

THE FATE OF NESTORIUS AFTER THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS IN 431*

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More than a hundred years ago Friedrich Loofs compiled and published the extant parts of Nestorius' writings, and soon afterwards Paul Bedjan published a Syriac translation of his work *Liber Heraclidis*¹. Those two publications had commenced, on a broad scale, a new stage in the research on Nestorius and his teaching. The successive monographs, published frequently in the atmosphere of hot debate, as well as the regular publishing of the Syriac sources, had caused that the figure of Nestorius, and particularly his theological views, are better known today than a century ago². Due to the theological significance of the Nestorian dispute, the questions regarding his biography had been relegated into the background and, with a few exceptions, did not constitute the primary aspect of the research devoted to him³. This article is an attempt to represent the life of the bishop of Constantinople (Istanbul) after his deposition in 431.

Sources

We possess a sufficiently ample collection of source information concerning Nestorius, which is due to the importance of the Christological dispute, of which he had been a protagonist. However, the items of information relevant to his life are most often dependant on the Christological option of their authors. Throughout the centuries, Nestorius had continued to be the person arousing extreme emotions, which had left a clear trace in the sources. His figure had been shaped, by both his adherents and opponents, so as to create either an image of a heresiarch or a saint. The Nestorian tradition portrays the bishop as a second John Chrysostom - a martyr, another victim of Egyptian hubris. On the other hand, the Monophysite and Chalcedonian tradition depicts the figure of Nestorius as a second Arius, making him resemble one of the greatest heretics in history⁴. One should

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¹ *Nestoriana: die Fragmente des Nestorius*, gesammelt, untersucht und herausgegeben von F. Loofs, Halle 1905; Nestorius, *Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, éd. P. Bedjan, avec plusieurs appendices, Paris-Leipzig 1910.

² On the subject of the development of the research on Nestorius, see L. Abramowski, „Histoire de la recherche sur Nestorius et le nestorianisme”, *Istina* 40 (1995), pp. 44-55.

³ About the research done thus far, devoted to biographical aspects of the figure of Nestorius, see R. Kosiński, “Dzieje Nestoriusza, biskupa Konstantynopola w latach 428-431”, [in:] *Chrześcijaństwo u schyłku starożytności. Studia Źródłoznawcze*, ed. P. Janiszewski, R. Wiśniewski, Warszawa 2008.

⁴ A more detailed analysis of the sources devoted to Nestorius has been presented in: R. Kosiński, “The Life of Nestorius as seen in Greek and Oriental sources”, [in:] *Continuity and Change. Studies in Late Antique Historiography*, ed. D. Brodka and M. Stachura, *Electrum* 13, Kraków 2007, pp. 155-170.

therefore approach the credibility of the information contained therein with considerable caution.

The oldest source describing the story of Nestorius is the account by Socrates of Constantinople. Although the author's attitude towards Nestorius is negative, his dislike has no dogmatic grounds, as it results from the politics that he had pursued towards heterodox groups⁵.

The sources of the Nestorian origin comprise, first of all, the works written by Nestorius himself; they are however preserved only in few fragments. The most important of them is the autobiographical *Tragedy*, mentioned by Ebed-Jesu, metropolitan bishop of Nisibis and Armenia (died in 1318), in his index of biblical and ecclesiastical writings⁶. There are only some extant fragments contained in Evagrius Scholasticus and Severus of Antioch⁷. The *Tragedy*, nevertheless, had probably served Barhadbešabba (along with *Ecclesiastical History* of Socrates, *Liber Heraclidis* and, probably, the *History* of the life of Nestorius, by Ireneus of Cyrus) in writing his *Ecclesiastical History*, written at the end of the 6th or in the beginning of the 7th century⁸. Barhadbešabba presents the story of Nestorius' life in chapters 20 - 30. The story is constructed in the form of an apology of the bishop of Constantinople. An earlier source is an anonymous letter to Cosmas, written probably after 451⁹. In his letter, the author describes the life of Nestorius, with a particular emphasis on proving his sanctity, especially through descriptions of miraculous interventions of the saint. The so-called *Syriac legend of Nestorius*, published in 1910 from a 16-th century manuscript, which appears to draw on Barhadbešabba's *History*, has a similarly apologetic character¹⁰. It provides the information on Nestorius' reformist activity in Constantinople, his conflict with Cyril, as well as his life during the exile in Egypt. Another source is the *Chronicle of Seert*, or the so-called *Nestorian History*, written in Arabic by an anonymous author after 1036. Unfortunately, the extant pieces of the work describe the periods from

⁵ Socrates, *Kirchengeschichte*, herausgegeben von G. Ch. Hansen, mit Beiträgen von M. Širinjan, Berlin 1995. On Socrates, see *Die Welt des Sokrates von Konstantinopel. Studien zu Politik, Religion und Kultur in späten 4. und frühen 5. Jh. n. Chr. zu Ehren von Christoph Schäublin*, herausgegeben von B. Bäbler und H.-G. Nesselrath, Munich 2001.

⁶ J. S. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, t. III/1, Roma 1725, pp. 35-36.

⁷ Cf. R. Abramowski, „Zur ‚Tragödie‘ des Nestorius“, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 47 (1928), pp. 305-324 and L. Abramowski, *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius*, CSCO, t. 242, Subsidia t. 22, Louvain 1963, pp. 21-32.

