

ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN SPIRITUAL RIGHTS: Nestorius, Part 5

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When therefore I had seen that these things were brought to pass by God, would you have wished that I should be silent and hide such a dispensation of God as all this? . . . The prophets of God, who had been cursed as lying prophets by lying prophets . . . would not have been distinguished, unless they had consented to be cursed by lying prophets for the sake of God.

– from *The Bazaar of Heracleides*



Mar Dinkha IV
(2008)

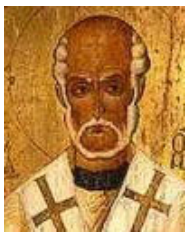


John Paul
II (1993)

The entire dramatic action of the Nestorian controversy played

out over fifteen centuries on several continents and reached an inglorious conclusion as a footnote of 1994. In that year, the modern representative of the Syriac Church, Mar Dinkha IV, Patriarch of the Church of the East, signs the “Common Christological Declaration” with Pope John Paul II of the Roman Church. The declaration does not mention Nestorius by name but does vindicate the term *Christotokos* by both churches. In addition, the Holy Synod of the Church of the East unilaterally decides to remove from its liturgical books and official publications all negative references to Cyril, who had been canonized a saint by the Western Church.

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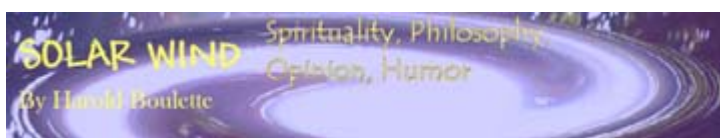
Nestorius,
Patriarch
of
Constantin
ople

The writings of Nestorius, originally very numerous, were condemned to be burned by imperial edict in 435. The few works of Nestorius that are extant are the product of or derived from his engagement in the ecclesiastical polemics of 428–431: fragments of letters preserved among the works of those to whom they were written, some sermons collected in Latin translation by an African merchant doing business in Constantinople during the time of the dispute, a liturgy attributed to him that is still used in the Church of the East for five days of the year, and a pseudonymous and

autobiographical account of the whole difficulty supposed to have been written by him (*The Bazaar of Heracleides*) and which was preserved in a single mutilated manuscript of styleless Syriac translation for several hundred years in a monastery in the Euphrates valley. In the fourteenth century, in addition to these, a collection of letters and a collection of homilies were still extant. They have since been destroyed in wars and natural catastrophes. The writings of the teacher of Nestorius have suffered a similar fate. Theodore of Mopsuestia, hailed as a great orthodox biblical scholar and theologian during his lifetime, was condemned as a heretic more than one hundred years after his death (at the fifth general council under the influence of Emperor Justinian in 553) because he was perceived to be a *precursor* of the heresy of Nestorius. From that time, even his name disappears in the West; and of the Syriac translations of his work, which once filled forty-one tomes, today only one remains.

Robert Petrovich
October 2005

“The Need to Share Our Light”



“And the third feature we notice about these men and women is

that this new power by which they lived was, as Ruysbroeck call it, 'a spreading light.' It poured out of them, invading and illuminating other men so that, through them, whole groups or societies were re-born, if only for a time, on to fresh levels of reality, goodness and power. Their own intense personal experience was valid not only for themselves. They belonged to that class of natural leaders who are capable of infecting the herd with their own ideals, leading it to new feeding grounds, improving the common level. It is indeed the main social function of the man or woman of the Spirit to be such a crowd-compeller in the highest sense; and, as the artist reveals new beauty to his fellow men, to stimulate in their neighbors the latent human capacity for God." ~Evelyn Underhill

"It is indeed important when we become full of spiritual light, that we share that light with others around us. It is likewise important that we share the divine knowledge that we call information factors found in that light. In short, the path of enlightenment is always the path of a teacher."

< [Read the entire article online at Solar Wind.](#) >

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contributed by Harold Boulette

ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN SPIRITUAL RIGHTS: Nestorius, Part 4

But I have endured the torment of my life and all my fate in this world as the torment of one day and lo! I have now already got to me the time of my dissolution, . . . [and mine] eyes have seen the salvation of God.

