NESTORIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE CONDEMNATION, SUPPRESSION, VENERATION

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF HIS NAME IN EAST-SYRIAC CHRISTIANITY

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THEODORET OF CYRRHUS¹

The name of Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople who became the object of an "ecumenical scandal" in 431, was soon to become a symbol determining positions and attitudes in church-political and doctrinal contexts. It has remained such a symbol throughout history up to the present day. The example of Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, is illustrative of the major attitudes to Nestorius emerging at an early stage in the development of the relations between various ecclesiastical communities. Theodoret was initially an ardent supporter of Nestorius, yet later on gave in to pressure and anathematized Nestorius after the latter's deposition. Theodoret's extant letters allow us to trace the range of attitudes to Nestorius, which he both encountered in others and to a certain degree shared himself.

One such attitude, which ultimately allowed Theodoret to keep his own ecclesiastical rank, was one which condemns Nestorius.⁴ A substantially

⁴ Ibid.

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¹ I use the commonly known transcription of the Greek toponym, though Prof. V. V. Bolotov remarks that 'for the fifth century, Κύρρος is only a dead archaic superfineness', and the town was locally called Κῦρος in the days of Theodoret. See V. V. Bolotov, *Theodoretiana* (Saint-Petersburg: Typ. A. Katansky, 1892), p. 73.

² A. Grillmeier, 'Das *Scandalum œcumenicum* des Nestorius in kirchlich-dogmatischer und theologiegeschichtlicher Sicht', *Scholastik*, 36 (1961), pp. 321-356.

³ Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum (ACO), ed. E. Schwartz and J. Straub (Berlin–Leipzig: Trübner – Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1914-1971), vol. II, 1, 3, p. [368] 9.

In another letter, addressed to Alexander, the metropolitan of Hierapolis, Theodoret observes: 'With respect to [our] friend [Nestorius], let it be known to your holiness, that whenever we only mention him (εἴ ποτε αὐτοῦ μνήμην), whether before the most-pious king or before the glorious consistory, we are immediately accused of apostasy – so strong is the enmity toward him among all those present here!'

Theodoret's position shifted from wholehearted support for Nestorius and sharp criticism of Cyril on the one hand to complete surrender to Cyril's camp's demands, acceptance of Cyril's teachings, and condemnation of Nestorius on the other.⁸ Theodoret's personality apart, his shifting attitudes to Nestorius reflect the various positions which would later on continue to be held and would determine the stances and actions of entire ecclesiastical communities.

⁵ M. Parmentier, 'A Letter from Theodoret of Cyrus to the Exiled Nestorius (*CPG* 6270) in a Syriac Version', *Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie*, 51 (1990), pp. 242-243. In his epistle to Andrew, Bishop of Samosata, Theodoret employs a similar language, adding that it would be impious to anathematize Nestorius, 'a man... whose doctrine we acknowledge as true' – see M. Geerard and J. Noret, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (*CPG*) (Leuven: Brepols-Turnhout, 1979-1998), vol. III, No. 6256.

⁶ Parmentier, 'A Letter', p. 243.

⁷ ACO I, I, 7, p. 80:3(5) (cf. CPG 6242).

⁸ I. Pásztori-Kupán, *Theodoret of Cyrus*, The Early Church Fathers (Oxford – New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 15-17.

ATTITUDES AND TRADITIONS

The first such attitude – one that anathematizes Nestorius – is the position of Cyril's supporters, the "Cyrillians", as they would later be called in the Syriac East. 9 The stronger their commitment to Cyril, the more peremptorily did they condemn Nestorius. This is evidenced by the acts of the two Councils of Ephesus (convened by Cyril in 431 and by Dioscorus in 449) and the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedon, especially, its eighth session, in which Theodoret's "file" was discussed. Cvril accused Nestorius of destroying the faith in the Incarnation. He demonized Nestorius in such a way that one no longer felt obliged to take the trouble to understand the views of Cyril's opponents. One felt, on the contrary, that casting doubt on Cyril's position was tantamount to undermining the Incarnation itself. Rare calls for restraint within Cyril's camp, such as Isidore of Pelusium's Epistles 310 and 311, were left unheeded. 10 Cyril's followers were driven by a fervent piety, and the accusations against Nestorius were then concocted so that they serve to enhance the feeling of repulsion toward the deposed bishop. 11 Opposition to the Council of Chalcedon gave additional impetus to this kind of inventive mythmaking:12 stories about Nestorius' alleged "Jewishness"13 and his

⁹ W. Wright, Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1838 (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1871), Pt. 2, p. 968:1; J. P. Margoliouth, Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 298; J. Lebon, 'Fragments syriaques de Nestorius dans le Contra Grammaticum de Sévère d'Antioche,'"Le Muséon, 36 (1923), p. 57.

¹⁰ Patrologia Graeca, t. 78, col. 361-364.

¹¹ E. Goeller, 'Eine jakobitische "vita" des Nestorius', Oriens Christianus, 1:2 (1901), pp. 276-287; P. Martin, באבר ביני, אבמטמאר אינום און אינום א

¹² A. K. Shin, 'The Images of Nestorius and the Factionalism after Chalcedon', *Studia Patristica*, 39 (2006), pp. 125-130.

¹³ S. Gero, 'The Nestorius Legend in the Toledoth Yeshu', *Oriens Christianus*, 59 (1975), pp. 108-120; D.J. Lasker and S. Stroumsa, *The Polemic of Nestor the Priest: Qiṣṣat Mujādalat al-Usquf and Sefer Nestor Ha-Komer*, vols. 1-2 (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 1996).

abominable views grew over time to fantastic proportions.¹⁴ This anti-Nestorian slant is most clearly represented by the Coptic tradition as well as the other "miaphysite" communities (labelled "monophysite" by their opponents), in proportion to the degree of their orientation toward Alexandria as their ecclesiastical centre. It is also represented by the neo-Chalcedonian tradition, i.e. by the supporters of Chalcedon who reinterpreted its doctrinal definitions in accordance with Cyril's views.

The second attitude - one which refuses to condemn Nestorius - was shared in 431 by the "oriental" (Antiochene) bishops and has a complex afterlife. The Emperor's demand to reconcile with Cyril, in the wake of the latter's scandalous attempt to convene a council at Ephesus, 15 caused a split in Byzantine Syria into two parties, one of which was willing, and the other, unwilling to achieve a compromise (the former party was led by John of Antioch; the latter included Euthyrius of Tyana, Alexander of Hierapolis, Meletius of Mopsuestia, and others). The pressure of the authorities continued, and the uncompromising bishops were exiled. Via the schools of Edessa and Nisibis, the focus of the opposition to Byzantine policies toward Nestorius' supporters shifted to Persia. There, outside the Byzantine Emperor's reach, reverential attitude to Nestorius (and to the Antiochene tradition more generally) and rejection of Cyril's actions, characteristic, as shown by Theodoret's example, of the Antiochene bishops, became even more firmly established. The Bishop of Nisibis Bar Sawmā (d. 495?), who contributed to the transfer of the school of Edessa to Nisibis in Persian territory, played a significant role in this development, 16 as did the exegete and liturgical poet Narsai (d. 502),¹⁷ who praised Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorius of Constantinople as teachers of the Church. ¹⁸ The Antiochene

¹⁴ G. Colin, 'La notice sur Nestorius du Mashafa Mestir de Georges de Saglà', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 50 (1984), pp. 107-125.