⁸ *La seconde partie de l'histoire de Barhadbešabba 'Arbaia et controverse de Théodore de Mopsueste avec les macédoniens*, text syriaque édité et traduit par F. Nau, PO 9, Paris 1913, pp. 493-677. About the author and his work, see L. Abramowski, *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius*, pp. 33-73.

⁹ The letter consists of two parts: the first had been written probably after 435, and afterwards it was elaborated after Nestorius' death, cf. F. Nau, „Introduction“, [in:] *Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Église nestorienne*, textes syriaques édités et traduits par F. Nau, PO 13, Paris 1916, p. 273 (the text of the letter published on pp. 275-286).

¹⁰ Compare M. Brière's brief introduction to the published text in: „La légende syriaque de Nestorius“, *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 15 (1910), p.1 (the text itself published on pp. 2-31).

251 to 422 and from 484 to 680¹¹. It contains therefore only some minor mentions referring to Nestorius, in a purely hagiographic style.

On the other hand, in a broad collection of Monophysite tales about Nestorius, one of the most interesting is certainly a collection of anecdotes – *Plerophoria* – by John Rufus, written at the time of Severus' episcopacy in Antioch (Antakya), i.e. in the years 512-518. The image of Nestorius represented therein is overwhelmingly negative¹². Other accounts of the Monophysite origin can be found in a Syriac translation of the *History* by Zachariah of Mytilene, written probably in the years 492 - 495¹³, *History of the Patriarchs of the Church of Alexandria*, attributed to Mawhub ibn Mansūr, dating back to the 11-th century and based on the older texts¹⁴ and the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian, dating to the second half of the 12-th century¹⁵.

Similarly, the Chalcedonian tradition has a distinctly negative approach towards Nestorius. Evagrius Scholasticus, one of the chroniclers mentioned above, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, had included, along with the sections of the Nestorian origin, also other traditions devoted to Nestorius¹⁶. Other chroniclers writing on the subject of Nestorius' life are Theodoros Anagnostes (died after 527)¹⁷ and Theophanes the Confessor, who had used Theodoros' work (died after 947)¹⁸. Another Chalcedonian source – *Spiritual Meadow* by John Moschos, dating back to the beginning of the 7-th century, presents one of the versions of the bishop of

¹¹ *Histoire Nestorienne (Chronique de Séert)*, première partie (II), publiée par A. Scher, traduite par M. l'abbé P. Dib, PO 5, Paris 1950, pp. 221-344. On the subject of the chronicle, see L. Sako, „Les sources de la Chronique de Séert”, *Parole de l'Orient* 14 (1987), pp. 155-166.

¹² Jean Rufus, *Plérôphories. Témoignages et révélations contre le Concile de Chalcédoine*, version syriaque et traduction française éditées par F. Nau, PO 8, Paris 1911, pp. 405-608. Cf. J.-E. Steppa, *John Rufus and the World Vision of Anti-Chalcedonian Culture*, Piscataway 2002, pp. 73-82, an analysis of the portrait of the enemies in John's works on pp. 143-162.

¹³ *Historia Ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, interpretatus est E. W. Brooks, t. I. CSCO, Scriptores Syri, series tertia, t. 5, Lovanii 1924. Cf. P. Allen, „Zachariah Scholasticus and the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Evagrius Scholasticus”, *Journal of Theological Studies* 31 (1980), pp. 471-488 and G. A. Bevan, *The Case of Nestorius: Ecclesiastical Politics in the East, 428-451 CE*. A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Graduate Department of Classics, in the University of Toronto, Toronto 2005, pp. 42-43.

¹⁴ *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, vol. II, *Peter I to Benjamin I (661)*, Arabic text edited, translated and annotated by B. Evetts, PO 1, Paris 1948, pp. 383-518. About the work, see J. den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansūr ibn Mufarriġ et l'historiographie copto-arabe. Étude sur la composition de l'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie*, CSCO, t. 513, Subsidia t. 81, Louvain 1989.

¹⁵ *Chronique de Michel le Syrien: Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1198)*, éditée pour le première fois et traduite en français par J.-B. Chabot, tome II (livre VIII-XI), Paris 1901. About the work of Michael the Syrian, cf. D. Weltecke, *Die „Beschreibung der Zeiten” von Mōr Michael dem Grossen (1126-1199). Eine Studie zu ihrem historischen und historiographiegeschichtlichen Kontext*, CSCO, t. 594, Subsidia t. 110, Louvain 2003.

¹⁶ *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the scholia*, edited with introduction, critical notes, and indices by J. Bidez and L. Parmentier, London 1898. On the subject of the *History* of Evagrius, cf. P. Allen, *Evagrius Scholasticus the Church Historian*, Louvain 1981.

¹⁷ Theodoros Anagnostes, *Kirchengeschichte*, herausgegeben von G. Ch. Hansen, Berlin 1971. About Theodoros Anagnostes (Theodore Lector), see P. Nautin, „Théodore Lecteur et sa «Réunion de différentes histoires» de l'Église”, *Revue des Études Byzantines* 52 (1994), pp. 213-243.

¹⁸ Theophanis *Chronographia*, recensuit C. de Boor, t. I, Lipsiae 1883. About Theophanes, see M. Whitby, „Theophanes, a great chronographer”, *Dialogos. Hellenic Studies Review* 6 (1998), pp. 98-107.

Constantinople's death¹⁹. There is less information about Nestorius in the *Universal History*, written in Arabic around 942 by Agapius (died in 941), melchite bishop of Hierapolis at Osrhoene²⁰.

The above-mentioned sources are supplemented by an assortment of minor mentions, collections of epistles, polemic writings and council documents, in which there is plenty of information important for the biography of Nestorius²¹.