– from *The Bazaar of Heracleides*

Exile



Schenoute I

In August 435 an imperial edict proscribes the writings of Nestorius and any meetings of his followers; Nestorius himself is dragged from retirement and banished to Petra in Arabia; a second decree sends him to the Great Oasis in the Libyan desert, known now as the Oasis of Kharijah. How Nestorius spends the remainder of his days is somewhat uncertain, but we know that at some point he is carried off in a raid by either Nubians or the Blemmyes and set free again circa 450 in the Egyptian Thebaid, with his hand and one rib broken. Nestorius gives himself up to the governor at Panopolis in order not to be accused of having fled, and then, there in the desert inhabited by thousands of orthodox monks and nuns in a city of

monasteries, his persecution continues at the hand of Shenute (Shenoudi), the hero of the Egyptian monks, appointed by Cyril in 431 to act as archimandrite at the council that condemned Nestorius. In Panopolis Nestorius dies, still defending his doctrinal position. It is there in Egypt, probably during the final year of his life, that Nestorius writes *The Book of Heracleides of Damascus* (mistakenly translated into Syriac as *The Bazaar of Heracleides*), a pseudonymous defense of his teaching and a history of his public life.

Council of Chalcedon (October 8–25, 451)

After the death of Nestorius's principal antagonist, Cyril, in 444, the ecclesiastical balance of the Imperial Church suffers another turn of events. At the so-called Robber Council of Ephesus (449), Cyril's successor in Alexandria deposes the Bishop of Tyre, who was once a friend of Nestorius, and the Bishop of Edessa, who is known in his city as a great teacher, together with the Bishop of Cyprus and the new Bishop of Antioch, the nephew of John. Two years later, the new empress, the older sister of Theodosius II, succeeds her brother after his early death in a horse-riding accident and summons a council to meet at Nicaea. When the Hunnic invasion of Rome that year prevents the imperial representative from reaching Nicaea for fear of the Huns in Illyricum, he orders the bishops to move the council to Chalcedon. This council endorses a letter written by Leo, the new Bishop of Rome, in which he uses the term "Mother of the Lord"—somewhat as Nestorius had originally wished. At this council, the Bishops of Edessa and Cyprus both take the view that Leo's Roman perspective helps rehabilitate Antiochene theology, and both bishops are restored to their sees. If we may believe the final pages of *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, Nestorius too rejoices at this reversal of Roman policy from the perspective of his exile during the last days of his life.

Missions East



Theodore of Mopsuestia

In the Syriac-speaking world of the fifth century, Theodore of Mopsuestia was held in high esteem, and the condemnation of his pupil was not well received. After the deposition of Nestorius, whose doctrines had been theirs since the first century, a Great Syriac Church built up, and the Sassanid Persian kings, then at war with Byzantium, used the opportunity to assure the loyalty of their Syrian Christian subjects by supporting the division between the churches of the East and West: They granted protection to the adherents of Nestorius (462); they executed the pro-Byzantine Catholicos and replaced him with the bishop of the Persian city of Nisibis, Bar Sauma (484); and when the Byzantine emperor closed the school of Edessa for its heretical tendencies (489), they allowed the transfer of the school to Nisibis. After 489, the Church in Persia, which then called itself *Chaldean*, practiced an autonomy like that of the old eastern patriarchates. They did not accept the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, and the great doctor of their school was Theodore of Mopsuestia. From the monastery of Beth 'Âbh in Mesopotamia under the Sassanids, many missionaries traveled east into Asia from the sixth through the eighth centuries, even reaching China in 635.



Monastery Beth
'Abhe

JAPAN REPORT: Letter from Japan, May 2013

The 2013 Japan Seminar Tour was held May 25-26.

On May 25, we visited the Kinryu shrine.



Gene Savoy Jr. and daughter Sabrina entering Kinryu Shrine
PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama



Shrine interior showing Kobo Daishi (Kukai) and Benzaiten, the goddess of eloquence, music, and wisdom PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama



Members of 2013 Japan tour group gather outside the shrine PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama

After that, we admired dedication dancing by Mizuho Asano.



Performance stage for traditional dancer Mizuho Asano PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama



Members of 2013 Japan tour with dancer Mizuho Asano (second row center) PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama

Then Bishop Gene Savoy Jr. announced the publication of the Japanese version of the book *Project "X": The Search for the Secrets of Immortality*, titled in Japanese *Project Sun*.

On May 26, we performed the ceremony of the Sunrise Service at

the ancient solar site of Yaki-no-Touge.



Sunrise view at ancient solar site of Yaki-no-Touge PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama



Officiants at sunrise service May 26, 2013 at Yaki-no-Touge PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama

Later an Ordination service was performed at the headquarters of Cosolargy Institute in Japan for Akiko Takahashi and Junko

Kodama.



Akiko Takahashi between Bishop Gene Savoy Jr and Bishop Yukimori Matsushita PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama



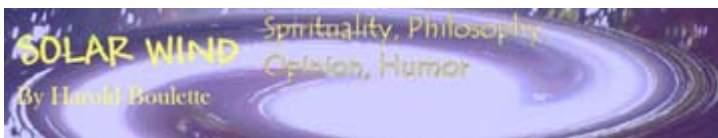
Junko Kodama between Bishop Yukinori Matsushita and Bishop Gene Savoy Jr PHOTO: Miyuki Okayama

The service was followed by a social gathering at the headquarters.

Sincerely,

Miyuki Okayama

“The Importance of Symbols and Understanding Them”



“In a sense one has to pass beyond the ‘symbols’ used in religion to the reality that it represents. The symbols contain and convey something of the reality that they signify. The symbols are therefore to be integrated into one’s spirituality as one moves toward greater realization of the truth, since they are not a ‘false’ reality, merely an attempt at representing the true reality. The symbols of a religion are not to be regarded as the religion itself, but to be transcended in order to discover why the religion exists.”

~Dion A Forster

“Symbols are important in religion and spiritual schools because anyone can understand them. No matter what language people speak, no matter if they are illiterate, they can understand symbols.”

< [Read the entire article online at Solar Wind.](#) >

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<http://blog.spiritsun.net/> >

contributed by Harold Boulette

2014 Peru Tour & Pilgrimage Announced



Sean Savoy, President and Chief Explorer of the Andean Explorers, revealed plans for a historic tour to ancient sites of Peru during the 2013 Convocation. The announcement was made on October 3rd as part of the "Solar Cultures of North America & the Sierra Seminar" at Camp Galilee, Lake Tahoe.

All Community members are invited to accompany the Peru Tour & Pilgrimage, which will take place in July 2014.

The Pre-Registration form provides an itinerary of the fascinating areas to be visited. Further details on the trip will be provided as arrangements develop.

< [Click here to view or print a copy of the pre-registration form.](#) >

ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN SPIRITUAL RIGHTS: Nestorius, Part 3

Every one, of whatsoever city it may be, who has suffered therein on my account, would not be giving light, even as the sun, if I had looked towards my accusers and not towards God and if also I had not been deemed worthy to be given a share in those things . . . brought to pass by God; for this affair is not mine but Christ's who made me mighty.

– from *The Bazaar of Heracleides*



Representation of the Council of Ephesus 431, at the center Cyril of Alexandria shows the image of the infant and Mary, proclaiming her divine maternity. Image from the Church Notre-Dame de Fourvières, Lyon, France

The Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431)