¹⁵ V. V. Bolotov, *Lekcii po istorii drevnej Cerkvi* (Saint-Petersburg: M. Merkushev, 1907-1917; reprinted: Moscow, 1994), vol.. IV, p. 221.

¹⁶ S. Gero, *Barsauma of Nisibis and Persian Christianity in the Fifth Century*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 426, Subs. 63) (Louvain: Peeters, 1981).

¹⁷ J.-B. Chabot, 'Narsai le docteur et les origines de l'Ecole de Nisibe, d'après la chronique de Barḥadbešabba', *Journal Asiatique*, 6 (1905), pp. 157-177; S.W. Sunquist, *Narsai and the Persians: A Study in Cultural Contact and Conflict* (Ph.D. Thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1990).

¹⁸ F. Martin, 'Homélie de Narsès sur les trois docteurs nestoriens," *Journal asiatique* 14:2 (1899): 446-492; 15:1 (1900): 469-525.

tradition, which refused to condemn Nestorius, found its continuation in Syro-Persian Christianity, represented by the Church of the East, with the Catholicos of Seleucia-Ctesiphon as its head. In "Cyrillian" circles, the Church of the East was consequently labelled "Nestorian".

The third position – one which *suppresses* the name of Nestorius (along with those of his predecessors in the Antiochene tradition) - is typical of those who were motivated by "ecumenical" expediency and strove to achieve social and political reconciliation of the parties by rising "above" doctrinal and ethical issues. It is no accident that Theodoret attributes the demand to suppress the name of Nestorius to the Byzantine Emperor, who was evidently concerned about the state of affairs in the "Oecumene": Theodoret states explicitly that this demand was coming from the king himself.¹⁹ Characteristically, when a century later, another Byzantine Emperor Justinian, known for his desire to establish Byzantine influence in both East and West, initiated negotiations with representatives of Syro-Persian Christianity, his main requirement presented to them was the excision of the names of "the Greek Doctors" - Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius - from the liturgical books of the Church of the East. 'What good is it', he wrote to the head of the School of Nisibis, Abrāhām d-Bēt Rabban, 'to commemorate these people? Why do you persist in this? We do not see in them anything but misery and deficiency. By [commemorating them], you separate yourself from the whole'. 20 Yet Abrāhām pointed out in his reply that these teachers' names are deeply symbolic, and that rejecting them 'is in reality a rejection of their teachings. If, however', he continued, 'we were to renounce their teachings, we would put ourselves, just like you, outside of any truth'. 21 A similar situation occurred also during the reign of Heraclius: when the Catholicos of the Church of the East Īšō'ya(h)b II, head of the Persian court's embassy to Byzantium, decided, as Heraclius' guest, to omit the names of "the Greek Doctors" during liturgy, this caused outrage in ecclesiastical circles in Persia.²²

¹⁹ ACO I, I, 7, p. 80:3(5) (cf. CPG 6242).

²⁰ F. Nau, La seconde partie de l'Histoire de Barḥadbešabba 'Arbaïa et controverse de Théodore de Mopsueste avec les macédoniens (Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Église nestorienne), Patrologia Orientalis, 9:5, No. 45 (Paris, 1913; repr.: Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), pp. 629-630.

²¹ Ibid.

²² For an analysis of this situation see my monograph (in Russian) *Nestorij i Cerkov' Vostoka* (Moscow: Put', 2005), pp. 47-50.

It must be pointed out that the names of Nestorius and the other "Greek Doctors" came to be suppressed every time some such "ecumenical" expediency was felt. Syriac manuscripts provide an impartial witness to such excisions in cases where their owners came into close contact with the "West". Thus, in a collection of hymns and supplications (משביעה סבוסוסה) of the year 1676, fol. 24v, the names of Diodore, Theodore, Nestorius, and Narsai were concealed with a leaflet, on which the names of Gregory, Basil, John, and James were written.²³ The Chaldean collection of services for holidays and memorial days (べらなって べぶんし) similarly features the names of Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom in lieu of those of Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Nestorius.²⁴ In a liturgical collection from the year 1538, coming from the library of the Chaldean patriarch Joseph I (patriarch 1681-1696) and containing the anaphora of Nestorius, the name of Nestorius has been crossed out.²⁵ The same has been done in the liturgical collection from Algoš from the year 168426 and in another collection from 1785.²⁷ Such examples can be multiplied at will. It is noteworthy that the arguments of latter-day Western missionaries coincide completely with those of the Emperor Justinian: it is in order to reunite the faithful of the Church of the East with "the whole of Christendom" that one ought, among other things, "to erase the name of Nestorius".28

A. van Lantschoot, Inventaire des manuscrits syriaques des fonds Vatican (490-631) Barberini oriental et Neofiti (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1965), p. 112.
 A. Scher, 'Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques du Musée Borgia, aujourd'hui à la Bibliothèque Vaticane', Journal Asiatique, 13 (1909), p. 269 (MS 87).
 Vat. syr. 83, fol. 59v.

²⁶ H. Zotenberg, Manuscrits orientaux: Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et sabéens (mandaïtes) de la Bibliothèque nationale (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1874), p. 215: MS. 283, 4° (fol. 57).

²⁷ E. Sachau, Verzeichniss der Syrichen Handschriften, Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin, 23:1-2 (Berlin: A. Asher & Co., 1899), I, p. 151: MS. 40 (Sachau 64), fol. 31a.

²⁸ 'Why, it may be asked, is this ancient Church, which has kept the light of Christianity alive amidst Mohammedan darkness, in outward separation from the whole of Christendom? The reason is its refusal to accept the decrees of the Council of Ephesus: the Assyrian Christians refuse to call the Blessed Virgin Theotokos (her who gave birth to God), and they commemorate Nestorius among the saints.... Mr. Badger believes that they might be induced, by proper explanations, to accept the statements made at Ephesus, and to erase the name of Nestorius' – A. J. D. D'Orsey, *Portuguese Discoveries, Dependencies and Missions in Asia and Africa* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1893), p. 389.

Interestingly, this kind of "de-sainting" of Nestorius was performed, possibly unwittingly, even by some representatives of the scholarly community. Thus, F. Nau found it acceptable to translate and as "le défunt Nestorius" (the "late" Nestorius instead of "among the saints")²⁹ and as simply "L'histoire de Mar Nestorius" instead of "history of Saint Mār Nestorius." A. Scher rendered with as "Mar Diodore, Mar Théodore, Mar Nestorius," leaving the words "who aspired to the Truth" untranslated.³¹

Such intentional or subconscious attempts to excise Nestorius from East-Syriac Christian heritage cannot fail to attract a researcher's attention, especially in an era when this heritage comes under increased scrutiny and when interfaith dialogue may once again lead to a wide consensus based on "ecumenical" expediency.³² In order to provide a critical analysis of the nature of veneration accorded to Nestorius in the East-Syriac tradition, it is necessary to examine, first, to what degree reverential attitude to Nestorius as a saint and teacher of faith is present in the well-known authors and authoritative texts of the Church of the East, and second, whether Nestorius' written legacy was known in that tradition.

SAINTHOOD, DOCTRINE, INFLUENCE

As noted above, already Narsai, who had taught in the school of Edessa and later became head of the school of Nisibis, testifies to the veneration accorded to Nestorius and his predecessors in the Antiochene exegetical and theological tradition. 'The fervent Nestorius served the people of Byzantium', wrote Narsai in his *Discourse*, 'he built wisely and fortified the word of the

²⁹ Patrologia Orientalis, 9:5 (1913), p. 510.

³⁰ Patrologia Orientalis, 13:2 (1917), p. 275.

³¹ Patrologia Orientalis, 7:1 (1909), p. 84.

³² A. V. Muraviev is correct in pointing out that some modern scholars exhibit the tendency to 'rehabilitate the theological "mainstream" of the Church of the East by detaching it from Nestorius himself; see A. V. Muraviev, "Solnce Huzistana" ili Neponjatnyj svjatoj', in *Mar Ishak s gory Matut (Prepodobnyj Isaak Sirin). Vosplamenenije uma v duhovnoj pustyne* (Smaragdos Philocalias) (Athos–Moscow–Saint-Petersburg: Novaja Fivaida, SPbGU, 2008), p. 40. Such "rehabilitation" is of course meant in relation to those confessions which condemn Nestorius; a critical scholar of course needs no rehabilitations.

truth, lest it be shaken by the contrary winds of the heretics. But heretics, in their vanity, hated the truth-loving one and contrived treacherous plots against his teachings'.³³ Narsai's contribution to the tradition of the Church of the East is enormous: his numerous Biblical interpretations and theological and liturgical works have always been and remain in constant use.

The next worth mentioning in the tradition is Mar Āba who is connected to the appearance of the East-Syriac anaphora, which bears the name of Nestorius (,ā, ma, resulta eficia resulta ra, ā,) ممعلیلیموملیم تحریتهای همدیم دلیم درخی مزدیمی دیلو عززیم אבסבסגאוֹר אביזסאגז, "The Anaphora of Mar Nestorius, patriarch of Byzantium, which is the city of Constantinople, a bloodless martyr, persecuted for the truth of the Orthodox Confession"). The caption of the anaphora reports that 'When the Catholicos Mār Ābā the Great, of blessed memory, traveled to the country of the Romans [Byzantium], 34 he translated (מאבת) the Anaphora of Mār Nestorius and all his works from Greek into Syriac'.35 The word "translated" (>><), apparently conceals a rather complicated history of the appearance of the Syriac text of this anaphora.³⁶ The indication that Mār Ābā contributed to the appearance of a Syriac translation of "all of [Mār Nestorius'] works" deserves special attention, because it is with Ābā that the history of the translation of Nestorius' apology, The Book of Heraclides is connected³⁷ (rendered into Syriac in 539/540).³⁸ The history of the

³³ Martin, 'Homélie de Narsès' (1899), p. 462, lines 16-20; (1900), p. 487.

³⁴ The Chronicle of Se'ert says that during Abā's and his co-traveler Thomas' sojourn in "the country of the Romans" (Byzantium), Emperor Justinian attempted to force them to denounce 'the excellent teachers Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius' (سالاباً الأفاضل ديودوروس وتيادوروس). See A. Scher, Histoire nestorienne (Chronique de Séert): Seconde partie (I), Patrologia Orientalis, 7:2, No. 32 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1909; repr.: 1950), p. 156/[64].

א הפגעאר האבא האבאר האבער (Order of the Sacraments of the Church of the East (Baghdad: Church of the East Publishers, 2004).

³⁶ A. Gelston, 'The Origin of the Anaphora of Nestorius: Greek or Syriac?', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 78:3 (1996), pp. 73-86.

³⁷ L. Abramowski, *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 242; Subs. 22 (Louvain: Secr. du CSCO, 1963), pp. 7-13.

³⁸ F. Nau and M. Brière, Nestorius: Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas. Trois homélies de Nestorius sur les tentations de Notre-Seigneur et de trois appendices: Lettre à Cosme, Présents envoyés d'Alexandrie, Lettre de Nestorius aux habitants de Constantinople (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1910), pp. XIX, 1-2 (note 8).

translation of *The Book of Heraclides* shows that the legacy of Nestorius spread from the borderline schools of Edessa and Nisibis to the monastic centers of the Church of the East. We have an additional evidence to this in the biography of Rabban Bar ' $\bar{E}(d)t\bar{a}$ (mid-sixth century), a novice of the same Abraham d-Bēt Rabban, who has been mentioned above as negotiator with the Emperor Justinian:³⁹

المحر الما المراقع المسلم الموقاء المراقة علا المراقع المراقع

'Mâr Abraham laid upon me the repetition of the entire Scriptures, and in certain years, of the Old and New Testaments I repeated each and every word, in sections like the Psalms. And the sweetness of the repetition of the Books of the Holy Spirit, by reason of the sweetness of the joy thereof, I am unable to utter. As concerning the books of the Fathers, which are read from end to end, by the old men, Abbâ Isaiah, and Mark, and the blessed man Mâr Evagrius, all these I worked at in my mind, and I toiled at the repetition of them by heart, until at length I did not even confuse the [particles] gēr and dēn throughout the

³⁹ E.A.W. Budge, *The Histories of Rabban Hôrmîzd the Persian and Rabban Bar-Idtâ* (London: Luzac and Co., 1902), Vol. 1, p. 120, lines 169-185. English translation (slightly corrected) in Vol. 2, Pt. 1, pp. 175-176.

text. I could repeat the book of the holy man Mâr Gregory of Nazianzus, and the book of Histories, and the discourses (*or*, sayings) of the Fathers one to another. I could also repeat the composition of the blessed man Basil, and I could repeat all the epistles that [were written] to the holy monks, and the Book of Mâr Nestorius wich is called Heraklîdôs, which, in my days, had but recently gone forth from Greek into Syriac. I laboured at this book for years, so as to be able to recite at any moment any section of this treatise'.

