

By Foot To China
Mission of The Church of the East, to 1400

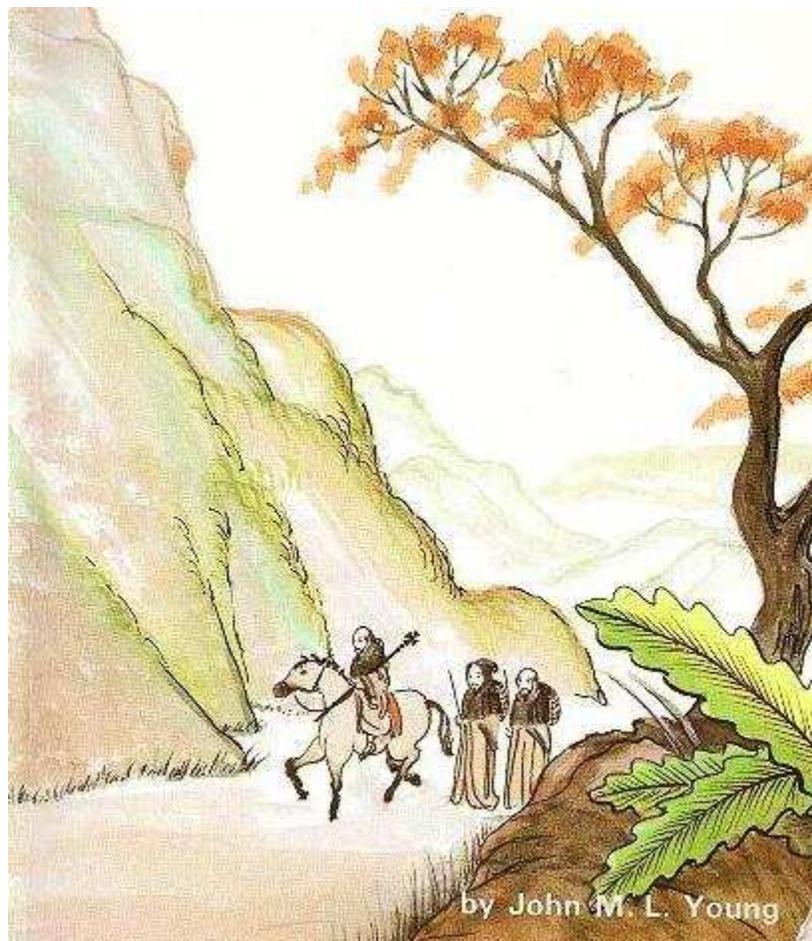
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Mission of The Church of the East, to 1400

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DEDICATED

to the memory of the men of God who thirteen centuries ago first took the gospel to China - "the missionaries who traveled on foot, sandals on their feet, a staff in their hands, a basket on their backs, and in the basket the Holy Scriptures and the cross. They went over deep rivers and high mountains, thousands of miles, and on the way, meeting many nations, they preached to them the gospel of Christ. □
FROM AN ANCIENT TEXT.

AND DEDICATED

to one who "also serves" in a thousand ways with her faithful help - my wife.



A restoration of the original silk painting of a missionary bishop of the Church of the East, now in the British Museum, London, discovered by Sir Aurel Stein at Tun-huang, western China, in 1908. It had been found, along with many manuscripts including some Christian ones, in a cave sealed in 1036. This restoration was painted by Robert MacGregor.

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PREFACE

A gospel-preaching church with 1,300 years of missionary experience deserves our attention. It is the purpose of this book to focus on that great missionary effort. Only a part of the story, however, of the Church of the East's missionary enterprise, from the second century to the end of the fourteenth, can be told here. The main focus will be the mission to China during the last 800 years of that period.

Research materials for writing on this subject are available, although they are scattered over half the earth and are in various languages. Little, however, is written for the reader who is not pursuing advanced studies. English speaking Christians have been interested in the western expansion of Christianity--in history that involves their own origin and development - and little is accessible to them concerning the amazing missionary effort of the Church of the East. That the gospel of Christ's kingdom did confront the masses of Asia long ago, when the world's population was the densest there and civilization the most advanced, is today little appreciated by western Christians. How it fared in that confrontation is almost totally unknown.

The result is that when someone asks, "Where was the evangelical church of Christ during those long 'Dark Ages' of Europe when the Church of Rome usurped the place of the Holy Spirit?" there usually follows a notable silence. The Iona colony of Scotland may be mentioned, or the later Waldenses of the Italian Alps, both involving small numbers. There is a better answer to the question, however, and the following narrative seeks to shed some light on it.

The story of the Church of the East's mission to Asia is one that needs to be told to today's church. It is the story of a dedicated missionary effort and the ever expanding witness of Christians from Antioch to Peking, nearly 6,000 miles by foot, until multitudes of Christians lived from the 30th to the 120th longitude in medieval times.

The facts and analyses that follow concerning the church's great epic of eastward advance, it is hoped, will bring encouragement, edification, and perhaps warning to our contemporary churches in their present mission to the unreached. Here is evidence that God gives strength and conversions in the direst and seemingly most impossible circumstances.

Here also is evidence that pitfalls to the church's mission always exist. Common examples are such things as an inadequate appreciation of the spiritual deadness of the natural man, failure to recognize the necessity of heart repentance and the meaning of baptism, the temptation to consider external acts of piety as necessarily representing inner holiness, the acceptance of liturgy and form in the place of justification by faith alone and identification with Christ, compromise with the world's secularism and other people's religious practices, sacramentalism, over-identification with a particular political regime, and concern with the elite that leads to failure to reach out to the common people.

As troublesome a problem as any, however, to those desiring to bring the gospel by word and deed into a foreign culture, deeply concerned to make the love and salvation of Christ understood, is the difficulty of adequately contextualizing the gospel without compromising its true meaning and uniqueness. The contextualization takes place not necessarily when the missionary succeeds in crossing the barriers of culture and language, so as to enable the listener to feel he understands the westerner's gospel, but when this new understanding is genuinely reflective of the New Testament message of Christ's redemptive love and mercy and involves a heart commitment to Him.

The lesson of the gospel in the Near and Far East during the Middle Ages is that such failures as are referred to above can cause Christian communities where churches once flourished to disappear so completely that later generations not only do not know what the gospel is but are not even aware that it was ever present in their midst. In those cases the only witness to the living may be the testimony of the dead, written on tombstones. An illustration of such a voice out of the past is that of a ninth century Christian in a central Asian cemetery, where the gentle words still whisper, "This is the grave of Pasak - The aim of life is Jesus, our Redeemer."

The lessons of history need to be studied for, as one sage noted, "Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat its failures in the future."

INTRODUCTION

In the year 635 A.D., a party of foreigners from the distant West, a vague area known to the Chinese for many centuries as Ta Chinn, reached the capital city of the Great Chinese Empire, Ch'ang-An, later called Hsian-fu. It was in the early years of the T'ang dynasty.

They indicated that theirs was a religious mission to bring to the empire knowledge of the doctrines and salvation of Jesus Messiah. The emperor gave them permission to practice their religion which he officially named the Ta Ch'in Chiao, the Ta Chinn religion. They themselves used the name Ching Chiao, Luminous Religion (or Illuminating?), and referred to their home church as The Church of the East. The Church of Rome, however, called them "Nestorians," and its thirteenth-century envoys and missionaries to the Far East always referred to the churches of these early missionaries from "The Church of the East" as "Nestorian" churches.¹

Who were these early missionaries? Where did they come from? Were they holders of the "Nestorian" doctrine condemned as heresy at the Council of Ephesus in 431? Did Nestorius himself hold it, and what was their attitude toward him? What do the nine Chinese and two Syriac manuscripts, discovered in north China this century, and the famous "Nestorian" monument inscription, discovered in 1625 by Jesuit missionaries near Ch'ang-An, reveal about their mission, theology, and particularly their christology? Was there anything unique in their theology or christology which motivated this great missionary zeal? And why did this tremendous missionary effort end in failure? These are questions which need investigation and which are pursued in the following chapters.

Part I traces the main details of the eastward expansion of the gospel from Antioch to Syria, across Persia and Mongolia, and on into north China by the ancient trade routes, noting the evidence of the Christian missions' activity.

Part II examines the christological controversy of the fifth century to ascertain what the church understood "Nestorianism" to be and what Nestorius's own presentation was, in order to come to an understanding of the theology of Nestorius and "Nestorianism." Those not desiring to follow the christological study of chapter six, with its linguistic considerations, may find the conclusion at the end of the chapter an adequate summary.

Part III examines the ten Chinese and two Syriac documents found in north China, considered to have been written by Christian missionaries between the seventh and eleventh centuries, to learn in what sense these missionaries were "Nestorians," and what relation, if any, this connection had to their missionary zeal and subsequent failure.

Much of the material of the latter two parts was prepared during studies at Calvin Theological Seminary when writing on the theme, "The Theology of the Nestorian Missionaries in China from 600-1000 A.D.," for a master of theology dissertation. The writer is much indebted to the very able assistance of Dr. Fred Klooster, professor of systematic theology at that institution, under whose direction the paper was written.

We shall begin, then, by tracing the history of the expansion of the Christian church eastward and the entrance of its missionaries into China.

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CHRONOLOGICAL GUIDE

A.D.	
35	A tradition arose that the apostle Thomas Preached in the Kingdom of Osrohene of Armenia (upper Euphrates) on his way to India.
100	A congregation existed in Edessa, considered to be the first of the Church of the East.
180	Tatian's Diatesseron completed.
200	The Church of the East in Edessa had a bishop and a theological college.
258	Djondishapur founded on the lower Tigris with much Christian participation.
280	Bishop of Selucia-Ctesiphon on the lower Tigris made first Catholicus.
301	Kingdom of Osrohene declared to be a Christian state, the first in history.
325	Council of Nicaea held and a theological college founded at Nisibis.
350	Syriac New Testament (Peshitta) Produced.
400	Jerome's Vulgate, a Latin version of the New Testament, produced.
424	The Church of the East appointed its own patriarch and declared him to be their highest court of appeal.
428	Nestorius called from the Antioch seminary to be the emperor's chaplain at Constantinople.
431	The Council of Ephesus met to accuse Nestorius of holding a two-person christology and in his absence declared him to be a heretic.
433	Formula of Union between the patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria affirmed.
451	Council of Chalcedon held.
484	The Synod of Beth Lapat (lower Mesopotamia) declared the Church the East independent of the Western Church of Constantinople and Rome.
488	Emperor Zeno demolished the Edessa theological college and the hospital was abandoned. The tradition of both was continued at Djondishapur.
499	The Synod of the Church of the East rejected celibacy of the clergy.
503	A bishop's seat was established in Samarkand and a linguistic school at Merv, for preparing written languages for the central Asian tribes, for Scripture translation.
600	Printing of full-page texts from carved wood-blocks was underway in China. A horoscope of later times set the birth of Krishna at this date.
618-907	The period of the T'ang Dynasty of China.
622	Mohammed's Hegira to Medina and the origin of the Muslim religion.
635	Christian missionaries reached Ch'ang An, capital of China.
635-643	Metropolitans appointed to Samarand India, and China.
641	The first Christian manuscript written in Chinese presented to the emperor.
?17	The second group of Christian missionaries arrived in Ch'ang An.
720	Shih t'ung (On History) first full study of historiography written.
724-748	The visit of a Persian Christian physician to the Japanese emperor and probable conversion of the empress.
751	The defeat of Chinese troops west of the T'ien Shan mountains by Arabs.
781	The Nestorian monument erected in Ch'ang An.
782	Prajna, Indian Buddhist monk, arrived in Ch'ang An with manuscripts to translate into Chinese.
800	Charlemagne crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.
801-806	Kobo Daishi and Dengyo Daishi from Japan studied Buddhism in Ch'ang An, near the Christian church there, returning to Japan to establish new, esoteric forms of Buddhism.
845	An edict drastically reducing Buddhism, Christianity, and other foreign religions in China was promulgated.
858-1342	A cemetery with tombstone dates and crosses, discovered in Turkistan a century ago, was in use during this period.
947-1125	The Liao of Manchuria established their dynasty over north China.
1001	The first Muslim invasion of India occurred.
1007	The conversion to Christianity of large numbers of Keraites took place.

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1036	A Tun-huang cliff-cave was sealed containing some 2,000 Buddhist manuscripts, a few Christian ones, and some Christian paintings.
1060	The earlier Chinese invention of gunpowder was developed for cannon warfare and military flamethrowers, water clocks, and the magnetic needle in a compass (for sea navigation) were Produced in this century.
1124-1234	The Chin Dynasty ruled over north China from the capital of Yen Ching near Peking.
1167	Te-muchin (Genghis Khan) was born east of Karakorum.
1211	The Mongols conquered the Chin of north China.
1220	The Mongols defeated the Muslim army of Persia.
1227	Genghis Khan died.
1229-1241	Ogodai ruled as the Great Khan.
1241	The Mongols withdrew their conquering armies from Austria, near Vienna, because of Ogodai's death.
1245	John of Plano Carpini arrived at Karakorum in time to witness Guyuk's election to be the Great Khan (1245-48). (Guyuk was said to be a Christian.)
1251-59	Mangu ruled as the Great Khan.
1253	William of Rubruck arrived at Mangu's court, an envoy from the King of France.
1260-1294	Kubilay Khan became the founder of the Yuan Dynasty of China.
1266	Kubilay requested the two Polo brothers to bring back from Rome one hundred Christian scholars.
1271	The crusade of Edward I of England failed to recapture Jerusalem, in spite of token Mongol help.
1274	The Act of Union between the Western and Eastern Churches was adopted at the Council of Lyons.
1275-1292	Marco Polo visited Peking and traveled in China.
1278	Two Oriental monks left Peking to visit the patriarch at Bagdad, one becoming the next patriarch.
1281	The Mongols invaded Japan and were defeated.
1291	Argun II Khan (a Christian) wrote to the king of France a proposal for a joint war on the Muslims of Egypt, but died shortly after writing.
1369	The Ming Dynasty took over China and proscribed Christianity.
1370-1405	Tamerlane, Khan of the Middle East, destroyed many cities and slaughtered great numbers of Christians in his Muslim Holy War.

PART I THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSION TO CHINA

Chapter 1

The Early Centuries

By the year 800 there were more Christians east of Damascus than there were west of that city. This statement may seem astonishing, if not incredible, to the average Western reader who knows almost nothing about Eastern church history. Students of the early growth and spread of Christianity in the Eastern lands, however, will recognize it not only as entirely factual but also as only one of many facts testifying to the remarkable missionary zeal of the eastward bound Christians.

It all began with the fulfillment at Pentecost of Christ's promise of an outpouring of His Holy Spirit for the empowering of a witness to Him throughout the world in the new international age of the gospel. "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia"² were there, their lives set ablaze with a new dedication to return to their homelands to proclaim the good news that Messiah had truly come for man's eternal salvation. The planting of the church in Antioch was an immediate result. The New Testament presents something of the history and significance of that church's missionary effort in its westward movement. But history records also an eastward expansion of the gospel with churches planted in Damascus, Edessa and Mesopotamia, in Media, Elam and Parthia (the later Sassanian empire of Persia) and in India. The church resulting from all this Eastern missionary activity came to call itself the Church of the East.

The Church of the East, considering itself distinct from the Western (Roman) or Eastern (Byzantine) Churches, holds its origin to have been in Edessa, modern Urfa of Turkey, the capital city of the little Kingdom of Osroene in northern Mesopotamia (between the rivers). Their tradition claims that King Abgar, son of Na'na, on hearing of Christ and His remarkable miracles, wrote to Him inviting Him to come to minister to his people. Our Lord received the message, so the story goes, shortly before His crucifixion, so Thomas undertook to send Addai (Thaddeus) one of the seventy who had been sent out to evangelize. From this disciple's ministry the gospel was planted in Edessa, considered the first Church of the East, its eastward expansion beginning from that city.³

Whether one accepts this story or not, we do know that there was a church in Edessa early in the second century and that the bishops of Edessa traced their succession to Serapion, Bishop of Antioch from 190 to 203.⁴ Also the coins of Edessa from 180-192 show a cross on the king's headgear. There is a Syrian tradition, however, that the apostle Thomas was their first patriarch. In a book called *Ecclesiastike*, purporting to contain the preaching of the apostles, the writer, Bar Aurai, maintains that the apostle Thomas preached Christ in the East in the second year after His ascension. Thomas was on his way to India, he states, and "We have reason to believe it true, what the Syrian writers and fathers say, that they regard St. Thomas to be their first patriarch, and accordingly they called themselves St. Thomas Christians."⁵ The Mar Thoma Church of south India holds to this day that Thomas came to them to preach the gospel and to found their church.

It is in the early literature of the Syrian church, however, that we see most clearly its antiquity and independent nature. Their language was the Aramaic, considered by many to be the language of our Lord, but in the eastern dialect of Edessa, while the written language was the old Syriac, Biblical Aramaic (Chaldee).⁶ Tatian, born in Edessa, in 150, composed a gospel harmony in continuous narrative form, called the *Diatesseron*, which for well over a century was the only gospel known by Persian Christians. About 350 a Syriac New Testament, the *Peshitta* (simple) appeared--but Burkitt claims that it was not a new translation, only a revision of an Old Syriac one.⁷

The Syriac Old Testament, Burkitt holds, is even older than the name *Peshitta*. It is quoted both by Aphraates (337 A.D.) and in the *Acts of Thomas* (first century), he contends. Specifically he states, "The *Peshitta* is a direct translation from the Hebrew, in all essentials, from the Messoretic text."⁸ Such a translation was inevitable, he feels, both because Edessa's independent civilization would require a vernacular version and because the Jewish converts in the church would insist on a translation from the Hebrew.

Although Burkitt places the Creed of Aphraates at about 337, he holds that the Acts of Thomas was written by Judas Thomas himself, the brother of our Lord. His comment on this is most interesting. "I believe most firmly that it was originally composed in Syriac, not Greek ... a doctrinal work cast in narrative form ... it

is as truly a book of religious philosophy as the Pilgrim's Progress, and it demands from us serious study."⁹ Thus he would give strong support to the early origin and independent nature of the church in Edessa.

Edessa--the capital of the small kingdom of Osrohene, lying between the outer edges of the two great empires of Rome and Parthia--sometimes a tributary of Rome (116 A.D.) and sometimes under the suzerainty of Parthia--became a Roman military colony in 216. The Sassanian dynasty of Persia, farther south, conquered Parthia in 226 and throughout that century was at intermittent war with Rome. In 258, the Sassanian king, Shapur I, captured Antioch and brought many learned scholars and doctors, among whom were Christians, back to Beth Lapat of Khuzistan, near Susa. Here they were ordered by the king to build a new city, Djondishapur, the future Eastern cultural, academic and medical center of learning. It was here that many of the east bound missionaries received their training in theology and medical lore. Later some of them were to testify that like Abraham they had left the land of Ur to bear witness for God.

The Romans recovered their losses and finally in 303 signed a treaty of peace with the Persians making the Abaros River, a tributary of the Euphrates, the boundary between the two empires. The Roman backed king, Terdat, had been restored to the throne of the Osrohene Kingdom of Lesser Armenia, a small country of northern Mesopotamia, and in 301 he declared his kingdom a Christian state, the first in history, with Gregory the Illuminator as the Church's head. After King Terdat embraced the gospel his people became Christians. With the death of Constantine in 327 and of Terdat in 342, however, the Persian king launched an attack to regain the lost western territories. The Christians of Armenia were identified with the Roman enemy, whose emperors were now Christian, and violent persecution was carried out against them, including the burning of their churches.

The Persian Zoroastrian priests were greatly concerned at the headway the Christians were making under the toleration of the treaty conditions. They finally succeeded in stirring their king to pass discriminatory laws against the Christians, which led to a renewal of persecution, on the grounds the Christians were friends of the Romans, sharing the sentiments of their enemy Caesar. Many Christians chose to flee the country at this time, some going to Nisibus (under Rome) where a theological college had been begun in 326 by a bishop just returned from the Nicene Council. In 363, however, Nisibus was recaptured by the Persians and the college fled to Edessa. In 399, a more tolerant Persian king, Yezdegerd I, came to the throne and the Romans again sought peace by sending an embassy seeking a treaty. An edict of toleration was signed in 409 giving toleration to Christians in the Persian Empire and the same to Zoroastrians in the Roman Empire.

The next year a synod was called for the whole area. It met in Selucia-Ctesiphon, on the lower Tigris, with some 40 bishops present, and was under the leadership of that city's chief bishop, who had the title of Catholicos. They adopted the Nicene Creed and defined the boundaries of some of the sees. A new and special title was given to the catholicos of "Grand Metropolitan and Head of all Bishops."

With the death of the peace-minded Yezdegerd I in 420, persecution of Christians broke out again and for many of the same reasons as before. Warfare with Rome also was renewed on the frontier but peace was concluded in 422. The immediate effect on the churches of the Armenian-Mesopotamian area was to convince them that they must by all means disassociate themselves from the Roman Church's jurisdiction (they were under the patriarch of Antioch) to escape future persecutions for political reasons.

In 424 another Council was called, this time at Markabta, with six metropolitans and 31 bishops attending. They declared their independence from the patriarch of Antioch and made their own Catholicos their new patriarch. They further agreed "that no appeal should be made from his decrees to [western patriarchs]."¹⁰ Although no doctrinal difference was declared to exist between the Church of the East and Rome, the Council did proclaim its Church to be independent in government and, in the words of Wigram, "it did as much as a Council could do to set an Oriental papacy over itself."¹¹ It was the first major crack in the structure of the Christian Church's organizational unity.

In the next act of separation from the Western church, however, doctrine was involved. The sympathies of the Eastern churches were with the Antiochene theology as we shall see later. Many of the leaders of their churches and of their theological college in Edessa, as well as the founders of the school of theology in Djondishapur, had been trained at the Antiochene theological seminary. Thus they opposed the decision of the Ephesus Council of 431 and supported the deposed Nestorius. The christological controversy raged in the Edessa theological college itself for many years until in 488 the Roman Emperor Zeno closed the college, had it torn down and on the site erected a church dedicated to Mary with the controversial title *theotokos*.¹² Most of the students and faculty moved east to Nisibus to reopen a theological school there, one which eventually became very large and influential.

Chapter 2

The Church of the East Establishes Its Independence

Prior to Emperor Zeno's closing of the Edessa "Nestorian" work in 488, a very significant event in the history of the Church of the East took place in Beth Lapat, near the ancient Ur of the Chaldees. An important theological event had just occurred in the West. Zeno had addressed his famous *Henotican* (instrument of union) to the patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch, and all three had adopted his formulation of the heretical monophysite christology. In 484 the Church of the East called a synod to meet in Beth Lapat to adopt what Rome called a "Nestorian" confession, in response to the Increasing monophysite takeover. They did not oppose the Chalcedonian formula of 451, but resented that Council's confirmation of the repudiation of Nestorius. Within the churches east of Antioch, by then, there were three distinct parties centering around each's particular christology, and each had its scholarly defenders. 1) There were the followers of Cyril of Alexandria's doctrine that Christ had two natures, one divine and one human, in one person.¹³ (Most of the monks of his see, however, held that the human nature was divinized by the logos and therefore, to all intents and purposes, did not exist after the hypostatic union.) 2) The Church of the East was most amenable to Nestorius's doctrine that Christ had two natures and two *kenume* (the set of personal characteristics of each nature) in one person. 3) The followers of the doctrine of Eutyches of Alexandria, however, held a view that was gaining increasing support in the east, the monophysite heresy that Christ had only a divine nature in His person after the ascension, the human nature having been divinized.

By the time of the Beth Lapat synod, the churches of Edessa and Upper Mesopotamia had been captured by the monophysite heresy. To make a sharp break with this error of the upper Mesopotamian churches, which were still considered a part of the western church, and to escape further controversy over the christological formulation, the synod decided to separate the Eastern church not only from the Western church's ecclesiastical jurisdiction (as in 424) but from its doctrinal confession as well, particularly with regard to its adoption of the Alexandrian monophysite heresy. Thereafter they considered themselves to be a different church, the Church of the East. The crack had widened into a complete break.

From then on not only in practice but in fact there were two independent Christian churches in the world, each with its own government and doctrinal position. It was not that the Roman Church and the Byzantine Church held the same christology, for Rome was duophysite and the Byzantine eastern churches had become monophysite. But they were still one church, the Western, Roman Church. The Church of the East too was duophysite, with a slightly different way of expressing it, but definitely not holding the view condemned at Ephesus as "Nestorian" (making Christ appear to be two persons), as we shall see later. But the Church of the East no longer considered itself a part of the Roman Church, and the Roman church retaliated by labeling it "Nestorian" after the deposed "heretic," Nestorius.¹⁴ In 499 another synod of the Church of the East rejected the doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy (though a later act required the highest clergy to be celibate, a rule sometimes ignored in different times and places). This rejection of the highly honored Roman rule made the Church of the East even more disdained by the Roman clergy.

These Eastern or "Nestorian" Christians were versatile and diligent propagators of their faith. With the flight of the Edessa theological school to Nisibis, outside the farthest borders of the Roman Empire, and the opening of another in Djondishpur, with a hospital also in the latter city, many Syrian Christians began to move eastward into Persia and to revive the spirits of that harassed Church. Zernov writes that "The Nestorians were renowned doctors. Some of them exercised considerable political influence, being confidants and advisers of such Califs as Harum al Rashid (785-809) and his successors. The third center of Christian scholarship was Merv, where many translations were made from Greek and Syriac into languages spoken in Samarkand and Bokhara."¹⁵

The influence these centers of learning had on the Arabs was also very great. Schaff, in a very interesting footnote, states his wonder that the "Nestorians" should have had such an important influence on the geographical extension of knowledge, even on the Arabs before they reached the learned Alexandria. They received their first knowledge of Greek literature through the Syrians, he wrote, and learned of medicine through the Greek physicians and those of the "Nestorians" at Edessa. Then he adds, "Feeble as the science of the Nestorian priests may have been, it could still, with its peculiar and pharmaceutical turn, act genially upon a race (the Arabs) which had long lived in free converse with nature, and had preserved a more fresh sensibility to every sort of study of nature, than the people of Greek and Italian studies The Arabians, we

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repeat, are to be regarded as the proper founders of the physical *sciences*, in the sense we are now accustomed to attach to the word."¹⁶

The "Nestorians" were firm believers in Christian education. Every bishop endeavored to maintain a school in connection with his church, realizing the necessity of such education in a land where all government education was pagan. "The chorepiscopus of every diocese," wrote Wigram, "appears to have had education as his special charge." Then he went on to write:

Scribes and doctors were highly honored. The school (of Nisibis) formed a self-governing corporation, which could own property, and was extradiocesan, its head being apparently subordinate only to the patriarch. It was quartered in a monastery, the tutors being brethren of the same.... Education was free, but students were expected to maintain themselves.... Begging was forbidden; but students might lend money to one another at one percent, and the steward had a number of bursaries in his gift. The course was purely theological, the sole textbooks being the Scriptures, and more particularly the Psalms.... The Church services also formed a part of the regular course; and no doubt all the approved theological works of the Church were to be found in the library. The students lived in groups of five or six in a cell, where they ate in common.... The college in Sabr-Ishu's day contained eight hundred pupils.¹⁷

During the year preceding the Mohammedan conquest Babai was the leader of the church in Persia, though there was no patriarch at the time as the king wanted a "Jacobite," a monophysite. Babai was an aggressive spiritual leader, and under him schools in sixty places were restored or built. Many books were translated or written to supply these schools, and missionaries and traveling evangelists were sent to many places. The statement has been made that more than 2,000 books and epistles or letters, written by prominent leaders of the time, were circulating among the Christians.¹⁸

By the year 424, as the missionaries planted churches northwards, Merv, Nishapur and Herat, south of the Oxus River, all had bishops while their monks taught the converts how to read and improve their vegetable growing.¹⁹ In a day when there was little understanding of the importance of fresh fruit or vegetables to maintain health, the "Nestorian" physicians with this knowledge brought healing to many. With the medicinal use of a "sherbet" of fruit juices and with the use of rhubarb, making both famous throughout the Orient. In 503 a bishop's seat was established in Samarkand. The missionaries kept moving northward, with perhaps their greatest success being the great Kerait conversions of the eighth century, with 400,000 families converted. The Onguts and Uigurs also were largely converted. Their historian Malech has reported:

During the patriarchate of Mar Ishu Jahb II, 636, Syrian missionaries went to China, and for 150 years this mission was active.... 109 Syrian missionaries have worked in China during 150 years of the Chinese mission.... They went out from Beth Nahrin, the birthplace of Abraham, the father of all believers. The missionaries traveled on foot; they had sandals on their feet, and a staff in their hands, and carried a basket on their backs, and in the basket was the Holy Writ and the cross. They took the road around the Persian Gulf; went over deep rivers and high mountains, thousands of miles. On their way they met many heathen nations and preached to them the gospel of Christ.²⁰

During the early years of the Mohammedan regime, the Syrian Christian churches had more freedom and peace than under the Persian kings. A concordat was signed with Mohammed whereby the Christians would pay tribute, in time of war shelter endangered Muslims and refrain from helping the enemy. In exchange they were to be given religious toleration, though they were not to proselytize, and they would not be required to fight for Mohammed.²¹ He had reason to befriend the Christians for a "Nestorian" had been Mohammed's teacher at one point and, in some early battles, certain Christian communities had actually fought on his side against pagan tribes.²² So much Christian influence, though highly distorted, is apparent in his teaching that Islam has been called a Christian heresy.

By the end of the eighth century the Church of the East had expanded to great distances with at least 25 metropolitans and one hundred and 50 bishops. Six bishops were the minimum to support a metropolitan. They were all under the patriarch of Bagdad, who had moved from Ctesiphon-Selucia in 763 to the newer city a few miles up the Tigris. So vast was this patriarchate that metropolitans in the outer regions were not required to attend regular synods and had to report in writing only every six years.²³ Zernov describes as one of the patriarch's activities that "He sent out missionaries to Tibet and to various nomadic tribes and consecrated bishops for them who moved with their flocks over the vast open spaces of central Asia."²⁴

The location of some of these 25 metropolitans is pointed out by Stewart, who cites the *Synodicon Orientale*, translated by J. B. Chabot. There the metropolitan of the Turks is placed tenth in the list and is followed by those of Razikaye, Herat, Armenia, China, Java, India and Samarkand. He also cites information, concerning the spread of the gospel in this period to the Turko-Tatar tribes, from a new manuscript translated by Mingana. This material is in the form of a letter from a Mar Philoxenus, of the eighth century, to the governor of Hirta, and makes frequent

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reference to Christian Turks throughout the area south of Lake Baikal. Mingana gives evidence to support his belief that the manuscript really has two parts, the latter written sometime between 730 and 790. It is this section that speaks of the many Christian Turks in central and eastern Asia. The writer states they were divided into strong clans, living nomadic lives with tents, though very wealthy, and that they ate meat, drank milk, had clean habits and orthodox beliefs. They used a Syriac version of the Bible but in their worship services translated into the Turkish language so that the people could understand the gospel.²⁵

The manuscript also mentions that these Turko-Tartars had four great Christian kings who lived at some distance from each other. Their names are given as Gawirk, Girk, Tasahz and Langu. Mingana believes that they were the heads, or Khakans, of the four tribal confederacies of the Keraites, Uigurs, Naimans and Merkites. The populace of each king is said to have been over 400,000 families. If there were five persons to a family, this would mean two million per king for a grand total of eight million.²⁶ If only half that many represented the actual population, it would still represent a Christian community so great it would be a tremendous witness to the zeal of those early missionaries.

Mingana declares that the credit for carrying the gospel of Christ to these tribes of central and eastern Asia belongs entirely to

the untiring zeal and the marvelous spiritual activities of the Nestorian church, the most missionary church that the world has ever seen. We cannot but marvel at the love of God, of man, and of duty which animated those unassuming disciples of Christ ... (who) literally explored all the corners of the eastern globe "to sow in them the seed of true religion as it was known to them."²⁷

A final witness to the great extent of "Nestorian" Christianity by the beginning of the ninth century can be taken from Gibbon. Of their church he said, "their numbers, with those of the Jacobites, were computed to surpass the Greek and Latin communions."²⁸

Chapter 3

The Christian Mission to T'ang China

During those early centuries of the Christian era, as the missionaries of the Church of the East were working their way eastward, the great Chinese Empire had not been inactive in making western contacts. Hirth, in his compilation of all the references to the Western nations in the Chinese historical annals begins with a quotation from 91 B.C.

When the first embassy was sent from China to An-Shi (Parthia), the king of An-Shi ordered 20,000 cavalry to meet them on the eastern frontier.... After the Chinese embassy had returned they sent forth an embassy to follow the Chinese embassy to come and see the extent and greatness of the Chinese Empire. They offered to the Chinese court large birds' eggs, and jugglers from Li-kan.²⁹

Another quotation, of 120 A.D., speaks of another embassy going to Ch'ang-An, the capital of China, and offering "musicians and jugglers They said of themselves: [We are men from the west of the sea; the west of the sea is the same as Ta-ts'in',³⁰ (the sea being the Gulf of Persia). From then on the designation Li-kan is seldom used, and Ta-ts'in, with a later spelling of Ta-Ch'in, becomes the usual designation. Since the early Christians in China, as the famous Monument inscription of 781 indicates, were called Ta-Ch'in Chiao, Ta Ch'in Religion, as we shall see shortly, it is important to determine where Ta-Ch'in was. One of the early Chinese records is worth quoting at some length:

The country of Ta-ts'in is called Li-chien (Li-kin) and, as being situated on the eastern port of the sea, its territory amounts to several thousand li. . . Their kings always desired to send embassies to China, but the An-Shi (Parthians) wished to carry on trade with them in Chinese silks, and it is for this reason that they were cut off from communication. This lasted till ... (166 A.D.) when the king of Ta-ts'in, An-tun, sent an embassy who, from the frontier of Jih-nan (Annam) offered ivory, rhinoceros horns, and tortoise. From that time dates the direct intercourse with this country.³¹

The country of Fu-lin, also called Ta-ts'in, lies above the western sea. In the southeast it borders on Po-ssu (Persia).... The emperor Yang-ti of the Sui dynasty (A.D. 605-617) always wished to open intercourse with Fu-lin, but did not succeed. In ... (643) the king of Fu-lin, Po-to-li, sent an embassy. [Then mention of embassies in 667, 701, and 719 are followed by this statement.] A few months after, he further sent *ta-to-sheng* [great-virtuous-priests, a term like Reverend, doubtless for Nestorians who arrived then] to our court with tribute.³²

Saeki identifies An-tun with the Roman emperor Marcus Antonius.³³ Hirth states, "We may say, in a few words, Ta-ts'in was Syria as a Roman province; Fu-lin was Syria as an Arab province during the T'ang dynasty (618-907), and as a Seldjuk province during the Sung dynasty (960-1280)."³⁴ Saeki believes that the etymological derivation of Fu-lin is from E-fu-lin for Ephraim, between Jerusalem and Samaria.³⁵ This opinion is corroborated by the reference in the first Chinese Christian document of 638, "The Jesus Messiah Discourse," of which we will take note later, in which we read, "Just about that time, the One (Jesus Messiah) was born in the city of Jerusalem in the country of Fu-lin (Ephraim)."³⁶ Hirth also states it is his view "that all the first embassies sent from Fu-lin during the T'ang dynasty were carried out by Nestorian missionaries. The Nestorians enjoyed a great reputation in Western Asia on account of their medical skill."³⁷

The Chinese records give a graphic picture of the long trade routes across their country, around the south of the Gobi desert, to the Oxus River, into Parthia and on to Mesopotamia. An alternate route was by sea from Canton, around the Malay peninsula, past the southern tip of India and into the Persian Gulf. Yule writes, "At this time, (early fifth century) the Euphrates was navigable as high as Hira, a city lying southwest of ancient Babylon ... and the ships of India and China were constantly to be seen moored before the houses of the town."³⁸ The Chinese either turned their goods, chiefly silks, over to the Arabs here, or over to the Parthians at the Oxus River, the latter then bringing them to Hira. There they were transshipped around the Arabian peninsula, up the Red Sea to Solomon's Ezion-geber or the Aelana (modern Akabah) of the Romans; from there caravans carried them to Petra, the great market city, to sell them to the western traders. Of Petra Hirth writes:

During the first two centuries A D., Petra or Rekem, was the great emporium of Indian (and, we may add, Chinese) commodities, where merchants from all parts of the world met for the purpose of traffic.... Under the auspices of Rome, Petra rose, along with her dependencies, to an incredible opulence.... This prosperity was entirely dependent upon the caravan trade, which at this entrepot changed carriage, and passed from the hands of the southern to those of the northern merchants.³⁹

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It was not until the seventh century that two events brought about the demise of this great trading center. The first was the smuggling of silkmoth eggs into Syria, concealed in a bamboo cane, the presumption being that it was done by "Nestorians,"⁴⁰ with the result that "by the end of the sixth century (Syria) appears to have been meeting the west's demand for the raw material."⁴¹ The other was the fall of Petra to the Mohammedans after 640. It was without doubt through these early oriental traders that the Syrian Christians of "Ta-Ch'in" first heard of the greatness of the Chinese Empire and determined to take the gospel there. It is even very likely that they arranged to go with returning merchants. We know that the time was early in the T'ang dynasty, when the empire had its widest extent, its soldiers governing 811 the way to the Oxus River, for the Nestorian Monument declares the year of their arrival at the capital of Ch'ang-An (or Hsi-an-fu) to be 635 A.D.

Evidence of Christian Activity in China, 635-845

Of all the evidence of the activity of the Christian missionaries in China which have come to light in the era of modern history, none has been more dramatic than the report of the discovery of the "Nestorian" stone Monument by a Jesuit priest in 1625. It had actually been dug up by Chinese workmen, under an old wall, two years earlier "at a certain place in Kuan-chung" ⁴² which Saeki identifies as the site of a "Nestorian" monastery and church near Chouchih, about 30 miles from Hsi-an-fu, the modern name for the old capital, Ch'ang-An. When Trigault, the first Roman Catholic missionary to see it, took rubbings it had been moved to Hsi-an-fu, probably late in 1624. It is still there today, while an exact replica exists in the Vatican museum, with still another in Japan at the Shingon (True Word) Buddhist Temple on Koyasan.

When announcements of it were first made in Europe some doubted its authenticity, claiming it was a "pious fraud" of the Jesuits to show the antiquity of their Church's missionary efforts.⁴³ Of this Gibbon has written:

The Christianity of China, between the seventh and the thirteenth century, is invincibly proved by the consent of Chinese, Arabian, Syriac, and Latin evidence. The inscription of Hsianfu, which describes the fortunes of the Nestorian church, from the first mission, A.D. 636, to the current year 781, is accused of forgery by La Croze, Voltaire, and others, who become the dupes of their own cunning, while they are afraid of a Jesuitical fraud.⁴⁴

One of the criticisms of it was that the style of writing "is too modern to be credited with a thousand year's age."⁴⁵ Of this Hirth says it "is utterly baseless A Chinese *connoisseur*, who had never heard of the Nestorian Tablet, and to whom I showed a tracing of it, declared it at once as 'T'ang-pi,' i.e., written in the style of, and containing the slight varieties adopted during, the T'ang dynasty."⁴⁶

The stone itself stands over nine feet high, three feet wide, and one foot thick, with two dragons carved over the top edge, a small "Nestorian" cross near the top center, and nine large Chinese characters below it reading, "A Monument Commemorating the Propagation of the Ta-Ch'in Luminous Religion in the Middle Kingdom (China)." It is stated to have been composed by a Persian presbyter named Adam and erected on "the 7th of the First Month of 781 A.D." by one "Lord Yazedbouzid" chorepiscopus of Hsi-an. Adam's Chinese name is given as Ching-ching, and in Syriac, Saeki says, it is stated on the stone, "Chorepiscopus, and Papash of Chinestan."⁴⁷ The names of some 70 missionaries are given in Chinese and Syriac at the end of the 2000-word inscription.

The inscription describes how the missionaries arrived in 635, were welcomed by the emperor, and instructed to put some of their writings into Chinese. (A later document, "The Book of Praise," indicates that there were then 530 Christian manuscripts at hand.)⁴⁸ They were given permission by proclamation in 638 to stay and teach, and a monastery was built for them outside the city in the I-ning ward. The names of the T'ang emperors are mentioned and praised as benefactors, some sending their portraits to be hung in the monastery and providing generous patronage. In return, the priests prayed for them and their ancestors daily. The arrival of 17 reinforcements from TaCh'in in 744 is mentioned which is in harmony with a Syrian church record of the departure then of these 17 missionaries⁴⁹ Comment on the doctrinal portion of the inscription will be made later.

A Japanese scholar, Dr. Takakusa, while studying "The Catalogue (of the books of) teaching of Chakya (Buddha) in the period of Chanyuan" (785-804 A.D.), discovered a passage referring to the Christian presence in Hsian, and particularly to that of Adam Ching-ching. The passage referred to Prajna, the Indian Buddhist scholar who came to China in 782. It stated: "He translated together with Ching-ching, Adam, a Persian priest of the monastery of Ta-Ch'in, the Satparamita sutra from a Hu (Uigur) text, and finished translating seven

volumes."⁵⁰ The Catalogue writer went on to complain that Prajna knew neither Uigur nor Chinese and that Ching-ching knew no Sanskrit nor understood Buddhism, but both were seeking vainglory.

He further mentioned that "They presented a memorial (to the Emperor) expecting to get it propagated" but that the Emperor (Tetsung, 780-804) was wise and after examining their work determined that it was poorly done, "the principles being obscure and the wording vague. The emperor then declared that the Ta-Ch'in religion and Buddhism were entirely opposed to each other; Ching-ching handed down the teaching of Mi-shih-ho (Messiah, using the same three Chinese characters as were used on the Nestorian Stone) while (Prajna) propagated the sutras of the Buddha. It is wished that the boundaries of the doctrine may be kept distinct."⁵¹ With that the emperor forbade the two from working together further.

The nine Chinese manuscripts and two Syriac ones found in China--some of them found in a cave sealed in 1036 in Tun-huang⁵² With one claiming that it was 641 years since Jesus Messiah was born and another giving the Chinese dating corresponding to 717--are also strong evidence of the presence of the Christians in China. These manuscripts will be described and examined for their theological content later.

Striking evidence of these early Christian times is presented by the remains of the monastery built at Chou-chih where the Monument was found. The building has long since crumbled away, but eleventh century Chinese poets have mentioned it in their poems by the name of Ta-Ch'in Ssu (temple), and in 1933 a famous tower on the property was still standing while the people of the area still called the place Ta-Ch'in Ssu.⁵³ Further, tombstones with "Nestorian" crosses on them, in areas where the local records indicate they date from the Tang era of the eighth and ninth centuries, have been found in different places in China.⁵⁴

Farther west, in the area of the salt sea in Turkestan called Lake Issyk-kul, over 600 tombstones with crosses on them were found in two ancient cemeteries. The oldest date was 858 and the latest 1342. The inscriptions on many were in the Syriac script but the names indicate that these people were native converts. One inscription reads, "This is the grave of Pasak--The aim of life is Jesus, our Redeemer." Another states, "This is the tomb of Shelicha, the famous Exegete and Preacher who enlightened all the cloisters with Light, being the son of Exegete Peter. He was famous for his wisdom, and when preaching his voice sounded like a trumpet."⁵⁵ Among the names are those of "nine archdeacons, eight doctors of ecclesiastical jurisprudence and of biblical interpretation, 22 visitors, three commentators, 46 scholastics, two preachers and an imposing number of priests."⁵⁶ A chorepiscopus is also buried there with mention that he came from a nearby city. This last resting place of the saints of 700 years ago is mute witness of a past genuine Christian presence. As Stewart says of it, "Only in the grave stones from Semirychensk (its Russian name) do we find evidence of the rich and varied Christian life which prevailed in one tiny corner of these extensive areas, filled as they once were with Christian communities."⁵⁷

The Tun-huang cave of western China, sealed, as mentioned earlier, in 1036 and not opened until about 1900, contained over 2,000 manuscripts, including some Christian ones. Also it had a painting on its walls of a Christian bishop on horseback, carrying a bishop's rod with a "Nestorian" cross on the end. In addition there was in the cave a silk screen painting of a robed man wearing a crown with a gold cross, with two other crosses around his neck, holding a bishop's rod. This painting was acquired by the Sir Aurel Stein expedition in 1908, and is now in the British Museum in London.⁵⁸ It seems to be beyond doubt a painting of an Oriental Christian bishop of the pre-1000 A.D. era. (See back cover painting.)

One of the intriguing aspects of the painting is that the right hand is held up with the thumb touching the tip of the second finger. The "Nestorians" were well known for their fondness for symbols. Was this posture a double witness to the Trinity with its triangle of thumb and finger and the remaining three fingers pointing upwards? Buddha images and paintings of earlier centuries usually show him with hands clasped in his lap or an upraised hand with open palm. In later centuries, however, it is not uncommon to see Buddha figures with the right hand raised in the posture of this painting of a Christian bishop. The question as to who used this symbol first is not answered, but it does seem to have more significance as a Christian Witness.

A tomb excavated in Manchuria in 1927 contained crosses and coins of the early eleventh century. Historical records show that those buried there were Uigurs, a Tatar tribe converted by the early missionaries.⁵⁹ Saeki feels that the Syriac script still found in some places in Manchuria today, which this writer has seen himself over some building entrances, is "nothing but the greatest Nestorian relics of all."⁶⁰

In addition, numerous references to the Persian missionaries in the land appear in the Imperial historical annals of China. For instance, the full proclamation of permission, issued in 638 and referred to on the Monument, appears with "the Persian monk A-to-pen (Abraham) bringing scriptures and teaching from far" specifically mentioned.⁶¹ Again, "In the ninth month of the twentieth year K'ai-yuan (October 732) the king of Persia sent the chief Pan-na-mi (Barnubi) with the monk of great virtue, Chi-lieh (Cyriacus) as ambassadors with tribute."⁶² But these casual references are too numerous to mention further. The evidence of the presence

of the "Nestorian" missionaries in China during the T'ang era is incontestable. On the basis of the Chinese records alone Hirth states dogmatically, "all the first embassies sent from Fu-tin during the T'ang dynasty were carried out by Nestorian missionaries."⁶³

In Japan and Korea also, evidence of a past early Christian presence survives. Two beams of an ancient temple, dating from the late seventh century, with crosses on them and having inscriptions identified by professor Sayce as being "in an alphabet akin to Syriac,"⁶⁴ are in the Tokyo National Museum. In northwest Japan is a large tomb, dating from about the same time, known to the local people as "the tomb of Jesus." In all probability it is the tomb of a "Nestorian" Christian who preached Jesus, perhaps even bore His name, who was buried there in the tomb period. The *Shoku-Nihongi*, published in 797, refers to the return from China in 736 of an envoy who brought with him "a Persian by the name of Limitsi and another dignitary of the church of the Luminous Religion (Kei Kyo-Chinese, Ching Chiao) called Kohfu."⁶⁵ Elsewhere in Japanese history the Persian is referred to as Rimitsu, the physician. The Empress Komyo was very much influenced by his teaching and later built a hospital, an orphanage and a leprosarium, works of mercy typical of the "Nestorian" practical Christianity, but not of the Buddhism of that day.

One of the most sacred objects of the Shingon sect of Buddhism at the Nishi-Honganji Temple in Kyoto, founded by Kobo Daishi after he returned in 806 from China's capital and contact with the "Nestorian" monastery there, is a copy of the early missionary manuscript, "The Lord of the Universe's Discourse on Almsgiving," a commentary on the Sermon on the Mount and other Matthew passages. It is said that Shiriran spent hours daily studying this Christian document.

The oldest structure in ancient Kyoto is the Lecture Hall of the Koryuji Buddhist Temple, rebuilt in 1165. According to Teshima, the original building was not Buddhist but Christian, erected in 603. This building burned down and was rebuilt about 818 as the Koryuji Buddhist Temple. When this writer visited it in 1976, he was given a pamphlet describing something of the temple's history but nothing of its possible Christian origin.

Amazingly, however, the pamphlet had on the cover page as the first two of five Chinese ideographs the characters Tai Shin, the same being the first two on the famous Nestorian Stone (in Chinese Ta Ch'in) indicating the Mediterranean-Mesopotamian area homeland of the missionaries. Immediately following the Tai Shin, in parentheses, was *uzu masa* in Japanese *hira gana* script. Saeki claims that the ethnic origin of these two, non-Japanese words (the meaning of which Japanese scholars can only speculate) is the Aramaic *Yeshu Meshiach*, Jesus Messiah. Remarkably the temple thus bears the names of its original identity, Tai Shin, the place of origin of the religion and the missionaries who brought it, and of Jesus Christ, the One once worshipped at that ancient church. Further identity of *uzu masa* is in a song of 641 recorded in the ancient history text *Nihonshoki*: "O Lord, our Uzu Masa, How majestic is your name in all the earth! You are truly God of gods."⁶⁶ The identification of Uzu Masa with the God of gods and Lord of the earth could not be clearer.

The most revered object in the Koryuji Temple is the pine carving of a sitting Miroko (Maitreya) Buddha, brought over from North Korea in the ninth century. The features, including a large, thin nose, are Semitic, not Far Eastern. This is the Buddha of the next coming, whose return to earth will bring marvelous deliverance to all living beings, a concept that arose in Buddhism about the beginning of the fourth century A.D. in India, at a time when Christianity had made great progress there. Maitreya is held to be the Hindi version of the Greek word Metatron, change of time, denoting the time of the coming Messianic deliverance and new age. Interesting also is the fact that the figures of the right hand of this Buddha of the future coming are in the same posture of three upright fingers, with thumb and one finger forming a triangle, similar to the posture of the bishop's hand in the painting of the "Nestorian" bishop of China.

In southwest Korea there is a cave with an entrance said to be in the pattern of the Christian cave-churches of Syria. Some 16 stone plaques are built into the walls with figures and implements carved on them which do not represent Koreans or their culture but rather seem similar to Syrian Christian scenes. The cave was built in the seventh century in honor of a "black monk" who is believed to have come to Korea the previous century.⁶⁷ Dr. J. G. Holdcroft, for many years a missionary in Korea, who describes this cave, also speaks of interviewing Dr. J. S. Gale, an American scholar of Korean antiquities, concerning the possibility of an early Christian presence in the Orient. Dr. Gale replied: "Oh, yes, all of Asia had the Gospel but lost it." Dr. Holdcroft continued, "He stated also that in the ancient Korean literature, which is all written in the Chinese character, there are even references to God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). 'But,' said he, 'I have never found any Korean scholar who knew where those quotations came from!'"⁶⁸ The Korean alphabet, a very simple one to learn, is held to have been a gift of Christian missionaries over a millennium ago, to have been revived by a Korean king some 500 years ago and then discarded, only to have been revived again by Protestant missionaries for the gospel's propagation during the past century.⁶⁹ In the providence of God, the gospel was

indeed preached throughout Asia but through compromise, ignorance of Scripture, and distortion, it became so perverted as to become almost indistinguishable from paganism and was lost to the peoples to whom it came.
Decline of the Christians in China from 845

In the year 845, a great disaster befell the Christian cause. An act of proscription was promulgated by the emperor. The Christians were not the prime targets but were definitely included. The act was directed against the many Buddhist monasteries and temples by the emperor, "hating the monks and nuns because (like moths) they ate up the Empire. He decided to have done with them," as one report puts it.⁷⁰ The act is referred to in the Chinese historical records with specific reference to the Ta-Ch'in religion, Christianity.

When Wu Tsung was on the throne he destroyed Buddhism. Throughout the Empire he demolished 4,600 monasteries, 40,000 Refugees, settled as secular subjects 265,000 monks and nuns, and 150,000 male and female serfs, while of land (he resumed) some tens of millions of ch'ing. Of the Ta-Ch'in (Syrian Christian) and Mu-hu Hsien (Zoroastrian) monasteries there were over two thousand people.⁷¹

A further report states:

The rest of the monks and nuns, along with the monks of Ta-Ch'in ... all were compelled to return to the world. A period was fixed for the demolition of those monasteries which were not to be allowed to remain. (A few were to be designated objects of art.) Materials from the demolished monasteries were to be used for repairing yamens and post-stages. Bronze images, mirrors, and clappers were to be melted down for coinage.⁷²

Although this act was withdrawn two years later, the damage was done. Buddhism never recovered from the blow, which may account for the fact that it never became the dominant force in China that it became in Japan.⁷³ Further, the Christian work definitely went into eclipse. The troublous times which followed the disintegration of the Tang dynasty, with the sacking of cities and slaughter of the inhabitants, as occurred in Canton where many foreigners died,⁷⁴ must have been also a contributing factor to the eclipse of Christian churches begun over 200 years earlier.

Foster gives the report of an Arabic record, written in Baghdad about 987, which tells of the writer meeting with a Christian monk who had seven years earlier been sent to China by the patriarch, with five others, "to bring the affairs of Christianity in that country to order." This young man told the Arab writing the account, "that Christianity had become quite extinct in China. The Christians had perished in various ways. Their Church had been destroyed."⁷⁵ The Christian monk had then returned to Baghdad. Whether this delegation had really made an adequate tour is problematical. Saeki has given evidence to show that the monasteries and churches in Chouchin and Hsi-an continued in existence long after this time. Also in 1093 the patriarch Sabrisha III appointed a bishop George to Cathay.⁷⁶ Nevertheless the evidence is that the progress of the Christian churches in China went through a noticeable decline during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Saeki reports that the famous Taoist scholar, Chia Shang-hsiang, who compiled the life of Lao-tze about 1100 A.D., apparently was unaware that the Christians had ever been present, for he classified "the remnants of the Chinese Nestorians among the 98 kinds of heretical cults or religions then known to the Taoists. He named it 'The Messiah Heretics' and put it in the 49th of the 98 heretical cults or religions prevailing in the 81 countries around Liu-sha and its neighborhood."⁷⁷

A remarkable example of the influence of Christianity on pagan religion can be seen in various concepts and rituals of the "Nestorians" being adopted, in a distorted form, by Buddhists, thereby radically affecting their tradition,⁷⁸ as witnessed by the development of the Lama sect in Tibet. Buddhism reached Tibet in 640, sometime before Christian missionaries did, but by the end of the first millennium, as striking resemblances show, Tibetan Buddhism had incorporated the Far Eastern "Nestorian" clergy's increasing preoccupation with demons, holy water, prayers for the dead, confession and red vestments as well as their traditional monastic system and hierarchy topped with a patriarch-in Lamaism's the Delai (All Embracing) Lama.

Although indications seem to warrant the conclusion that the curtain had fallen, finally, at the end of the tenth century, on the drama of Christianity in China, a story which opened so auspiciously at the beginning of the seventh, it was not to be so. The evidence of its great revival three centuries later will be given in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

The Mission Under the Khans

We have already observed that during the seventh and eighth centuries the missionaries began to take the gospel into the northern tribes of that vast area of plains later known as Mongolia. An interesting witness to the extent of the conversion of many of the southern tribes is given in the report of Benedict the Pole who accompanied Friar John of Plano Carpini on his mission from the Pope to the Khan's court in 1245. As they journeyed north of the Black Sea and crossed the Don River, Benedict wrote, "next the Alans who are Christians and then the Khazars who are likewise Christian. After, the Circassians, and they are Christians. And finally, the Georgians, also Christians."⁷⁹

The first of the northern tribes to be almost completely converted were the Keraites south of Lake Baikal. It was a later chief, the uncle of Genghis Khan, who became famous to the western world as the almost legendary Prester John.⁸⁰ From the Keraites the gospel reached the neighboring Naimans to the west and the Uigurs (ogres to Europe) to their west. The Manichean sect also succeeded in penetrating the latter tribe and converting a portion of it. By then, during the eighth century, the Uigurs had replaced the East Turks as the strongest power of the area. The Onguts north of the big bend of the Yellow River became Christians, but the Mongols and Tatars east of the Keraites were more resistant.

The Uigurs were open to civilizing influences and became a literate people through a script worked out for them by the Christian missionaries, the alphabet being the Syriac with additional letters for the new sounds. The later Mongols, under the Khans, adopted this Uigur script for writing their own language. The Christians, at their linguistic headquarters in Merv, sought to have the languages of all the tribes put into writing that they might have constant access to the gospel. The effectiveness of their mission is testified to by an inscription, found at Kara-Balsaghun in this Uigur writing, attesting an astonishing transformation brought about through the conversion of the Uigurs. It states, "This land of barbarous customs, smoking with blood, was transformed into a vegetarian state, and this land of slaughter became a land devoted to good works."⁸¹ Throughout the reign of the Khans, the Uigurs were used as their secretaries.

Saeki has given a translation of an interesting inscription that shows the influence of the Uigurs and their religion in China just before the Khan conquest. The inscription is on a stone monument erected on the side of the avenue leading to the tomb of the honorable Ma, the governor of Heng-Chow. It states that when the Chin emperor had conquered Liaotung (north of Peking) he had the Uigurs of western Kansu moved there. During the reign of the Emperor T'ai-tsung (1113-1134), he heard of the image (lit., portrait) worshipped by the Uigurs, and requested to see it. The inscription states that it was taken out of "the House where the Uigurs meet and sing their hymns" to be shown the emperor. He was so impressed that he emancipated all their slaves and gave them presents of money and land. Less than a century later one of their leaders, Ma Hsi-chi-ssu, (a corruption of the Syriac Mar Sargis) became the famous General Ma Ch'ing-hsiang and governor of Heng-Chow. In the genealogical table of the Ma family, an excerpt of which Saeki translates, appears the following statement: "The ancestors of the Ma family were the descendents of the Niessuto'o-li (i.e. Nestorian) noble family of the Western lands."⁸³ This seems to be one of the few times the "Nestorians" are referred to in the Chinese records by a transliteration of that name rather than by the name Ta Ch'in, a reference to their land of origin..

For four centuries Christianity spread through these primitive tribes, although in many instances it was weak through ignorance and compromised by the superstitious fear of and belief in the shaman, the soothsayers. It was not until the coming of Genghis Khan, with his conquest of all the tribes and amalgamation of them into the Mongol Empire, including his conquest of China, that the Church of the East came to its greatest influence and extent in the Far East.

Genghis, whose original name was Temuchin, was born in 1167, a son of the chieftain of the Mongol tribe, one of the smaller clans east of the ruling Keraites. His father named him Temuchin (Finest Steel) after a defeated warrior he admired. In subsequent battles with their hereditary enemies to the east, the Tatars, the father was killed. Temuchin then made a treaty with the Kerait leader, a Christian with the title Prester (Presbyter) John. Gradually together they conquered the neighboring tribes and through generous terms won them over. But leaders of the aging Prester John foolishly moved him to attack the Mongols, resulting in the defeat of the Keraites and his death. By 1205 Genghis was the sole suzerain of all the tribes, the ruler of the Mongolian plains. The next year he called for the leaders of the tribes to assemble for a general kuriltai (diet) and at this council they elected him their emperor with the new name Genghis Khan, Emperor of All Men.

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In 1211 the new emperor began his great war with China. It was then a divided kingdom, with the Manchu Chin dynasty ruling north of the Yellow River, and the Sung dynasty south of the river. Genghis conquered all the way across north China, destroying cities that withstood his thousands of horsemen (each of whom led four horses in addition to the one he rode) until he laid siege to Yen Ching, the capital, near the present Peking. The city fell and the undefeatable Khan turned his armies home to his capital, Karakorum, and then on to a great southern campaign. Before reaching home he carried out what became a common practice before each winter; he had his soldiers slaughter the vast mass of conquered people he had used as slave workers during the campaign. Concerning this practice, Lamb has made the following comment:

It appears to have been the custom of the Mongols to put to death all captives, except the artisans and savants, when they turned their faces homeward after a campaign. Few, if any, slaves appear in the native lands of the Mongols at this time. A throng of ill-nourished captives on foot could not have crossed the lengths of the barrens that surrounded the home of the nomads. Instead of turning them loose, the Mongols made an end of them - as we might cast off old garments. Human life had no value in the eyes of the Mongols, who desired only to depopulate fertile lands to provide grazing for their herds. It was their boast at the end of the war against Cathay that a horse could be ridden without stumbling across the sites of many cities of Cathay (China).⁸⁴

On the southward march, Genghis Khan's armies defeated the last of the nomad tribesmen of "the Roof of the World" and then crossed the T'ien Shan range to face the great Muslim power of the Shah of Kharesm. At this time Islam was at the height of its martial power. The crusaders had been driven back to their coastal forts and the western Turks were pushing the enfeebled Greek empire out of Asia. The great army of the Shah was equipped with superior armor - steel swords that could be bent double, chain mail, light steel helmets, gleaming shields and even some guns. They also used Greek fire and understood flaming naphtha and the use of catapult machines. This was the greatest military power Genghis had yet faced. But he totally overthrew it.

As Genghis remained behind to reduce the great cities of the Kharesm empire, he sent two of his generals, with 20,000 cavalry, to pursue the fleeing emperor. They followed him to Baghdad, then north into Georgia, and, following news of his death, they crossed the Caucasus Mountains, defeated a Russian army of over 80,000 and returned to their Khan by way of circling the Caspian Sea. It has been called an amazing march, "the greatest feat of cavalry in human annals."⁸⁵ Meanwhile Genghis reduced city after city--Kashgar, Balasaghun, Samarkand, Bokhara, Herat, Merv, Balkh, Nishapur--some of the greatest cities in the world, with all their wealth, culture, industries, libraries, and ancient art were destroyed.

Some descriptions of the extent of these destructions--with many of the cities being centers of strong Christian communities - have been given. When Herat fell, 1,600,000 people were taken out of the city and killed, this once magnificent capital eventually reduced to 40 persons. Kharesm's population was divided up with each Mongol soldier being given 24 people to kill, until the population of 1,200,000 were exterminated.⁸⁶ Merv, the great educational and translation center of the Christians, had its population of 1,300,000 divided into three masses of men, women and children (excepting only 400 craftsmen whom the Mongols wanted), who were then forced to lie down while they were strangled or slashed to death.⁸⁷ Nishapur, another Christian center, had its population of 1,747,000 also put to death. Muslim and Christian alike suffered terribly in this first invasion of the Mongolian hordes. When it was over, Genghis Khan ruled from Peking to Mesopotamia, from the Knieper River to the Indus, an area covering eight longitude. In all of this "he succeeded in destroying a larger portion of the human race than any modern expert in total warfare."⁸⁸

In 1222 Genghis returned to Karakorum for a few years rest, but in 1225 he was on the march again, southeastward, to conquer the Sung dynasty of south China through Kansu, the center of the Tibet kingdom. Here he died in 1227. The escort that accompanied the funeral death cart to Karakorum had orders to strike down every individual met so no word of the Khan's death could leak out in China. Genghis had called himself "The Scourge of God," believing, as his great seal declared him to be, "The power of God on Earth; the Emperor of Mankind." In spite of his frightful behavior towards his fellow men, he constantly affirmed that he believed in one God whose will he was carrying out. His yasa or code of laws regulating Mongol life began with the statement: "It is ordered to believe that there is only one God, creator of heaven and earth, who alone gives life and death, riches and poverty as pleasures Him-and who has over everything an absolute power." The influence of the Christianity of the Keraites, Genghis' strongest tribe, is without a doubt apparent in this statement with its witness to the sovereign God of creation and providence. The next rule of the yasa shows his sense of religious toleration, a mark of all the Khans. "Leaders of a religion, preachers, monks, persons who are dedicated to religious practice, the criers of mosques, physicians and undertakers are to be freed from public taxes and charges."⁸⁹

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Genghis Khan's rule introduced the pax Tatarus. It was completely safe to travel from the Pacific to the Black Sea with a Mongol safe conduct. He set up a pony express, with way stations every 25 miles for a change of horse, and lodging every 100 miles. The envoys from the pope in 1245, led by John Plano Carpini, and from King Louis of France in 1253, led by William of Rubruck, tell of traveling by this highly efficient route, month after month, the more than 6,000 miles from their homelands to Karakorum. Genghis gathered excellent Chinese and Christian administrators and scribes about him who organized his conquered domains efficiently. He required the Uigurs to give the Mongols a written language, and Carpini has written, "These people, (the Uigurs) who are Christians of the Nestorian sect, he also defeated in battle, and the Mongols took their alphabet, for formerly they had no written characters; now however they call it the Mongol alphabet."⁹⁰ This Mongol script from the Uigur alphabet (gift of the early Christians) became the usual medium of writing throughout the vast area of the Mongol empire and, as Stewart says, "the parent of alphabets made use of by other more backward tribes such as ... the Manchus." As an illustration he speaks of an ancient Uigur manuscript existing which "supplies us with a specimen of the Nestorian alphabet as adapted to the use of the Ugro-Altai tribes. It shows the connecting link between the Nestorian writing and the various Mongolian alphabets."⁹¹

The Mongol emperors kept physicians in their courts who were available to the people. Among them the Christian physicians, with their knowledge of the use of rhubarb and sherbet, were the most respected. Rubruck mentions seeing rhubarb used at Karakorum while Saeki translates a Chinese description of a Christian physician using sherbet at the court of Kublai Khan. The writing speaks of physicians who were of the Yeh-li-k'o-wen religion (the religion of Christian priests) who made sherbet from fragrant fruits by boiling them and mixing with honey. She-li-pa-ch'ih (a man of sherbet) is the name of his office. His Excellency had the hereditary skill (to make sherbet) and it often had miraculous effect. The Emperor specially granted to him a gold tablet and made him devote himself solely to the office."⁹² The missionaries' knowledge of the value of fruit and vegetables for the sick and their physicians' effective use of that knowledge was well known in the Khan empire.

In 1236 the Mongol armies were on the move again, under their new suzerain, Ogotai, and his chosen generals Batu and Subutai. Batu divided his "golden Horde" of some 40,000 men into four army corps and moved west from the Volga into Europe. Kiev fell and the population was massacred; the German and Polish army was destroyed near Leignitz and that city too was massacred. The Hungarian army of 100,000 was wiped out as Subutai joined his forces with Batu's, and the Templars died to a man as the Teutonic Knights had at Liegnitz. Pesth (Budapest) was captured and the victorious armies of Batu and Subutai marched into Austria to Nieustadt, southwest of Vienna, with no army left to stop them. The European armies, mostly afoot, were slow and poorly led by their kings. In less than two months of 1241 the Mongols had destroyed three of their great armies and many small ones as the Mongol cavalry captured all their great cities. The Mongols were in the process of overrunning all the country south of Vienna in their ruthless manner when news suddenly arrived that Ogotai Khan had died, poisoned by a mistress, and that they were to return for a council meeting to elect a new Khan. By that providence of God, Europe was spared from further invasion. A thoroughly alarmed Christendom, however, now began to take steps to send envoys to the Khans to see what could be done to prevent such further devastating incursions. To Europeans the Mongols were usually referred to as Tatars (their neighboring tribe) or Tartars, for they liked to say they came from Tartarus (hell).

The first envoy, from Pope Innocent IV in 1245, was John of Plano Carpini. Carpini wrote a fascinating "History of the Mongols" in which he described the strange culture he was plunged into during his long trek to Karakorum. There he was present for the election to the Kha Khanship of Ogotai's son, Guyuk, whom Stewart, quoting a certain Bar Hebraeus, holds to have been a Christian. The latter stated, "He was a true Christian and in his days the prestige of the numerous Christians bodies in his dominions was very high. His camp was full of bishops, priests and monks."⁹³ Many of his advisers and ministers were Christians, including the Chinese son of Genghis' chief minister, Ye Liu Chutsai. This son had a chapel with a cross on it built before his tent. Guyuk's mother was a Christian as were many of the wives of Khans. Because the Keraites, for a number of centuries Christians, were more advanced in civilization the khans usually took their chief wives from their tribes. Dawson speaks of the fame of Baigi, wife of Tuli and mother of the Great Khans Mangu and Kubilay, and of the II Khan of Persia, Hulagu, as a Christian and adds that the chief wife of Hulagu "Dokuz Khatun, is described by the Armenian chronicles as a second St. Helena."⁹⁴ Rubruck speaks of seeing the wife of Mangu Khan come to the "Nestorian" chapel with all her children for Christian services, and of an occasion when Mangu also came. One of the hymns sung at such services is preserved to us. It begins "the Son of Mary is born to us" and is written in alternate strophes, one in Syriac and one in Mongolian.⁹⁵

Guyuk's reply to the pope through Carpini was conciliatory but contains some interesting theology.

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The contents of your letters stated that we ought to be baptized and become Christians
... you wonder at so great a slaughter of men, especially of Christians and in particular Poles, Moravians and Hungarians... Because they did not obey the word of God and the command of Genghis Khan and the Khan, but took council to slay our envoys, therefore God ordered us to destroy them and gave them into our hands. For otherwise if God had not done this, what could man do to man? But you men of the West believe that you alone are Christians and despise others. How can you know to whom God deigns to confer His grace? But we worshipping God have destroyed the whole earth from the East to the West in the power of God."⁹⁶

The Western attitude, and the charge against it, do not seem to have changed much in 700 years.

Guyuk's favoritism to the Christians can be seen in an edict he issued concerning treatment of them in Muslim lands. "We have come with authority and power to announce that all Christians are to be freed from servitude and taxes in Muhammadan lands, and to be treated with honor and reverence. No one is to molest their gods, and those of their churches which have been destroyed are to be rebuilt and they are to be allowed to sound their plates."⁹⁷ Carpini in his report wrote of Guyuk, "he maintains Christian clerics and provides them with supplies of Christian things; in addition he always has a chapel before his chief tent and they sing openly and in public and beat the board for services after the Greek fashion like other Christians, however big a crowd of Tartars or other men be there. The other chiefs do not behave like this."⁹⁸ It was doubtless this strongly pro-Christian position that led him to try to restrict the voracious campaigning of sub-Khan Batu, who then retaliated by arranging to have Guyuk poisoned in 1248. Guyuk's mother served as regent for three years when Tuli's son, Mangu, was elected the new Kha Khan.

Mangu's mother too was a Christian (a niece of Prester John), as was also his wife. Rubruck, as mentioned, reported that he saw this first wife and her children worshipping in the "Nestorian" chapel, that her daughter was a devoted Christian, and that the oldest son seemed to be also. Mangu had Christian advisers, his chief secretary being one, and provided one of their scholars to be the teacher of his oldest son. Rubruck describes how at the services the Christians "proffered their right hand to all present in the church, for this is the custom of Nestorians on entering the church."⁹⁹ He also mentions visiting "a completely Nestorian village" and states that at Mangu's headquarters during Quinquagesima, the Lent of the Easterns, great crowds of Christians streamed every day of the first week to the church, the archdeacon of which was "a well-educated man." He adds, "On Easter Eve the Nestorians baptised in the most correct manner more than 60 people, and there was great common joy among all the Christians." He also mentions that "Nestorians" were living in China: "There are Nestorians in 15 cities in Cathay and they have a bishopric there in the city called Hsi-chin (near Peking) ."¹⁰⁰

During Mangu's reign Hulagu, his brother, founded the 11 Khan dynasty in Persia and ruled in Baghdad until he died in 1265. Stewart has written of his wife:

Dokuz Khatun is described as "the believing and true Christian queen." She exercised a great influence for good on her husband. When Baghdad was taken by the Mongols, the Christians, as Bar Hebraeus tells us, were spared death and torture because of "the magnanimity, the wisdom and the marvelous high character of Hulagu." In 1265 Hulagu and his wife died. "The Christians of the whole world greatly mourned the loss of these two great luminaries and protagonists of the Christian religion," Bar Hebraeus concluded.¹⁰¹

A Muslim writer later wrote that when in 1259 Hulagu proclaimed religious freedom of worship, with no Muslim interference, "On that day there was no single Christian of the common people or of the highest who did not put on his finest apparel." Two decades later Il Khan Arghun ordered that Christian churches destroyed in the previous wars were to be rebuilt. From the time of Muhammed in the seventh century, Christians from Syria to India never had more freedom nor prestige than in the thirteenth century under the Il Khans.

Following Mangu's death in 1259, his brother Kubilay was elected Kha Khan the next year. In 1267 Kubilay moved his capital to Khanbalik (Khan capital city), a city he founded on the edge of what is now Peking, and established the Yuan dynasty of China. Marco Polo, who spent nearly 25 years serving him, has given with elaborate praise many vivid descriptions of his empire - the efficiency of his administration, the magnificence of the paved highways covering China, the humaneness with which he governed his people and the splendor of his court. A modern historian gave this appraisal of Kubilay's reign: "He ruled over a wider extent than any Mongol or indeed any other sovereign. He was the first to govern by peaceful means. The splendor of his court and the magnificence of his entourage easily surpassed that of any Western ruler."¹⁰²

Marco Polo also frequently refers to the many "Nestorian" Christians he found throughout China on his travels for the emperor. He especially singled out "the beautiful Church of Nestorian Christians in Hangchow,"

the capital of the southern Sung dynasty, which Kubilay Khan captured in his conquest of all China. Remnants of this church, according to Saeki, stone relics, are still there, while the street it was on, Mao Lao Hsiang, he suggests, is a survival of the Syriac Mura (meaning church) Lane.¹⁰³ Polo speaks of seeing three churches in Kanchou in the far west where Christianity was strong and the government of the province was in the hands of Christians. Saeki also tells of discovering in the imperial history of the Yuan Dynasty the record of Ai-hsieh, a high minister of Kubilay Khan's court, "a man from Fu-lin (Ephraim) in the Western Lands," whom the emperor greatly honored and valued for his integrity and forthright, uncompromising advice, even though it frequently differed from the emperor's. This man seems without question to have been a Christian, with the names of his children being given as Elijah, Daniel, Isaac, George, and Luke. His wife's name was Sarah. Chinese records frequently associate men from Fu-lin with the Ching Chiao religion, Christianity.¹⁰⁴

A fascinating testimony to the virility of the Christian witness in China during this time is the story of two young Christian leaders who, in 1278, set out from Kahnbalik to see Jerusalem. Both were Orientals, Rabban Sauma an Ongut Turk born in the capital, and Rabban Markos his fellow countryman.¹⁰⁵ While they were still in Mesopotamia the patriarch of the Church of the East died and in 1281 Markos was elected to take his place. Three years later, together with the Il Khan Argun, Markos sent his friend Sauma to the Western powers, asking for joint action against the Muslims to regain Jerusalem. He visited Philip IV of France, Edward I of England, and the new pope, Nicholas IV, conducting Christian services with them. Dawson has given us the following report:

Thus when the cardinals expressed surprise that a Christian priest, attached to the patriarchate (at Baghdad) should have come as an envoy from "the king of the Tartars," Rabban Sauma replied: "know ye that many of our fathers in times past entered the lands of the Turks, the Mongols, and the Chinese and have instructed them in the faith. Today many Mongols are Christians. There are queens and children of king; who have been baptized and confess Christ. The khans have churches in their camps. They honour Christians highly and there are many faithful among them. And as the King is united in friendship with the Catholics (patriarch) and purposes to take possession of Syria and Palestine, he asks your aid for the conquest of Jerusalem."¹⁰⁶

Edward I, tremendously impressed with what he had heard, replied to Rabban Sauma, "We have seen a thing than which nothing is more wonderful, that is to say that in the countries of the Franks there are not two confessions of Faith, but only one confession of Faith, namely that which confesses Jesus Christ; and all Christians confess it."¹⁰⁷ Since it was clearly understood that Rabban Sauma was a "Nestorian" Christian, representing his Church as an envoy of the patriarch, Edward's words were a striking testimony to the fact that the Church of the East's christology was not now being held suspect of the heretical doctrine for which Nestorius was accused and condemned in 431. Sauma used the East Syrian liturgy but both Edward I and the Pope received communion from him. In the summer of 1274, at the Council of Lyons, an Act of Union had been subscribed to by the Eastern and Western Churches, with the envoys of Abaga II Khan present. Apparently the new spirit of detente included the Church of the East, long called "Nestorian," and a more objective realization that it had not really been christological doctrine which had divided them in the past. The pope sent back a reply with Rabban Sauma to Markos, who ruled under the patriarchal name of Mar Yaballaha III, in which he confirmed the latter's "patriarchal authority over all the Orientals." For one brief period of history sovereigns either espousing Christianity or friendly to it reigned from the Atlantic to the Pacific across Europe and Asia.

A politically divided Europe was not able to rally around the Mongol request for united action against the Saracen hold on Jerusalem. Edward I was deeply convinced of the significance of the opportunity before them but could not raise support for united action. The powerful Mameluk sultanate of Egypt gradually pushed the Christians and Mongols out of Palestine and Syria. Argun's own son became a Muslim in 1291, in spite of his baptism, and the opportunity for continued religious toleration for Christians from the Atlantic to the Pacific under sovereigns friendly to Christianity was lost. In the century that followed, the advance of the gospel was politically and religiously resisted throughout Asia.

Kubilay Khan's benevolent reign was coming to an end at this time. He was the first Mongol ruler of a united China and twice (1274, 1281) he had tried to add Japan to his domains with great invading fleets. The second attempt was a total disaster as a great typhoon struck (called by the Japanese *kamikaze*, a divine wind) destroying the fleet. One of the relics of that invasion is preserved in the Nichiren Mongolian Invasion Museum of Fukuoka, an iron helmet with a "Nestorian" cross inlaid in silver within a heart design. