Boston- Köln, 2000), 16.

[53] R.M. Siddals, "Logic and Christology in Cyril of Alexandria", *JTS* 38 (1987): 342, 350.

[54] Cyril of Alexandria, *Against Julian*, 4, SC 582, 415, lines 5-10 (PG 76, 725AB): "Moses did not ignore that God is one, meaning one divine nature in holy and homoousion Trinity is worshiped, in the Father ... and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit."

[55] E. Artemi, "The Comparison of the Triadological Teaching", 315.

which set up this "deception," like some trap aimed at simple souls.[56]

Additionally, he showed in a clear way that the works of Moses, were prior to those of the wise Greeks, and, moreover, that the Christian faith as it has been transmitted, appeared incomparably superior to their dogmatic positions. It was thus, and not differently, that the next books could avoid too long digressions and avoid appearing to deviate sometimes very far from the subject.[57] At the same time, Cyril analyzed the Christian theology - theoretically to Julian- but in fact to those who were influenced by Julian or to whom that supported the same things with the emperor. Cyril insisted on saying that Christians didn't have had embraced vain superstitions of the ancient Greeks, but they were living their life according to Moses' teaching. Moreover, Cyril showed that the Christian doctrines were not something new, but they had deep roots in the Old Testament. The Greeks formed their own doctrines deriving them from the tradition of the Mosaic Law until their era.[58] By the passing of time, some Greeks misunderstood the writings of Greek Philosophers and interpreted them in a wrong way. The result was the creation of idolatry and polytheism.[59] Cyril used some examples from the literature and philosophy of the Greeks, especially the works of Hesiod, Sophocles, Hermes Trismegistus, and Plato, and tried to compromise them with Christian teaching. Of course, many of them were false and were created by some previous church fathers; or these Greek texts were used by quite a different way than the Church's preaching and theology.

Through this contradictory work, Cyril sought to fortify with the spiritual way the Christians of Alexandria, so they would not to indiscriminately adopt the various philosophical concepts. Otherwise, the danger would be for them to become ill because of the spiritual illness of conservatism. The result would be that they could be called Christians, and at the same time, their teaching of faith would be adulterated with idolatrous elements.[60] On this point of view, it could be explained Cyril's attempt to explain the "triadology" of Plato[61] as the triadology of Christianity.[62]

Cyril, the archbishop of Alexandria, praised the writings of the Greek authors in the structure and flow of speech but stressed that their teach-

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[56] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 2, SC 322: 5, lines 1-10 (PG 76, 561C).

[57] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 1, SC 322: 3, lines 13-17 (PG76, 512D).

[58] Cyril, *Against Julian,* 1, SC 322: 4, lines 10-22 (PG 76, 513AB).

[59] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 1, SC 322, 40, lines 4-10 (PG 76, 545D); Cyril, *Against Julian*, 2, SC 322, 20, lines 9-11 (PG 76, 577D): "Their extreme ignorance made them ignore the one God, God by nature, and to worship his creations". Cyril, *Against Julian*, 9, PG 76, 908B.

[60] Cyril of Alexandria, *Festal Letter* 12, 1, SC 434, tome 3: 32, lines 9-13 (PG 77, 669C).

[61] Plato, *Timaeus*, 36e-37d; Id, *Laws*, 896de.

[62] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 1, SC 322: 47, lines 23-25 (PG76, 553BC); Cyril, *Against Julian*, 9, PG 76, 961B.

ing differed from that of Scripture. The full Truth was revealed later. Additionally, Cyril expressed his admiration of the Attic language,[63] but he had realized that Divine Truth was not presented through beautiful words but by the illumination of the Spirit. Only then could he be correct in his theology and not influenced by heretical teachings. He used the language of secular education as a coaching culture in the true Lord's admonition.[64] Cyril of Alexandria perfectly understood the simplicity and poverty of expressive resources that characterized biblical language, but he did not esteem the Holy Bible for the beautiful way of speech, but because in its bosom, there was hidden the treasure of Divine Truth.[65] On the other hand, as an Alexandrian theologian, he praised Christian teaching against Greek Philosophy, and at the same time, he showed himself influenced by Platonic and Neo-Platonic philosophy.[66]

One of the most important allegations of the emperor Julian was that nowhere in the Bible did it say that Jesus Christ was the incarnate God. This was a good argument of Julian that the Christians were certain who twisted the scriptures, and they did not accede the apostles' teachings. Also, Christians were wrong when they honored the tomb of the dead, being inconsistent with the teachings of Jesus, who criticized that the scribes and the Pharisees were whitewashed tombs on the outside but on the inside were full of relics of bones. Cyril refuted these words of Julian and explained that there was no connection between the words of the Lord and what Julian understood[67]: "Nowhere the apostate Julian says, that we must avoid graves which Christ says are unclean; but he knew not the force of our Saviour's words, for He did not command us to depart from the graves, but likened to them the hypocritical people of the Pharisees."