The second half of the sixth century was a time when the Church of the East faced mounting pressure from the representatives of those confessions which condemned Nestorius. A council convened by the Emperor Justinian proclaimed the condemnation of the "Three Chapters" and adopted a series of rulings directed against the "Nestorians." At the same time, opponents of the Council of Chalcedon were being pushed from Byzantine Syria eastwards, where ideological clashes between them and the supporters of Nestorius were bound to take place. The following decision of Rabban Dādīšō' (a monk on Mount Izla, then abbot 588-604) testifies to the fervor with which East-Syriac monks defended their loyalty to "the Greek Doctors":⁴⁰

בל אינא אנא הכלנגל הפעבל כובנא הלמשכנהלא הבהלא מלהלומא לא שלבו הלאומבמא לא מחבל הליאול מלהלומצא לא מחבל הליאול העדיא הבלא הכבניא הוא להלוכניא הבביא האוכנים הכיו, האוכנים הכיו, האוכנים הכיו, האוכנים הכיו, האוכנים הכיו, האוכנים המלא אהב ביולא אה בעלא אה בעלא אהב ביולא אהב ביולא אומבלא אה באלא היא ביולא היא לבומצים ביולא היא לבומצים *

'1. Every brother of whom it is known that he is corrupted in his mind and does not agree with the faith of the catholic church, and does not accept the orthodox fathers, particularly those through whose teaching the whole church of the Orient gains instruction, baptism and growth, Mar Diodor, and Mar Theodoros

⁴⁰ A. Vööbus, *Syriac and Arabic Documents Regarding Legislation Relative to Syrian Asceticism*, Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 11 (Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1960), pp. 167-168.

and Mar Nestorios, and rejects or rebukes the symbol of their teaching, and rejects or despises also the monastic fathers who in their teaching were tested by our first fathers and were received — this one in his wickedness shall be foreign to our community.'

At roughly the same time, the end of the sixth century, the Church historian Barhadbšabbā composed a treatise in which he paints a picture of the struggle of the Church against heresies. Beginning with Chapter XVII, he singles out Diodore of Tarsus, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius of Constantinople, Narsai, and Abraham as a solid lineage of theologians of the Orthodox faith. 41 The "history of the God-loving Mar Nestorius" (מבנה אלה היעת אלה היעה occupies the most prominent place in this chronicle: Chapters XX-XXX. 42 Let us focus on one characteristic detail. In his Book of Heraclides Nestorius reports how, even before his ordination as bishop of Constantinople, he managed to reconcile the parties arguing there over whether the Virgin Mary should be properly called "Mother of Man" or "Mother of God." While accepting the appellation Theotokos as a liturgical title, 43 Nestorius proposed as theologically more accurate the naming Christotokos ("Her Who Gave Birth to Christ"), thus achieving reconciliation. 44 Commenting on this story, Barhadbšabbā writes: 'But when Satan saw that in this way Saint Nestorius bought peace for the Church, he advanced the commanders of his army...' (عرب المعادية) LIK : Khil winto is how kee ilos kifo . (لكمنعم ةحر متعلمه،

⁴¹ F. Nau, La première partie de l'Histoire de Barḥadbešabba 'Arbaïa (Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Église nestorienne), Patrologia Orientalis, 23:2 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1932), pp. [138]/314-[157]/333; F. Nau, La seconde partie de l'Histoire de Barḥadbešabba 'Arbaïa et controverse de Théodore de Mopsueste avec les macédoniens. (Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Église nestorienne), Patrologia Orientalis, 9:5 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1913), pp. [15]/503-[143]/631.

⁴² Patrologia Orientalis, 9:5, pp. [29]/517-[99]/587.

⁴³ Nau and Brière, Nestorius: Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas, p. 345:7-8.

At the beginning of the seventh century, veneration of Nestorius, as well as of Diodore and Theodore, is reflected in the documents included in the collection of conciliar acts of the Church of the East, called by its publisher, J.-B. Chabot, the *Synodicon orientale*. This was due mainly to the influence of the monastic centres, which was especially strong during the hiatus of 612-628, when the Shah Chosroes II prevented the election of a Catholicos under the influence of West-Syriac opponents of the Church of the East. At that time, Bābai the Great, the abbot of the Great Monastery on Mount Izla, was in charge of the ecclesiastical affairs. In the documents of this period, we see distinct polemical motifs, directed both against Byzantine and against local West-Syriac "theopaschites." It is the context of this controversy that explains the emphasis on the fact that the natures comprising the Christological union are present in their hypostases. The decision of the council of bishops of 612 states, for instance, the following: 46

هم مهل حلم ددهت هم لحان مج همه المعسلة المحلكة المحلفة المعلقة المحلفة المحل

'From all the passages cited above, and other statements of multiple teachers preceding Nestorius, it is patently clear that Christ has two natures and two hypostases, because when Christ is called God, he is not [all] three hypostases of the Trinity, but one hypostasis of God the Word. In the same way, when Christ is called man, he is not all the hypostases of humankind, but one hypostasis from among the human race, the one which has been taken into union with God the Word.'

⁴⁶ Chabot, Synodicon Orientale, pp. 578, 597.

Yet another text included by J.-B. Chabot in the *Synodicon* as an appendix – "History of the martyr Giwargis," authored by Bāḇai the Great – dates from the same time.⁴⁷ With reference to Nestorius it is repeated there that the confession of two natures in Christ necessarily implies the confession of two hypostases (*qnōmē*) in the single person of Christ.⁴⁸ The text adds that the Church of the East will not accept someone who 'despises or condemns the three ecumenical teachers, blessed and venerable pillars of the Church, and their apostolic teaching, by which all the East was enlightened, i.e. the blessed Diodore, the blessed Theodore, and the blessed Nestorius, who are glorious among the confessors, and the other teachers who followed in their footsteps'.⁴⁹

It is to the monks of the "Great Monastery" that Bāḇai's comprehensive tract on Christology "The Discourse on Divinity and Humanity, and on the Person of the Union" is addressed.⁵⁰ There is no doubt that throughout this work, Nestorius' *Book of Heraclides* was perused.⁵¹ In fact, it is quite possible that the appearance of Bāḇai's treatise, which is more coherent and richer in imagery, reduced the popularity of the *Book of Heraclides*, though we still do see its active use somewhat later, in the eighth century.⁵²

⁴⁷ P. Bedjan, אבינה און היילאראלים בער אינים און אינים איני

⁴⁸ Bedjan, אציים מין זמין , הביא, p. 499; Chabot, Synodicon Orientale, pp. 627.

⁴⁹ Bedjan, محمد من أمد بنة خاب بنة , pp. 503-504; Chabot, Synodicon Orientale, pp. 628-629.

J. Labourt, 'Un traité inédit de Babaï le Grand', Le Muséon, NS 7 (1906), pp. 27-32;
 A. Vaschalde, Babai Magni Liber de Unione, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 79, Scr. Syr. 34; 80, Scr. Syr. 35 (Louvain: Imprimerie orientaliste L. Durbecq, 1953).
 I. F. Shanenko, 'Hristologicheskaja formula Nestorija v bogoslovii Babaja Velikogo', in XI Konferencija Pravoslavnogo Svjato-Tihonovskogo Bogoslovskogo Instituta: Materialy 2001 (Moscow: PSTBI, 2001), pp. 13-24; G. Chediath, 'The Theological Contribution of Mar Babai the Great', in Syriac Dialogue, 1 (Vienna: Pro Oriente, 1994), pp. 155-167.
 L. Abramowski and A. E. Goodman, A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts: Cambridge University Library MS. Oriental 1319, vols. 1-2 (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), vol. 2, pp. XXXIII, XXXVII.

Another document incorporated into the *Synodicon Orientale* – an epistle of the Catholicos-Patriarch Giwargis of Kaphra to Mina, the Chorbishop of Persia – stresses that Nestorius and other Greek Doctors are perceived by the Church of the East as adherents to the tradition, not as innovators.⁵³

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'Know, brother, that these things which I write to you are not the invention of the blessed Nestorius and Theodore, who are slandered by many of the blasphemers, <...> but are from the teachings about Christ which come from His own life-giving mouth, and [from what] the Holy Apostles have spoken about Him by the Holy Spirit.'

The fourteenth chapter of Yōḥannan bar Penkāyē's chronicle (בוֹז לבֹא הוביא בוֹבי בּלֹא בּלֹבי בּלֹי בּלֹי בּלֹי בּלִי בּלְי בּלְיי בּלִי בּלִי בְּבְּילִי בְּלִיי בְּלִיי בְּבְּילִי בְּלִי בְּבְּילִי בְּבְּילִי בְּבְּילִי בְּבְילִי בְּבְילִי בְּבְּילִי בְּבְּילִי בְּילִי בְּבְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילְים בְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּיבְיים בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּילִי בְּילְיים בְּילִיים בְּילִי בְּילִי בְּילִיים בְּילִיים בְּילי בְּילִיים בְּילי בְּילִיים בְּילִיים בְּילִיים בְּיים בְּילִיים בְּיים בְּיים בְּייבְיים בְּיים בְּיים בְּייבְיים בְּיים בְּייבִיים בְּיים בְּיים בְּייבְיים בְּיים בְּייבְיים בְּיים בְּיבְיים בְּיים בְּיבְיים בְּיבִיים בְּיבְייים בְּיים בְּיבִּיים בְּייבְיים בְּייבְיים בְּי

⁵³ Chabot, Synodicon Orientale, pp. 235, 500-501.

⁵⁴ A. Mingana, *Sources Syriaques*, vol. I, Mšiḥa-Zkha (texte et traduction). Bar-Penkayê (texte) (Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, [1908]), pp. 135*-143*; A. Scher, 'Notice sur la vie et les œuvres de Youḥannan bar Penkayè', *Journal Asiatique*, 2 (1907), p. 173.

⁵⁵ A. Scher, 'Étude supplémentaire sur les écrivains syriens orientaux', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien*, 2 sér., 1 (11) (1906), p. 23.

⁵⁶ Cf. the Codex Theodosianus, XVI, 1, 3, Sources chrétiennes, 497 (Paris: Cerf, 2005), pp. 116-117, where being in communion with Diodore of Tarsus is proclaimed to be a criterion of Orthodoxy.

⁵⁷ Mingana, Sources Syriaques, I, p. 139*.

Theodore bar Koni's eighth-century treatise Liber Scholiorum has a compilatory character.⁵⁸ In this work, he devotes a special chapter to the "Cyrillian heresy" (كيمية). ⁵⁹ He describes "Cyril's battle against Saint Nestorius" (@iala araba araba), saying that as a result of this assault by the bishop of Alexandria, "the whole Greece (عم ملح) became infected" with evil teachings, while the imperial court and Pope Celestine were seduced by Cyril's gifts. Another contemporary author, Šāhdost, Bishop of Tīrhān (d-Tarīhān), 60 calls Nestorius "a saint" and "a victorious confessor, clothed in Christ, who was the patriarch of the capital city..." (: Kural real of the capital city... outalou Krin <...> inhaba huran retita rami). As L. Abramowski points out, "[Šāhdōst] has read Nestorius, making some unknown lines available, even the Liber Heraclidis."61 An example is furnished by a passage from Šāhdōst's writings⁶² where he follows Nestorius' thought based on the Book of Heraclides⁶³ – an important testimony to the use of Nestorius' apology in the eighth century.

Since we have mentioned polemics, including "internal" polemics occurring within the East-Syriac tradition, we must say that Nestorius' influence is often traceable in both polemicizing parties. A nice illustration of this situation is provided by the following observation of P. Bedjan, the editor of numerous Syriac texts, including Nestorius' *Book of Heraclides* and the works of Martyrius-Sāhdōnā, an opponent of Bāḇai the Great and a supporter of Chalcedonian Christology.⁶⁴

'We publish here for the first time a very valuable treatise of the famous Martyrius or Sahdona on the Orthodox faith. In it, the author admirably

⁵⁸ Scher, 'Étude supplémentaire', p. 26.

⁵⁹ A. Scher, *Theodorus bar Kōnī*, *Liber scholiorum*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scr. Syr., Ser. 2, T. 66 (Paris: Typ. Reipub. – Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1912), Pt. 2, pp. 337-340 (Syr.); R. Hespel and R. Draguet, *Théodore bar Koni, Livre des scolies, II: Mimrè VI-XI*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scr. Syr., 188 (Louvain: Peeters, 1982), pp. 251-254 (Fr.).

⁶⁰ Abramowski-Goodman, A Nestorian Collection, II, pp. XXVI-XXXII.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. XXVII.

⁶² Ibid., p. 38.

⁶³ Nau and Brière, Nestorius: Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas, pp. 81-83.

⁶⁴ A. de Halleux, 'La christologie de Martyrios-Sahdona dans l'évolution du nestorianisme', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 23 (1957), pp. 5-32.

interprets the mystery of the Incarnation. Let us make the observation that, having examined these ten pages, and carefully read the book of Nestorius, we are struck by the great similarity in thoughts, interpretations, and even terminology that exists between these two authors.⁶⁵

In this context, we cannot fail to mention the following story by the Russian Orthodox Bishop Sophonia (Sokol'sky), taken from his notes, compiled during his sojourn among the "Nestorians":

'Typikon (Penqītā). <...> After historical excerpts, there follows an exposition of the ancient creeds, or confessions of faith, namely: that of Gregory [the Wonderworker] of Neocaesaria, with the word tlītāyūtā (Trinity), the Antiochene creed, with the addition of the words haāusiyo l-ābā (consubstantial with the Father), then the Athanasian creed, the Nicene creed, the creed of John the archbishop of Antioch before his reconciliation with Cyril, and lastly, the creed of Nestorius himself, written by him with a view to explaining the mystery of the Incarnation of God the Word, for the Egyptian monks, at a time when he was already in Elephantine. It should be noted that not only Assyro-Nestorians, but also the Chaldean Uniates especially respect this confession. It is, according to them, the last expression of the right belief, proclaimed by Nestorius as a deathbed testament, crowning his ten years-long period as a confessor.'66

Continuing this theme, we must mention East-Syriac mysticism and the sharp criticism levelled at some of the mystics by the Catholicos Timothy I (727-823).⁶⁷ It is well known that during this controversy Īšō' bar Nūn was

⁶⁵ P. Bedjan, حماحت / Liber superiorum seu Historia monastica, auctore Thoma, episcopo Margensi (Paris–Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1901), p. XII.