Soon after Pentecost, the bishops and imperial officials assemble at Ephesus. Only the famous Augustine of Hippo and the other bishops of North Africa are indisposed to attend, owing to the Vandal invasions of their territories. John of Antioch, held back by circumstances surrounding a drought in his territories, sends the message that he hopes to arrive in several days and not to wait for him to convene the council. Cyril and his followers, with the support of the Bishop of Ephesus and the populace of Ephesus, assemble in the Church of the Theotokos. Nestorius is summoned but refuses to attend until *all* the bishops are assembled. With the Gospels placed on the throne to represent the presence of Christ, Cyril proceeds to open the first session without delay. Creeds and letters are read at the first session. Cyril's letters are received with acclamation, those of Nestorius with anathemas. The council deposes and excommunicates Nestorius. When John of Antioch and the bishops of the East arrive four days later, they immediately hold council to depose Cyril and excommunicate all those who will not repudiate Cyril's twelve anathemas. Three days later, an imperial rescript arrives that rebukes Cyril for his haste and commands all the bishops to await the arrival of an imperial commissioner. Cyril continues the council anyway. Rome's legates arrive and give their support to Cyril at a second session. During the fourth session, John sends the message that he refuses to have anything more to do with Cyril and his supporters.

In August, the imperial commissioner arrives. He deposes and arrests Nestorius, Cyril, and the Bishop of Ephesus; he also tries to persuade the Cyrillians to confer with the bishops of the East, who have drawn up a formulary of reunion, but the Cyrillians refuse and continue to stir up the clergy of Constantinople with their appeals. On September 11, the emperor receives seven delegates from each side at Chalcedon, but no agreement is reached. The emperor dissolves the council, sends Nestorius back to his former monastery at

Antioch, per his request, and orders the consecration of a new Bishop of Constantinople, who proceeds to depose those bishops who continue to adhere to Nestorius. After the rival parties go home, Cyril is released from prison and, in October, arrives at Alexandria in triumph.

Rome, in exchange for the vote to depose Nestorius, gets Pelagius condemned by an ecumenical council and wins greater prestige in the East because Cyril, going over the head of the emperor, had appealed to the Bishop of Rome; in exchange for the vote to condemn Pelagius, the Alexandrians get Nestorius deposed, as well as Cyril's explanation of the incarnation canonized over the doctrine of Nestorius.

The Reconciled and the Irreconcilable

In spring 432, the emperor suggests as a basis of reconciliation that the East give up Nestorius and that Cyril give up his twelve anathemas. By autumn, John of Antioch and a few others go ahead with the reconciliation; some waver; and others, like the Bishop of Hierapolis in Syria, stand out. Those for reconciliation send to Alexandria an envoy who brings the Formulary of Reunion and other propositions; when the envoy arrives, John is pressed to accept the deposition of Nestorius, whereupon he is received into communion at Alexandria and admitted to preach there on Christmas Day as an orthodox bishop. In 433 John and Cyril sign the Formula of Reunion, and it is ratified by the emperor. After this action is taken, whoever wishes to be part of the catholic and orthodox Imperial Church must, in their thought and speech, avoid denying the humanity of the rational soul of Christ and at the same time avoid dividing his two natures into two persons. Some bishops of the East acknowledge the orthodoxy of Cyril but refuse to accept the deposition of Nestorius; others denounce both. The following year, Proclus, the old adversary of Nestorius, is consecrated Bishop of Constantinople, and the emperor orders all bishops of the East to abandon their resistance to John and Cyril. Many obey, but eighteen are

deposed; they are banished to the mines of the Egyptian Thebaid, as persecuted Christians in the Roman Empire had been since Diocletian.

“Alfredo Moser: Bottle light inventor proud to be poor”



PHOTO: BBC News Magazine

“Alfredo Moser’s invention is lighting up the world. In 2002, the Brazilian mechanic had a light-bulb moment and came up with a way of illuminating his house during the day without electricity – using nothing more than plastic bottles filled with water and a tiny bit of bleach.