The Council of Ephesus and the deposition of Nestorius²²

Nestorius was deposed from the see of Constantinople on 22 June 431 as a result of the resolutions passed by the assembly of 155 bishops at Ephesus, led by the patriarch of Alexandria - Cyril²³. The bishops had placed an anathema both upon him and those who would remain in communion with him²⁴. Subsequently, Cyril announced a deposition of Nestorius²⁵. Cyril had also sent a series of letters addressed to the priests of Constantinople²⁶ and to the people in the capital city close to Cyril, informing them of the decisions taken by the assembly²⁷. The deposition

¹⁹ Th. Nissen, „Unbekannte Erzählungen aus dem Pratum Spirituale”, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 38 (1938), pp. 351-376. About John Moschos, see Giovanni Mosco, *Il Prato*, presentazione, traduzione, e commento a cura di R. Maisano, Napoli 1982, pp. 1-16.

²⁰ *Kitab Al-'Unvan, Histoire universelle écrite par Agapius (Mahboub) de Menbidj*, éditée et traduite en français par A. Vasiliev, (seconde partie (II)), PO 8, Paris 1912, pp. 397-550. About Agapius, see G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, t. 2, *Die Schriftsteller bis zum Mitte 15. Jahrhunderts*, Città del Vaticano 1947, pp. 39-41.

²¹ Cf. E. Goeller, „Eine jakobitische 'vita' des Nestorius”, *Oriens Christianus* 1 (1901), pp. 276-287; *A Panegyric on Macarius, Bishop of Tkôw, Attributed to Dioscorus of Alexandria*, Translated by D. W. Johnson, CSCO, *Scriptores Coptici*, t. 42, Louvain 1980; the hymn of Sliba about Greek Doctors in: *Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Église nestorienne*, textes syriaques édités et traduits par F. Nau, PO 12, Paris 1916, pp. 287-316, Sévère ibn al-Moqaffa' évêque d'Aschmounain, *Histoire des conciles (second livre)*, I, édition et traduction du texte arabe par L. Leroy, PO 6, Paris 1911. Most of the letters and polemic writings connected with the Christological dispute have been compiled and published in *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum (ACO)* by the distinguished German publisher Eduard Schwartz, where several collections of Greek and Latin council documents can be found. We also have a Coptic version of the Ephesian documents: *Koptische Akten zum ephesinischen Konzil vom Jahre 431*, Übersetzung und Untersuchungen von W. Kraatz, Leipzig 1904. In addition, we should mention the letters by Theodoret of Cyr, published in: Théodoret de Cyr, *Correspondance*, texte critique, introduction, traduction et notes de Y. Azéma, I, SCh 40, Paris 1955, II, SCh 98, Paris 1964, III, SCh 111, Paris 1965, IV, SCh 429, Paris 1998.

²² A detailed representation of the events at Ephesus in 431 in: J. McGuckin, *Saint Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy. Its History, Theology, and Texts*, New York 2004, pp. 53-107. For a more extensive account of Nestorius' life until his deposition at Ephesus, see: R. Kosiński, „Dzieje Nestoriusza, biskupa Konstantynopola w latach 428-431” [in:] *Chrześcijaństwo u schyłku starożytności*. *Studia Źródłoznawcze*, ed. P. Janiszewski, R. Wiśniewski, Warszawa 2008.

²³ Cf. ACO I,4, pp. 31-32. On the subject of the first session, see A. de Halleux, „La première session du concile d'Éphèse (22 juin 431)”, *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 69 (1993), pp. 48-87.

²⁴ Cf. ACO I,1,2, pp. 31-36. Nestorius makes an excuse in *Liber Heraclidis* that appearing before the Cyrilian assembly would have put his life in jeopardy, cf. Nestorius, *LH* p. 134. For an account of the fruitless attempts of calling Nestorius to appear, see ACO I,1,2, pp. 10-12.

²⁵ Cf. ACO I,1,2, pp. 54-64. The deposition of Nestorius was signed by 197 bishops; therefore, the number of participants in the assembly had increased since the moment of its opening.

²⁶ Cf. ACO I,1,2, pp. 64-65.

²⁷ Cf. ACO I,1,2, pp. 66-68: the letter was addressed to the bishops Comarios and Potamon, who had come to Constantinople from Alexandria in December 430, archimandrite Dalmatios and the presbyters Timotheos and Eulogios.

decree had also been presented in public, on the Ephesian agora²⁸. However, a representative of the emperor Theodosius II, Candidianos, had considered the first session of the Council as invalid²⁹; it was also contested by Nestorius and the second episcopal assembly, led by the patriarch of Antioch, John³⁰.

At the end of June the letters of Nestorius and patriarch John had reached the capital³¹. Theodosius responded by sending, on 29 June, a letter to Ephesus, in which he had rejected the decisions taken by Cyril's assembly³². On the first of July, however, the news of Nestorius' deposition reached Constantinople, which resulted in demonstrations of his adversaries, who had begun to celebrate the news by praising God and singing psalms³³. When the demonstration had arrived at the imperial palace, Theodosius II invited the leaders of the monks, led by Dalmatios, to come inside. After the meeting at the palace, Dalmatios and the crowd went to St. Mokios' church, where Cyril's letter, addressed to his followers at the capital, was read out; also recounted was the meeting with Theodosius, who, according to the archimandrites, had not taken any binding decision – even though Nestorius himself claimed that as a result of the meeting the emperor had changed his attitude towards him and agreed to his deposition³⁴. According to Nestorius' account, the arrival of the famous archimandrite, who had not left his monastery for 48 years, had made a great impression on the emperor; in my opinion, however, the important thing was – most of all – to display, in a mass street demonstration, the scale of the opposition to Nestorius, which the emperor could not ignore³⁵.