⁶⁶ Sofonija (Sokol'skij), bishop, Sovremennyj byt i liturgija hristian inoslavnyh iakovitov i nestorian, s kratkim ocherkom ih ierarhicheskogo sostava, cerkovnosti, bogosluzhenija i vsego, chto prinadlezhit k otpravleniju ih cerkovnyh sluzhb, osobenno zhe ih liturgii (Saint-Petersburg: Typ. zhurnala "Strannik", 1876), p. 305. Cf. also "Confession of Faith of the Luminous Pillar of Light Mār Nestorius Bishop of Constantinople" / "Confession of the Pure Church Compiled According to Saint Mār Nestorius Bishop of Constantinople" (Arab.): [حماصه منام المعاملة المعاملة

⁶⁷ R. Beulay, La Lumière sans forme: Introduction à l'étude de la mystique chrétienne syro-orientale, Collection "L'Esprit et le Feu" (Chevetogne: Éditions de Chevetogne, [1987]), pp. 229-231; V. V. Bolotov, Iz istorii Cerkvi siro-persidskoj (Saint-Petersburg: Typ. A. P. Lopuhin, 1901), p. 115/1185.

an opponent of Timothy and that after the latter's death he succeeded him as catholicos. It is remarkable, however, that both Timothy and Īšō' bar Nūn show veneration to Nestorius in their writings. Electron Timothy's personality has in recent years attracted the attention of scholars, in connection with the discovery and publication of lost texts of Isaac of Nineveh (Isaac the Syrian). Timothy is sometimes pictured as a representative of the rigid "Babaian orthodoxy", in contrast to Isaac, who is alleged to be a supporter of Chalcedon. This view, however, fails to take into account the following remarks of A. Mingana, published as early as 1934:

'In 1909, the late Paul Bedjan published under the name of Isaac of Nineveh [Mar Isaacus Ninivita de Perfectione Religiosa] a section of the first part of the work which I am editing and translating in the following pages. In comparing the two texts, it is interesting to observe how the Jacobite copyists have modified the sentences in which a Nestorian author is clearly mentioned, or a Nestorian doctrine is expressly defined, or the writings of a Nestorian author are plainly quoted. Thus, on page 79, our author [i.e. Isaac] speaks of Mar Babai the Great, and of the work which he wrote for the novices. Seeing that Mar Babai was a Nestorian, the Jacobite copyist substituted for his name that of the Great Macarius, the Egyptian, but left in his text the statement concerning the "books for the novices," not realising that Macarius never wrote such a book [see p. 604 of Bedjan's edition]. [...] On page 93, our author writes: "and if possible, do not read anything else on a Sunday, except the works written by the blessed Theodore, the Interpreter, and the rest of the orthodox Doctors, on the honour and greatness of the body and blood of Christ." Here the Jacobite copyist simply changed "Theodore" into "Cyril," overlooking the fact that the epithet "Interpreter" which follows refers exclusively to Theodore, and that Cyril never wrote a work on the subject under consideration [Ibid., p. 624].'69

⁶⁸ Timothy I, Letter 35 "to the beloved in the Lord, the faithful Mār Naṣr" – see O. Braun, *Timothei Patriarchae I Epistulae*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scr. Syr. LXVII, Ser. 2 (Paris: J. Gabalda – Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1914), p. 233; cf. also his letter to the monks of the Monastery of Mār Mārōn: *Studi e Testi*, 187 (1956): 42-44 (Syr.), 121-125 (Lat.); Īšō' bar Nūn, Letter to Macarius the "deacon and anchorite" of Ḥīrtā, Q. 62 (Mingana Syr. 586, fol. 431b-441b); cited from W.C. van Unnik, *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist, by Isho'yabh IV* (Haarlem: J. Enschede en zonen, [1937]), p. 271.

⁶⁹ A. Mingana, *Early Christian Mystics*, Woodbrooke Studies, 7 (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1934), pp. 74-75.

It is obvious that given this "tampered" state of Isaac of Nineveh's writings, as a result of their popularity in the West-Syriac environment, any judgments about his views should be made with great caution, and only after a careful textual study.

In addition to Timothy, yet another East-Syriac author of the ninth century deserves mention: the well-known exegete Īšō'dād, Bishop of Merv. In his Biblical commentaries, he does not only mention the "blessed Nestorius", but also, significantly for our purposes, refers to his works.⁷⁰

An interesting reference to Nestorius in connection with the history of Biblical exegesis is furnished by Job of Qaṭar. He provides a lengthy listing of authors, known to him as interpreters of Scripture, mentioning in the first place (area) Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius:⁷¹

אחר ו שמון שממא המלפיא אומהממא הבן ובעותה באלוו באלא מוא חביבותה באלי מהוא הבינה באלה מהא הבינה באלוו באלא מוא הבינה באלה מוא הבינה באלה באלי באלה המיניתה יא מהמא המיניתה יא מהמא המיניתה יא מהמא ההמינית במול ההמינית במול בינא באל בינא המינית בינית אלאהמי אלהמיל אלהמיל אלהמיל אלהמיל אלהמיל אלהמיל בינית בי

'(Porro scribimus nomina doctorum patrum orthodoxum, e quorum sensu confirmatus est hic liber et quorum interpretationibus declaratus est e ceteris libris sacris.) Primus Diodorus et Theodorus et Nestorius, Mar Ephrem, Johannes Chrysostomus, Išodād, Ṣĕlībhā qui est Ṣaḥr Boḥt, Michael explorator, et

⁷⁰ M. D. Gibson, *The Commentaries of Isho'dad of Merv, Bishop of Ḥadatha (c. 850 A.D.), in Syriac and English*, vol. IV, Horae Semiticae, XI (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913), pp. XV, 20.

⁷¹ B. Vandenhoff, Exegesis Psalmorum, imprimis Messianicorum, apud Syros Nestorianos e codice usque adhuc inedito illustrate (Rheine: J. Altmeppen, 1899), p. 23 & 18-19 (Syr.).

Theodorus discipulus interpretatoris, Mar Abhā Cascarensis, Johannan, Abraham et Ambāz et Ambrosius, Hěnānišo', Jšo'barnon, Timotheus, Gregorius, Johannan Betrabbanensis, qui est filius sororis Mar Nersetis, Barhadbešabbā, Mar Babai Persa, Philo philosophus spiritualis, Sabrišo' Pauli [filius], Gabriel Katarensis, Theophilus Persa, Johannan Ninevita, Origenes, Mar Elias metropolita Merwensis, Theodoretus, Daniel filius Tubhanitae, Joannes, Hĕnânâ, Athanasius, Jacob Hazzaja'.