The knowledge of one real God from ancient Greeks was something that Cyril wanted to prove to Julian. For this reason, he employed Xenophon's passage from his *Memoirs*. In this text, Xenophon insisted on the reference that God of Hellenes was omnipotent, great, manifest in His all actions, invisible in His nature and His form. At the same time, Cyril immediately quoted the teaching of the Bible immediately after the passage of Xenophon so that the comparison between genuine theology and falsehood would be visible. He emphasized, then, that in the inspired Scripture, God is one and true, the supreme of human mind and speech, a zealot, indestructible, unborn, the creator of everything. He emphasized that "the Son, naturally born of him, the creator of this Logos, was also aware of them (Greek wise

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[63] Ibid., 7, PG 76, 857C.

[64] Ibid., PG 76, 857D, 860A.

[65] Cyril, *Commentary to Corinthians* 4, 19, PG 74, 868B.

[66] Eirini Artemi, "Embracing Greek Philosophical thinking in the Fathers of the 2nd - 5th centuries," *Vox Patrum* 36(2016) t. 65: 31-47, 42.

[67] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 10, PG 76, 1016CD.

men, poets, philosophers, etc.)"[68] Of course, the text of Xenophon[69] was quite paraphrased and changed by Cyril in order to prove whatever Cyril wanted to show.[70]

To sum up, Cyril's attempt was to show to those who were devotees of Greek philosophy, and in particular of the ancient Greek religion, that the ancient Greeks also had in themselves traces of the knowledge of true God, which some deliberately took care to erase. Here, it could be said that Cyril adopted the teaching of Justin Martyr about the spermatic Logos who implanted in all men.[71] Thus the ancient Greeks were grasped in the trap of idolatry. In some Greeks, the spark of truth remained within them. For this reason, they referred to the existence of one God, the creator of all creation and man. Through these general interpretations of the positions of the ancient philosophers and writers on one God, Cyril sought to persuade the Gentiles that the ancient Greeks completely agreed with what the Old Testament said about God; and this became true with the Incarnation of Logos in the New Testament. The patriarch of Alexandria's goal was to prove that the Julian Apostate was not able to know the true content of Christian teaching, and at the same time, he was confused about it.

Conclusions

In this dialogue between Cyril and Julian, we examine two important texts, "Against Julian" of Cyril and "Against Galilaeans" of Julian. In his polemic treatise against Christians, Julian wrote how the ancient Hellenic religion and philosophy were more important than the teaching of the Galilaean 'prophet'. After all, the existence of various religions was an important factor for the division of the Byzantine Empire's unity. In this text, the emperor adopted a polemic attitude against the pseudo-cynical, the Antiochians; He spoke about an ideological morality, the faith of all people in the Sun, the only King God, the one who gave life to everyone and everything, and

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[68] Ibid., 1, SC 322: 45, lines 1-9 (PG76, 552AB).

[69] Xenophon, *Memorabilia,* 4.3.13-14: "Yes, and you will realize the truth of what I say if, instead of waiting for the gods to appear to you in bodily presence, you are content to praise and worship them because you see their works. Mark that the gods themselves give the reason for doing so; for when they bestow on us their good gifts, not one of them ever appears before us gift in hand; and especially he who co-ordinates and holds together the universe, ... is manifest in his supreme works, and yet is unseen by us in the ordering of them. Mark that even the sun, who seems to reveal himself to all, permits not man to behold him closely ... Moreover, the soul of man, which more than all else that is human partakes of the divine, reigns manifestly within us, and yet is itself unseen. For these reasons it behoves us not to despise the things that are unseen, but, realising their power in their manifestations, to honour the godhead."

[70] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 1, SC 322: 43, lines 3-11 (PG76, 549A); Cyril, *Against Julian*, SC 322: 45, lines 1-9 (PG76, 552AB).

[71] Justin the Martyr, *Apology,* 2, 8-13, PG 6, 457A-468A.

in Cybele, the mother of the gods. For the only thing that he did not make sufficient reference was the death; in this subject, Julian would find as the winner the Christian teaching which mentioned the resurrection of the incarnate man and the plan of the resurrection of all people righteous and unjust. At this point, Christianity had a very important and undeniable advantage, which announced it as the winner in relation to the Paganism and the ancient Hellenic religion.

In Cyril's work, he recruited all his knowledge of his secular education in order to achieve the complete refutation of the emperor Julian's arguments about paganism and Hellenistic religion; Julian tried to prove that the religion of Christians has no relation to Jewish God and at the same time he created a detailed assault upon Christianity. This composition was but a rehash of the earlier skeptical polemics as Porphyry, Celsus, etc., infused with Julian's better knowledge of the Scriptures, and his more fanatical disposition. As a summary, it should be underlined that Cyril explained with many arguments the difference between the Hellenic tradition and the Church. The charm and philosophy of ancient Greek were thought of as sirens and enchanted the people who loved the education. On the other hand, the Christian Church was and is the only one who could offer salvation to man, giving him the opportunity to be united with God again and to become equal to God, with the grace of Triune God.

As a final conclusion, it should be clarified that the Alexandrian theologian used the language of secular education as a coaching of true education in Christ.[72] In addition, he had understood the simplicity and subtlety of the expressions that characterize the biblical language. For Cyril, the value of biblical language was not its eventuality; but this language concluded the treasure of the hidden and later revealed divine truth. On the other hand, Cyril sought to glorify and acclaim Christian teaching against Greek philosophy, giving to the first a philosophical note.

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[72] Cyril, *Against Julian*, 7, PG 76, 857D, 860A; Ibid., 1, SC 322: 17, lines 13-20 (PG 76, 524B).

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