On the same day, a delegation of Cyril's assembly had departed from Ephesus to Constantinople. The delegation arrived at the capital on 3 July. The representatives of Cyril had endeavoured to gain for him various officials in authority, which they managed to achieve with at least partial success. Some of the officials did not see the point in supporting Nestorius when his position was becoming weaker and weaker, especially with the opponents of the bishop gaining the dominance in the city. This state of affairs may be confirmed by an account of *comes* Ireneus, Nestorius' friend, who had arrived at Constantinople on Sunday, 5 July³⁶. He claims that he could not reach the palace for a long period of time for fear of losing his life.

Upon hearing the news of the arrival of Cyril's delegates, the people and the clergy had gathered on Saturday, the fourth of July, at the Great Church, where

²⁸ That decree was torn up by *comes* Candidianos, who announced that the deposition of Nestorius had been passed in violation of the emperor's orders, cf. ACO I,1,5, p. 120.

²⁹ Cf. ACO I,4, p. 33.

³⁰ Cf. ACO I,1,5, pp. 119-124. John's synod had also commenced with the formal reading of the *sacra* by *comes* Candidianos.

³¹ Cf. ACO I,1,3, pp. 46-47.

³² Cf. ACO I,1,3, pp. 9-10. The *sacra* had been brought to Ephesus on the first of July, cf. ACO I,1,5, p. 131.

³³ Cf. ACO I,1,2, pp. 65-66, *Koptische Akten zum ephesinischen Konzil vom Jahre 431*, pp. 47-49.

³⁴ Cf. Nestorius, *LH* pp. 272-278.

³⁵ Cyril and his bishops had greatly appreciated Dalmatios' anti-Nestorian activity, which they expressed in their letter to the archimandrite, cf. ACO I,1,7, pp. X-XI.

³⁶ Cf. ACO I,1,5, p. 135. About Ireneus, see PLRE II, pp. 624-625.

they called on the emperor to read out in public the deposition of Nestorius³⁷. Theodosius sent *referendarios* Domitian³⁸ to the assembled with the information that the deposition of Nestorius had indeed been received from Ephesus and it would be announced on the following day. On 5 July, Domitian had officially read out the depositions of Nestorius, as well as Cyril and Memnon.

After these events the emperor, accompanied by his officials, had met with the representatives of both parties, trying to convince them to cooperate.³⁹ However, the emperor's officials were divided on the issue of taking appropriate measures. One group had suggested that all three depositions be accepted, whereas others were of the opinion that they should be made invalid and the representatives of both parties should come to Constantinople and continue to discuss the matters of faith. Others also proposed that a special emperor's commission be sent to Ephesus. According to Irenaeus' account, the emperor had not taken any binding decision yet at the time of the meeting.

Around 10 July the pope's legates had come to Ephesus, - the bishops Arcadius⁴⁰, Projectus⁴¹ and the presbyter Philip⁴², who had signed their names on the resolutions of Cyril's assembly, concerning Nestorius⁴³. It was only after 22 July that John, *comes sacrarum largitionum*, had arrived at Ephesus from Constantinople, who had been appointed to watch, from then on, over the events at Ephesus, on behalf of the emperor⁴⁴. He decided to remove the most controversial people from the assembly, in order to resume the proceedings. He had called therefore on the leaders of both parties to come to his seat for a meeting, where he read out the *sacra* of Theodosius II. The document had recognized the depositions of Nestorius, Cyril and Memnon, who had been ordered to be put in custody. *Comes* John had then encouraged the rest of the bishops to proceed with the joint session in the interest of peace and unity. On the same day Nestorius had been placed in custody by the guard of *comes* Candidianos. John of Antioch and the bishops had written letters to the churches of the East, where they expressed their contentment at the arrest of Cyril and Memnon, with no mention of the fact that the same fate also concerned Nestorius⁴⁵.

Nestorius had remained in custody only for a little more than one month, as on 4 September 431, upon Nestorius' repeated requests, the emperor had agreed to his leaving Ephesus and returning, as soon as possible, to Euprepios' monastery at

³⁷ Cf. *Koptische Akten zum ephesinischen Konzil vom Jahre 431*, pp. 49-55.

³⁸ This figure is not known in other sources, cf. PLRE II, p. 370.

³⁹ Irenaeus' account in: ACO I,1,5, p. 136.

⁴⁰ On bishop Arcadius, see *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, t. 2, *Prosopographie de l'Italie chrétienne (313-604)*, sous la direction de Ch. Pietri et L. Pietri, Rome 1999, pp. 178-182.

⁴¹ On Projectus, see *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, pp. 1855-1857.

⁴² On Philip, see *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, pp. 1786-1792.

⁴³ Cf. ACO I,1,3, pp. 53-63.

⁴⁴ Cf. ACO I,1,3, pp. 31-32. On John, see R. Delmaire, *Les responsables des finances impériales au Bas-Empire romain (IVe-VIe s.). Études prosopographiques*, Bruxelles 1989, pp. 215-216.

⁴⁵ Cf. ACO, I,4, pp. 57-58.

Antioch⁴⁶. Withdrawing to the monastery not in consequence of the council's resolutions but on his own request, had been a sort of blow to the plans of Nestorius' opponents. Maximian, consecrated on 25 October 431, had become the new bishop of Constantinople⁴⁷.

The fate of Nestorius after the deposition

Despite the consecration of the new bishop of Constantinople, it was until 433 that the majority of the Eastern bishops had refused to put an anathema upon the deposed bishop and accept his deposition. In a dialogue, however, maintained after the Council between John of Antioch and Cyril of Alexandria, the latter had demanded that categorically. Finally, the patriarch of Antioch, along with the bishops loyal to him, had signed the document called the *Formulary of Reunion*, which had finally sealed Nestorius' fate⁴⁸. Despite that act many bishops continued to refuse to condemn him: among them, Theodoret of Cyrus, Alexander of Hierapolis (Manbij), Andrew of Samosata (Samsat)⁴⁹.

Nestorius himself was of the opinion that the *Formulary of Reunion* of 433 had been enforced by the emperor, even though we do not know anything about any Nestorius' attempts to oppose it⁵⁰. He continued to be a moral authority for his followers, and his presence in Antioch had posed a certain threat to implementing the signed agreement⁵¹. Many bishops continued to refuse to accept the *Formulary of Reunion*, what is more, after the death of bishop Maximian in April 434 the rumours appeared of Nestorius' being restored to his former bishopric⁵². It became clear for the court that the situation would not calm down as long as Nestorius, staying at Antioch, could have any influence on the affairs of the church⁵³. This situation was also troublesome for the patriarch John, who is accused explicitly by

⁴⁶ Cf. ACO I,1,7, p. 71, and also Nestorius, *LH* pp. 280-281, *Nestoriana: die Fragmente des Nestorius*, p. 194, Barhadbešabba Arbaña, *HE* 25 (pp. 555-556) and *La légende syriaque de Nestorius*, p. 21. See also N. N. Seleznyov, *Nestorij i Cerkov' Vostoka*, Moscow 2005, p. 32.

⁴⁷ Cf. Socrates, *HE* VII 35,3-4; 37,19 and ACO I,3, pp. 179-180.

⁴⁸ Cf. ACO I,1,7, pp. 164-165. The signed documents had been sent to the Pope Sixtus, Maximian of Constantinople and Cyril. Cf. also Evagrius, *HE* I 5. Barhadbešabba accuses John of Antioch of being jealous of Nestorius' popularity in Antioch, which had led him to betray his friend and ally with his enemies, cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaña, *HE* 27 (pp. 564-565). About the *Formulary of Reunion*, see A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. I, *From the Apostolic age to Chalcedon (451)*, trans. by J. Bowden, Atlanta 1975, pp. 498-500.

⁴⁹ Cf. ACO I,5, pp. 170-171, ACO I,4, pp. 129-130, ACO I,4, pp. 134-135. On Andrew of Samosata, see also P. Evieux, „André de Samosate. Un adversaire de Cyrille d'Alexandrie durant la crise nestorienne”, *Revue des Études Byzantines* 32 (1974), pp. 253-300.

⁵⁰ Cf. Nestorius, *LH* pp. 330-331.

⁵¹ Cf. F. Nau, „Saint Cyrille et Nestorius”, *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 16 (1911), pp. 1-6.

⁵² Cf. ACO I,4, p. 170 and *Vita Hypatii* 39,1 (p. 232). Cf. also N. N. Seleznyov, *Nestorij i Cerkov' Vostoka*, p. 34.

⁵³ The Nestorian sources also accuse Pulcheria of being behind Nestorius' exile, cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaña, *HE* 27 (pp. 567-568) and *La légende syriaque de Nestorius*, p. 21. The Pope Celestine, in his letter to the bishops at Ephesus, had also urged banishing Nestorius from Antioch, cf. *PL* 50, col. 540-541. Cf. also F. Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place in the History of Christian Doctrine*, Cambridge 1914, p. 58 and N. N. Seleznyov, *Nestorij i Cerkov' Vostoka*, p. 32.

the Nestorian sources of being envious of Nestorius' popularity and involved in causing his exile⁵⁴.

The actual situation had been the basis for a series of depositions of those who had been consistently against the *Formulary of Reunion*⁵⁵ and led to the issue of the emperor's constitution, on 3 August 435, directed by Theodosius II against Nestorius' adherents, called "simonians" by the emperor⁵⁶. The constitution had forbidden both possessing and reading Nestorius' writings against the orthodox religion or decisions of the Ephesus Council; such works were ordered to be burnt. Nestorius had been deprived of his material property and had to move to a place of exile at Petra⁵⁷. The date of his banishment remains disputable; most probably, however, the exile followed and supplemented the emperor's constitution, and therefore it should be dated in the second half of the year 435⁵⁸. Also sentenced to the exile at Petra was Nestorius' friend, *comes* Ireneus, most likely in the same period as Nestorius⁵⁹.

Petra had not been the final place of exile for the deposed bishop and it appears that after a relatively brief period of time, after his first exile, sometime in 435 – 440, he was transferred to the Great Oasis (nowadays known as Khargêh) in Egypt⁶⁰ and perhaps placed at one of the monasteries there⁶¹. According to the letter

⁵⁴ Cf. *La légende syriaque de Nestorius*, p. 21. In his *Ecclesiastical History* Evagrius writes that John informed the authorities that Nestorius continued to teach his views, suggesting that John had been behind banishing his former friend from Antioch, cf. Evagrius *HE* I 7. Theophanes writes explicitly that John had asked the emperor to banish him (Nestorius) from the East, cf. Theophanes AM 5925.