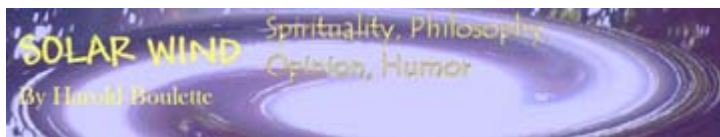
In the last two years his innovation has spread throughout the world. It is expected to be in one million homes by early

next year. ”

< [Read the entire article posted 12 August 2013 by Gibby Zobel BBC World Service, Uberaba, Brazil at the online BBC NEWS magazine.](#) >

link submitted by Tom Fee

“Tools are Tools”



“Fasts and vigils, the study of Scripture, renouncing possessions and everything worldly are not in themselves perfection, as we have said; they are its tools. For perfection is not to be found in them; it is acquired through them. It is useless, therefore, to boast of our fasting, vigils, poverty and reading of Scripture when we have not achieved the love of God and our fellow man. Whoever has achieved love has God within himself and his intellect is always with God.” ~The Philokalia

“Just as some people will treat a national flag as a thing of worship, some people who consider themselves spiritual or religious think they are being holy when they act as if the tools used for spiritual growth are themselves divine. We especially see this in many Christians who treat the Bible as if it is actually God rather than simply a book about God and his prophets. Many Muslims act the same with the Koran, even

threatening death to those who deface or destroy a copy of it, a book, as if it were indeed God and therefore of more value than a human life.”

< [Read the entire article online at Solar Wind.](#) >

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contributed by Harold Boulette

ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN SPIRITUAL RIGHTS: Nestorius, Part 2

*In such wise as the corruptible body is one thing and further the immortal soul is another thing, yet one man is constituted of them both, so from the mortal and the immortal, from the corruptible and from the incorruptible, and from what is subject to beginning and from the nature which has no beginning, that is, of God the Word, I confess one **prosôpon** of the Son.*

– from a homily of Nestorius called “Concerning the Faith”

First Acts



Bust of
Emperor
Theodosius II

The fate of Nestorius is sealed long before the Council of Ephesus opens. Emperor Theodosius II nominates Nestorius, the pupil of Theodore of Mopsuestia, a teacher for whom the emperor's grandfather had the greatest respect, for the position of Bishop of Constantinople. The nomination is part of a deliberate plan to weaken the political influence of his older sister, Pulcheria, who had gained effective control over imperial affairs and all the powerful parties of Constantinople while acting as his guardian for years until he came of age. The debut of Nestorius – an unknown outsider whose temperament does not permit him to undertake things gradually – is a storm of zeal to inaugurate a new age of reform and doctrinal purity within Byzantium. From the outset, his naivete and lack of political experience set him at odds with the populace and with some of the most prominent and influential individuals in Constantinople.

Immediately he takes steps to suppress the assemblies of Arians, Novatianists, and Quartodecimans, and the followers of Macedonius. Of the groups considered heretical in the West, he will favor only the Pelagians; several Pelagian bishops receive refuge with him at the capital as they had received refuge at Mopsuestia with his mentor Theodore years before. Nestorius next takes action against the immorality of Constantinople's theatrical entertainers; this irritates the nobility, as does his attempt to disconnect monks in the

empire's archiepiscopal see from the day-to-day affairs of the capital and from close relationships to members of the nobility. The new regulations of Nestorius humiliate the monks of Constantinople, outrage the aristocracy, and belittle the emperor's sister, who is the monks' strongest supporter. Within a few months, all these powerful groups become his adversaries.

Next, as the spiritual father and pastor of the most influential city in the world, Nestorius devotes his strength and resources to articulate and vindicate those points of doctrine that he considers to be most in danger of misunderstanding. One of these is the notion, commonplace in fifth-century Constantinople, that Mary gave birth to God when she gave birth to her son Jesus, a notion that Nestorius fears may engender a false doctrine of the relationship between the human and the divine. In November 428, six months into his term as Bishop of Constantinople, a presbyter whom Nestorius has brought with him from Antioch preaches against the popular use of the epithet *Theotokos* (Θεοτοκος, "God-bearer") with reference to Mary, the mother of Jesus. A crisis develops. Nestorius silences the protesters by force, and on Christmas Day he begins a course of sermons in the chaplain's defense. Faithfully following Theodore of Mopsuestia's christology to a logical conclusion, Nestorius declares that the Divine Nature cannot be born any more than it can die, that the human nature of Jesus was born of Mary while the Divine Nature was not. Further, he risks explaining the mystery of the Incarnation as a prosopic union in terminology easily misunderstood. Then to appease and at the same time correct his vast congregation, Nestorius gives them permission to call Mary *Christokos*, "Christ-bearer," saying that while it is theologically correct to say "Christ was born of a woman" it is not orthodox to say "God was born of a woman." The faithful of the city, who often call Mary *Theotokos* in songs and prayers, are surprised that the newly appointed bishop of their city should stand up in the cathedral and order them to stop it. Alexandrian spies, no

doubt, are both shocked and delighted.