The famous East-Syriac chronicler, Elijah bar Šennāvā (975-1049 or 1056), metropolitan of Nisibis, locates his survey of doctrines and beliefs within the general context of the history of the Church. In the second part of his work The Book of the Proof of Faith, he outlines the history of church councils, 72 giving particular attention to the Council of Ephesus convened by Cyril of Alexandria⁷³ and pointing out that this council was illegitimate: Nestorius ("whose sanctity and great excellence had been acknowledged by the Romans" [Byzantines] - in L. Horst's German translation: "dessen Heiligkeit und grosse Vorzüglichkeit die Römer anerkannt hatten")⁷⁴ rightly demanded to wait for the "Eastern" bishops' arrival. This, however, was dispensed with, and so the council, which was convened by Cyril and which condemned Nestorius, consisted exclusively of those who opposed the latter. It is the recognition accorded to this council in Byzantium that led to the Second Council of Ephesus, convened by Dioscorus and Eutyches, and eventually to the subsequent schism of the Byzantine Church into the "Melkites" and the "Iacobites".75

"THE GREEK DOCTOR"

Around the turn of the fourteenth century, two outstanding East-Syriac authors - Giwargis Wardā (d. 1300) and 'Abdīšō' bar Brīkā of Nisibis (d. 1318) - deserve our attention. In Giwargis Wardā we find the reverential attitude to Nestorius (هندیم "Saint Nestorius"), characteristic

⁷² L. Horst, Des Metropoliten Elias von Nisibis Buch vom Beweis der Wahrheit des Glaubens (Colmar: Eugen Barth, 1886), pp. 24-40.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 27-35.
⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 27.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 37.

of the Church of the East.⁷⁶ Wardā notes that Nestorius lived "in the days of the Christ-loving [Catholicos of the East] Dādīšō'" (בֹּנִישׁ בְּׁבִּיׁבֶּׁ). ⁷⁷ Similarly, 'Aḇdīšō' bar Brīkā, like Elijah bar Šennāyā and other earlier authorities before him, provides an overview of the major confessional positions within the Christian world. ⁷⁸ The position of the Church of the East, is introduced as follows: ⁷⁹

⁷⁶ אומס הלבוס היא הפרובי ('Ōnītā on the Catholicoi of the East], manuscript (no number) from the collection of Jacob Daniel, Bishop of Syria and Lebanon for the Ancient Church of the East, אומס האסולים ה

The source of Dādīšō's catholicosate, the rhyme is organized according to the Greek words krīstōs—āklōs—qewrellōs—nestōrīs. It seems likely that this poetic device was meant to point out that the hymn refers to events that took place in the Greek West. In yet another hymn ('ōnītā) with a similar rhyme, Theodore and Nestorius are called "architects" (κίριπος) of the Church, together with the apostles Peter and Paul (κίριπος) ο το κίριπος (κίριπος) ο το κίριπος κίριπος) ο το κίριπος κίριπος

⁷⁸ Mar O'dishoo, Metr. of Suwa (Nisibin) and Armenia, *The Book of Marganitha (The Pearl) on the Truth of Christianity*, tr. H.H. Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII, Catholicos Patriarch of the East (Ernakulam: Mar Themotheus Memorial Printing & Publishing House Limited, [1965]), pt. III, ch. IV, pp. 32-38.

'The third confession is that professes two natures, two hypostases ($qn\bar{o}m\bar{n}n$), one will, one sonship, one power, and that is called Nestorian. The Easterners in no way altered their truth, but preserved it unchanged, as they had received it from the Apostles. They are called Nestorians unfairly, because Nestorius was not their patriarch, and they did not understand his language. Yet when they heard that he teaches about two natures, two hypostases, one will, one Son of God, one Christ, confessing the Orthodox faith, they gave him their testimony, because they held the same [confession]. It was Nestorius who followed them, not they followed Nestorius, especially with regard to the appellation "the Mother of Christ." And when they were demanded to anathematize him, they did not accept it, saying that anathematizing Nestorius would be tantamount to anathematizing the Divine Scriptures and the Holy Apostles, from whom they took that to which they adhere'.

The book of Mār 'Abdīšō' was extremely popular in the Church of the East and became, in fact, a standard catechism, on which later works of this kind rely.⁸⁰ It is noteworthy that some modern studies treating of the place of Nestorius in the tradition of the Church of the East cite this passage from Mār 'Abdīšō' without the concluding remarks, thus completely misrepresenting his true intention and leaving the mistaken impression that the association between the Church of the East and Nestorius is of a very tenuous nature.⁸¹

⁸⁰ E.g. אבאס המשנא האבים וואס האב

Despite anti-Byzantine tendencies, however, which were quite widespread among Syriac-speaking Christians, Nestorius' affiliation with the Greek-speaking world and with the Church of Byzantium did not at all mean that he was "alien" to the tradition of the Church of the East. This is clear from the fact that from the time of Narsai up to the present day the Church of the East has always venerated "the *Greek* Doctors" (حامة علي المحافية). 82 An additional piece of evidence to the same effect can be furnished by a very popular East-Syriac hymn by Ṣlīḇā of Manṣūrīya⁸³ (sixteenth century). 84 This hymn is composed for the day of commemoration of "the Greek Doctors," yet its main hero is "our venerable father, the head of all the exalted, who made his soul into a temple of the Lord, the Greek Mār Nestorius (حنه عنه المحافة). 85 Ṣlīḇa's hymn is a poetic story about the life of Nestorius, his successorship to Theodore of Mopsuestia, his conflict with Cyril of Alexandria, and his subsequent suffering as a confessor. The hymn concludes with the following solemn praise to Nestorius: 86

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Thought, ed. J. F. Coakley and K. Parry, p. 35; K. Pinggéra, "Nestorius in der "nestorianischen" Kirche: Streiflichter zum Selbstverständnis der Apostolischen Kirche des Ostens", in Prüft Alles, und das Gute behaltet! Zum Wechselspiel von Kirchen, Religionen und säkularer Welt: Festschrift für Hans-Martin Barth zum 65. Geburstag, eds. F. Schönemann and Th. Maaßen (Frankfurt a. M.: Verlag O. Lembeck, 2004), pp. 212-213.

⁸² The "Greek Doctors" are commemorated on the Friday after the fourth Sunday following the feast of the Theophany of Our Lord (באר המגם אונערט בעלים). On this day, a liturgy with the Anaphora of Nestorius is celebrated. See אונערט בעלים אונערט בעלי

⁸³ Qaššā Şlībā bar Qaššā David b. Qaššā Meqbel from Manṣūrīya of Gazarta became famous for his hymns on church feasts and memorial days, preserved in numerous manuscripts. The hymn cited here usually appears as an appendix to the collection of hymns "Wardā," also preserved in many manuscript copies.

84 Scher, 'Étude supplémentaire', p. 30; A. Baumstark, Geschichte der syrischen Literatur, pp. 331-332.

⁸⁵ Patrologia Orientalis, 13:2, No. 63, p. [180]/290.

86 Ibid., p. [205]/315.

'Blessed are you, the pillar of light, like pure and tested gold, | you have experienced and explored the truth, and overcame the rabid Cyril! | Blessed are you, our glorious Father, who like the Apostle Paul | endured harassment and vilification from this insolent people! <...> Blessed shall you be in the coming of Jesus, the Lord of [all] creation!'

Let us complete this brief survey of written witnesses to the traditional reverential attitude to Nestorius in the Church of the East with yet another document from the sixteenth century – "the Bishops' Confession" of 1548 (the confession of faith, proclaimed by bishops before their ordination). This document reads as follows:⁸⁷

'He was and is and forever [will be] one Son, one Lord, one Christ, one Saviour, one will and power. One person of Sonship is proclaimed in two natures and two hypostases ($qn\bar{o}m\bar{i}n$), in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Apostles and the tradition of the spiritual Fathers – Mār Diodore, Mār Theodore, and Mār Nestorius, who aspired to the truth – and in accordance with the legacy and the decision of our blessed Fathers – Mār Ephrem, Mār Narsai, and Mār Abraham with the other Orthodox Fathers, who shone forth in this Eastern land. All this which [concerns] their faith I uphold and to their confession I adhere'.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion allows us to draw the following conclusions. The various positions with regard to Nestorius of Constantinople, which

⁸⁷ രമ്മയാട് പ്രവാത്ത, Patrologia Orientalis, 7:1 (1909), p. 84.

formed while he was still an active participant of the ideological and church-political clashes in Byzantium in the mid-fifth century, had a continuation in the traditional attitudes to his name. Three such attitudes, traceable throughout centuries, can be distinguished: condemnation, suppression, and veneration.

The first attitude (condemnation) has its origin in the polemical interpretation of Nestorius' statements by Cyril of Alexandria. In the course of time, it led to a totally fantastic (and, needless to say, repulsive) image of Nestorius, as exemplified by stories about his alleged "Jewishness," his attitude to women, 89 and his ignominious death. 90

The last of the three positions (veneration) has its origin in the attitude to Nestorius among the Antiochene clergy who knew him personally, in their appraisal of the Council of Ephesus, and in doctrinal documents, obtained at first hand, which included, *inter alia*, Nestorius' apologetic treatise *The Book of Heraclides*. This position develops into ecclesiastical veneration of Nestorius in the East-Syriac tradition.

Finally, the attitude of suppression was motivated by a desire to achieve an "ecumenical" reconciliation, for the sake of which one was encouraged to "forgo" and "sacrifice" Nestorius. This position vis-à-vis the East-Syriac tradition was, and remained, characteristic of the "West" in the broad sense of the term – i.e. the Christian world lying to the West of the Eastern frontiers of the Byzantine Empire. In recent times it manifested itself in the "Western" (again, in the broad sense) missionary activity in Mesopotamia and India – a milder form of "ecumenical" interaction. Even so, Nestorius' name was often suppressed only nominally, while his legacy remained a part of the heritage of the suppressors.

The foregoing analysis of written sources on the attitudes to Nestorius in the Church of the East shows that he was traditionally venerated as a saint and teacher of faith. As already indicated, this attitude was grounded in the

⁸⁸ Cyril himself compared the views of Nestorius to "the blasphemies of ancient Jews," calling Nestorius "an imitator of their madness and impiety." See *ACO* I, I, 2, p. 93. This accusation became a common place among miaphysite authors and gave rise to bizarre stories. See the studies of Gero and Lasker-Stroumsa mentioned above.

⁸⁹ See e.g. the text of George of Saglā referenced in n. 14 above.

⁹⁰ Nau, Nestorius d'après les sources orientales, pp. 52-53.

actual knowledge of his views. Nestorius' influence was considerable: his apology, which is preserved in Syriac and whose impact is attested for the sixth to eighth centuries at the very least, was employed by Bāḇai the Great in his treatise *Liber de Unione* – the most influential doctrinal composition in the history of the Church of the East. It is striking that Nestorius' influence is evident in the heritage of those representatives of the East-Syriac tradition who otherwise held opposing positions on doctrinal issues.

One can distinguish the following stages in the development of Nestorius' legacy in the Church of the East. (1) In the fifth century, an outrage of Antiochene clergy in the frontier schools of Edessa and Nisibis at the actions of the Alexandrian ecclesiastical circles and the imperial administration led to a widespread opposition to the Byzantine policy vis-à-vis Nestorius and his supporters. (2) In the sixth century, the position of the School of Nisibis (the School of Edessa had been in the meantime closed by Emperor Zeno in 489) was adopted by the monastic centers of the Syriac East. Nestorius' teachings were recognized as conforming to the ancient tradition, while those of Cyril of Alexandria, recognized in the Byzantine Empire, were rejected. (3) At the beginning of the seventh century, as part of the controversy against the "theopaschites," of both Justinian and miaphysite persuasions, the veneration of Nestorius was evident in the conciliar decrees, in the formulation of which the monastic centers of the Church of the East played a decisive role. (4) In the eighth century, the internal struggle within the Church of the East between Timothy I and Īšō' bar Nūn did not lead to a reconsideration of Nestorius' role, given that both Catholicoi show evidence of his veneration. (5) The established positions remained unchanged until the arrival of Western missionaries who demanded a renunciation of Nestorius and excision of his name from books. (6) The modern period is characterized by increased contacts between the "East" and the "West", leading to repeated attempts to suppress Nestorius' name and to present Nestorius as a marginal figure in the East-Syriac tradition.

Written heritage of the Syriac East requires a serious, first and foremost textual and philological study. Ideological clashes often resulted in tampering with texts, which obstructs the scholarly reconstruction of historical and literary connections. This study of Nestorius' legacy in the East-Syriac tradition and of perceptions of Nestorius in West-Syriac circles has detected numerous problematic cases of precisely this kind.

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A fragment of the Epistle (1 Thess. 2:13), read on the day of the commemoration of "the Greek Doctors" (Vat. syr. 22; year 1301). In the list of names "Mār Diodore, Mār Theodore, Mār [Nestorius]" the name of Nestorius has been effaced. The image is reproduced from: E. Tisserant, Specimina codicum orientalium, Bonnae: A. Marcus et E. Weber, 1914, where it is given the title "Epistularium pro Nestorianis" (Table 34a; cf. also p. XXVII).

Abstract

This article offers a historical analysis of different attitudes toward Nestorius of Constantinople which became "traditional" and which formed opposing tendencies in various branches of Christianity. The main focus of the article is on the origins of veneration of Nestorius in the East-Syriac tradition as well as on the frequent attempts of those who condemn Nestorius to erase his name from the books of the Church of the East.