⁵⁵ Cf. ACO I,4, pp. 203-204 – the deposition of the fourteen bishops who refused to enter into communion with John of Antioch. Some of them had also been put in a place of exile: Alexander of Hierapolis at Famothin in Egypt, Doroteus of Markianopolis (Devnya) at Caesarea (Kayseri) in Cappadocia, and Meletios of Mopsuestia (Misis) at Melitene (Malatya) in Armenia.

⁵⁶ Cf. *CTh* XVI,5,66 and *CJ* I,5,6. Cf. also the Greek text in ACO I,1,3, p. 68. Following the emperor's constitution, a letter of three prefects had also been issued against Nestorius' adherents and his works, cf. ACO I,1,3, pp. 69-70.

⁵⁷ Cf. ACO I,1,3, p. 67. In Nestorius' times Petra was situated in Palaestina Tertia; it was also the capital of that province, cf. W. E. Kaegi, A. Kazhdan, „Petra”, [in:] *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. A. P. Kazhdan, New York – Oxford 1991, p. 1642-1643.

⁵⁸ However, Eduard Schwartz recognized that the most probable date of Nestorius' exile is 436, cf. *ACO*, I,4, p. XI. A similar view is also shared by André-Jean Festugière, cf. *Ephèse et Chalcédoine. Actes des conciles*, trad. A.-J. Festugière, Paris 1982, note 2 on p. 414 and Fergus Millar, cf. F. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire. Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408-450)*, Los Angeles 2006, pp. 176-179. The imperial decree had been addressed to the praetorian prefect and consul Isidor, who had held that latter office in the year 436, cf. PLRE II, pp. 631-633. Agapius mentions that Nestorius had been exiled during the twenty-ninth year of Theodosius II's reign, which would correspond to AD 436/437, cf. Agapius, *Universal History*, p. 415. But Barhadbesabba mentions that after his resignation Nestorius had been staying at Antioch for 4 years, which would mean that he had been transferred to Petra in the second half of 435, cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaia, *HE* 30 (p. 586). A detailed account of the doubts referring to the datation of Nestorius' exile in: G. A. Bevan, *The Case of Nestorius: Ecclesiastical Politics in the East, 428-451 CE*, pp. 274-278.

⁵⁹ Cf. *ACO*, I 4, p. 203. The extant emperor's letter concerning this question is not dated; however, the authors of late-antiquity prosopography date Ireneus' exile at the same time as Nestorius', cf. PLRE II, p. 624, and, on the further Ireneus' fate: F. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire*, pp. 179-181, 184-190.

⁶⁰ According to a section of Nestorius' letter to the governor of Thebaid, he was supposed to stay at the oasis called Oasis of Ibis, cf. Evagrius, *HE* I 7.

⁶¹ Socrates of Constantinople had known about the fact of putting Nestorius at the Oasis, cf. Socrates, *HE* VII 34,11. Both he and the other authors do not mention placing Nestorius at Petra, mostly writing only about his exile at the Oasis, cf. Evagrius, *HE* I 7, Theophanes, AM 5925, Barhadbešabba Arbaia, *HE* 30

written by Nestorius to the *comes* of Thebaid⁶², quoted by Evagrius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, during one of the raids by a nomad tribe called Blemmyes (or some other nomad Nubian tribe – the Nobades)⁶³ the Great Oasis had been ransacked and the invaders captured many of its inhabitants, including Nestorius himself. The Blemmyes had then, unexpectedly, released their captives, warning them also that the area where they had been staying would be plundered by a Libyan tribe, the Mazici. The events mentioned here may have taken place in 444, when the Mazici had attacked and destroyed the monastery at Scetis⁶⁴. Nestorius had therefore gone, together with the fugitives, to Panopolis (Akhmīm)⁶⁵, where he informed the authorities of his presence there, in order to avoid being suspected of escaping his exile. The governor of Thebaid ordered him to move, escorted, to the island Elephantine⁶⁶ at the southern fringes of Egypt; yet before he managed to get there, he had been called back to Panopolis and then placed near the city, perhaps in the fortress Sinbelġe⁶⁷. While he had been staying there, another order was issued to move him to an unidentified location⁶⁸.

(p. 586), Zachariah of Mytilene, *HE* III 1 (p. 42), Michael the Syrian, *The Chronicle* VIII 4, John Moschos, *Pratum Spirituale* (Nissen) I (p. 354), *The Chronicle of Seert*, p. 210. Agapius provides general information that Nestorius had been exiled to Egypt, cf. Agapius, *Universal History*, p. 415.

⁶² The official to whom Nestorius had addressed his letter, called by Evagrius as *hegoumenos* was probably the *praeses* of Thebaid, cf. F. Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire*, p. 181 (*dux et comes* of Thebaid).

⁶³ In his letters to the governor of Thebaid, Nestorius calls the attackers “Blemmyes” in one letter, and “Nobades” in the other. The context, however, indicates that he describes the same event.

⁶⁴ As suggested by D. W. Johnson, “Nestorius”, [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, New York – Toronto 1991, vol. 6, p. 1786. In his letter Nestorius writes that he was sent into the Oasis in consequence of the recent disturbance at Ephesus, which may suggest that the above-mentioned attacks by the nomad tribes occurred several years after Nestorius had been placed at the Oasis, cf. Evagrius, *HE* I 7. About the attacks on Scetis, cf. also A. Cody, “Scetis”, [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, New York – Toronto 1991, vol. 7, pp. 2103-2104. The Nestorian sources also mention Nestorius’ abduction and the miracle which accompanied that event, cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaia, *HE* 30 (pp. 584-585), *A Letter to Cosmas* 13 (pp. 283-284).

⁶⁵ Panopolis (Akhmīm) was a city situated on the right bank of the Nile. There were several monasteries in the vicinity, cf. R.-G. Coquin, “Akhmīm”, [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, New York – Toronto 1991, vol. 1, p. 78.

⁶⁶ Elephantine, situated on an island on the Nile, was Egypt’s southernmost city; in late antiquity, the temple located there had been used as army quarters, cf. P. Grossman, “Elephantine”, [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, New York – Toronto 1991, vol. 3, pp. 951-952. Also the author of *A Letter to Cosmas* writes on Nestorius’ exile into Elephantine (literally: into an island on the Nile), suggesting, however, the deposed bishop’s longer stay at that place, cf. *A Letter to Cosmas* 10 (p. 280).

⁶⁷ On Sinbelġe, located near Akhmīm, Pseudo-Dioscorus writes in a panegyric in honour of Macarius of Tkōw, cf. Pseudo-Dioscorus, *A Panegyric on Macarius, Bishop of Tkōw* 12, 7 (p. 79). Pseudo-Dioscorus’ account mentions that in the period of the Council of Chalcedon, Macarius of Tkōw had a vision during which he had been at Sinbelġe, together with Shenoute and Nestorius. Cf. also D. W. Johnson, “Nestorius”, [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, New York – Toronto 1991, vol. 6, p. 1786. Drawing on Timotheos Ailuros’ story, also John Rufus mentions that Nestorius, at the end of his lifetime, had been staying at Panopolis, cf. John Rufus, *Plerophoriae* 36 (pp. 83-85). The *History of the Patriarchs*, on the other hand, mentions that Nestorius had been exiled into Akhmīm, where he had stayed until his death, cf. *History of the Patriarchs* 12 (p. 441). Akhmīm, as Nestorius’ place of exile, is mentioned also by Severus ibn al-Moqaffa’ in his *History of the Councils* (Sévère ibn al-Moqaffa’ évêque d’Aschmounain, *Histoire des conciles (second livre)*, I, édition et traduction du texte arabe par L. Leroy, PO 6, Paris 1911) pp. 514-515 and Eutychios in the *Annals*, PG 111, col. 1033.

⁶⁸ Cf. Evagrius, *HE* I 7. The place in question may have been Saclan, mentioned by Eutychios in the *Annals* as Nestorius’ place of burial, cf. PG 111, col. 1033.

The most doubts and controversies among historians arise as to the time and place of Nestorius' death. In relating the last moments of the former bishop of Constantinople, the sources are very strongly marked with the intent of conveying the propaganda message, showing that Nestorius had died in a manner similar to the heretic Arius (Monophysite and Chalcedonian traditions), or, on the contrary, among the signs attesting to his sanctity (according to the Nestorian tradition). Hence, there are considerable discrepancies in the descriptions dealing with his death, mostly of the topical character.

However, in the sources of both Monophysite and Nestorian traditions there is corresponding information that before his death Nestorius had been recalled from exile by the emperor Marcian⁶⁹. Only the Chalcedonian sources do not mention this information in order to avoid connecting the ruler, an important figure for Chalcedonians, with a heretic⁷⁰. This exceptional correspondence between both traditions results from the view of the emperor held by the two parties. The Monophysites, for whom Marcian was a godless ruler, have been willing to connect that figure with Nestorius, for reasons completely different than the Nestorians. Only the Chalcedonians are in opposition here – Marcian had restored orthodoxy, but as there was no place for Nestorius within its framework, the information on the recalling from exile had not been mentioned in the Chalcedonian tradition.

The correspondence of the Monophysite and Nestorian traditions in the question of calling Nestorius to come to the Council does not mean, however, that such an event had actually taken place. We do not find a relevant mention in any official documents; what is more, there was not the slightest reason to do so – his rehabilitation was not desired by either Augusta Pulcheria, the initiator of the Council, or the Pope Leon, or the overwhelming majority of the participants in the Council. I think, therefore, that this tradition is not authentic, maintained by the both parties of the conflict for purely “propaganda”-related reasons. For the Nestorians, calling Nestorius to appear at Chalcedon (Kadıköy) signified his rehabilitation, for the Monophysites, on the other hand, it was the proof that the Council had restored “Nestorianism”.

Apart from the question of calling Nestorius to the Council of Chalcedon, the most doubtful issue is connected with determining the date of his death: whether he had died before the beginning of the Council, or later. The most frequently mentioned date is around the year 451, and it is broadly accepted (in conformity with the Monophysite and Nestorian traditions) that Nestorius had died on the way

⁶⁹ Cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaia, *HE* 30 (pp. 585-586), *La légende syriaque de Nestorius*, p. 24, John Rufus, *Plerophoriae* 36 (pp. 83-85), Zachariah of Mitylene, *HE* III 1 (p. 42), Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* VIII 9, Severus ibn al-Moqaffa', *History of the Councils*, pp. 514-515, Philoxenus of Mabboug, *A Letter to the Monks of Senoun* (Philoxène de Mabbog, *Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, traduit par A. de Halleux, CSCO, *Scriptores Syri*, t. 99, Louvain 1963), pp. 14-15, Pseudo-Dioscorus, *A Panegyric on Macarius, Bishop of Tkōw* 12,7 (p. 79).

⁷⁰ Cf. Evagrius, *HE* I 7. Likewise, Theophanes does mention that Nestorius had been recalled from the Oasis before his death, but only to put him in another place of exile, cf. Theophanes, AM 5925. On the other hand, John Moschos mentions that messengers with the imperial letters visited Nestorius, but he does not inform about the contents of the letters, cf. John Moschos, *Pratum Spirituale* (Nissen) 1 (p. 355).

to the Council⁷¹. Having rejected the thesis of recalling Nestorius by the emperor Marcian, there is no need to maintain the version of Nestorius' death on the way to the Council, or recalling him from exile in consequence of the Council decisions, especially as the Council had confirmed his condemnation, even compelling a previously adamant Theodoret to accept it. Therefore, Nestorius had died at the place of his exile, which is accepted even by a majority of the sources informing about his recall⁷², probably somewhere near Panopolis, or at that fourth, unknown, place of exile.

Determining the year of Nestorius' death is possible thanks to the calculations by Barhadbešabba, who provides the facts of Nestorius' life in chronological order: he was supposed to hold the office of the bishop of Constantinople for three years, then stayed at Antioch for four years, eighteen years at the Oasis – in total, 25 years of episcopacy. It would mean that Nestorius had lived until the Council of Chalcedon and died after its completion, in 452 or 453⁷³. The evidence may be found in *Liber Heraclidis*, where, next to recounting the events connected with the Council of Ephesus (449) and the information about the death of Theodosius II in 450, we have a mention referring to Dioscorus' well-deserved punishment⁷⁴. It may be considered to be a later interpolation, or as evidence of *Liber Heraclidis* being written in the days of the Council, perhaps in order to present the author's apology in connection with the Council⁷⁵. It is additionally confirmed by the Syriac Christological texts of the Nestorian origin, which provide that Nestorius died 22 years after the Council of Ephesus; it would also confirm that the date of his death falls around the year AD 453⁷⁶.

⁷¹ As stated in Monophysite sources: Zachariah of Mytilene, *HE* III 1 (p. 42) and Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* VIII 9.

⁷² Cf. *La légende syriaque de Nestorius*, pp. 24-25, John Rufus, *Plerophoriae* 36 (pp. 83-85), Severus ibn al-Moqaffa', *History of the Councils*, pp. 514-515, Pseudo-Dioscorus, *A Panegyric on Macarius, Bishop of Tkōw* 12, 7 (p. 79). Such information also in the Chalcedonian sources, cf. John Moschos, *Pratum Spirituale* (Nissen) 1 (pp. 355-356), Theophanes, AM 5925, Theodore Lector, *HE* 528. Barhadbešabba's ambiguous information seems to suggest that Nestorius had died at the Oasis, cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaia, *HE* 30 (pp. 585-586). The author of the letter to Cosmas states that the bishop died at the place of his exile, cf. *A Letter to Cosmas* 12 (pp. 281-282).

⁷³ Cf. Barhadbešabba Arbaia, *HE* 30 (p. 586). François Nau figured out that Nestorius had died, in accordance with the Monophysite sources, between the calling and assembling of the Council at Chalcedon, therefore around June 451, cf. F. Nau, *Nestorius d'après les sources orientales*, Paris 1911, p. 51.

⁷⁴ Cf. Nestorius, *LH*, p. 375. The evidence of the fact that Nestorius had lived in the period of the pivotal events of the years 449-450 is a letter he had sent to the people of Constantinople, in which he expressed his support for the teachings of the Pope Leon and Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, regarded by François Nau as authentic, cf. *La lettre de Nestorius aux habitants de Constantinople*, éditée par E. W. Brooks, *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 15 (1910), pp. 275-281. There is no doubt in the fact that Nestorius had lived until the Council of Ephesus in 449, which is confirmed by the outcries appearing at the Council, demanding the burning of Nestorius together with Ibas of Edessa, cf. J. Flemming, *Akten der Ephesinischen Synode von Jahre 449*, syrisch mit G. Hoffmanns deutscher Übersetzung und seinen Anmerkungen herausgegeben, Berlin 1917, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁵ On the subject of the authenticity of the particular parts of *Liber Heraclidis*, see L. Abramowski, *Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius*, pp. 118-134 and L. I. Scipioni, *Nestorio e il concilio di Efeso. Storia, dogma, critica*, Milan 1974, pp. 299-308.

⁷⁶ L. Abramowski, A. E. Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts*, Cambridge – New York 1972, vol. I, p. 36, vol. II, p. 24. Cf. also M. Parmentier, "A Letter from Theodoret of Cyrus to the

Abbreviations:

- ACO I – *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, tomus primus, *Concilium Universale Ephesenum*, volumen primum, *Acta graeca*, edidit E. Schwartz, Berolini et Lipsiae 1921-1930.
- PG – *Patrologia cursus completus. Series Graeca* 1-159, Paris 1857-1966
- PL – *Patrologia cursus completus. Series Latina* 1-207, Indices I-IV, Paris 1878-1990.
- PO – *Patrologia Orientalis*, Paris 1903-
- SCh – *Sources Chrétiennes*, Paris 1941-
- CSCO – *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium*, Paris 1903-1949, Louvain 1950-
- CJ – *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, editio stereotypa octava, volumen secundum, *Codex Iustinianus*, recognovit P. Krueger, Berolini 1906.
- CTh – *Codex Theodosianus*, edidit T. Mommsen, Berolini 1905.
- PLRE II – *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, ed. by A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, t. II, Cambridge 1980.

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