That Spring on the Feast of the Annunciation—the celebration of the incarnation of Jesus in the womb of Mary—Proclus, the unsuccessful rival of Nestorius for the position of Bishop of Constantinople a year before, preaches in the cathedral at Constantinople before the patriarch Nestorius at the latter's invitation. Proclus so firmly asserts the propriety of the epithet *Theotokos* in his sermon that Nestorius is constrained to rise from his patriarchal throne during the service and reply. A few weeks later, during Eastertide, Nestorius addresses Proclus in three sermons and then writes his arguments into a circular Easter letter, which makes it official: The Patriarch of Constantinople considers reference to Mary as *Theotokos* to be a heresy. Alexandrian agents in the capital begin to set up anonymous placards near the churches throughout the city juxtaposing phrases from Nestorius with sayings of the old Antiochene heretic Paul of Samosata. The placards draw attention, and people in Constantinople begin to gossip about Nestorius's flawed orthodoxy.



Cyril of Alexandria,
painted by Rousanu

Matters are ripe for foreign intervention, and the antagonism

and jealousy of the Alexandrian school toward the Antiochene school find determined and unscrupulous expression in Cyril, the new Bishop of Alexandria, who is as eager to get rid of Nestorius as his predecessor had been to get rid of the Antiochene patriarch and reformer John Chrysostom, who in 403 was deposed and led to die in exile, as Nestorius will be.

In June, after Pentecost, Cyril sets into motion the series of events that will lead to the downfall of Nestorius: He stirs up his own clergy, encourages dissidents at Constantinople, begins a vigorous correspondence with bishops around the Roman Empire and, by begging the clergy of his own diocese to bribe the officials of the imperial court, manages to address himself to both the sister and the wife of the Emperor Theodosius. The emperor's sister and the rest of the aristocracy, the monks, and the populace of the capital are collectively driven by abhorrence of their bishop and personalize it in the zeal of Cyril to challenge Nestorius.



Celestine I, Bishop
of Rome

The next year, around Easter, Cyril sends a letter to Celestine, the Bishop of Rome, and encloses a careful selection of the writings of Nestorius. Cyril appeals to Celestine to hold in his city a council to settle the

controversy. Celestine, who appreciates being asked to take precedence over the Bishop of Constantinople, is delighted. At about this same time Nestorius is approached by the Pelagian exiles, who have been designated as heretics in Rome but whom he has received favorably; Nestorius takes the occasion to write to the Bishop of Rome concerning them and to give his own account of the dispute. Celestine naturally resents any questioning of his Roman decision concerning the Pelagians; that summer at a church council in Rome, Celestine makes the determination that correct Christology requires the use of the term *Theotokos*. Celestine condemns Nestorius and instructs Cyril to carry out the sentence. With Celestine's letter in hand, Cyril pressures the emperor, who reluctantly agrees to convoke a council on the assumption that Nestorius and the Antiochene tradition will be vindicated thereat. The council is to be convened at Ephesus on Pentecost.

Cyril sends out a synodical letter, his third against Nestorius, with twelve anathemas, or denunciations, attached. In December, Nestorius receives Cyril's letter and Celestine's sentence of excommunication (which cannot immediately be put into force owing to the imperial letter calling the council). Nestorius preaches two new sermons and sends them with counter-anathemas to Cyril; then, with the aid of Cyril's list of anathemas, he wins over John, the Bishop of Antioch, who enlists the Bishops of Samosata and Cyprus on the side of Nestorius.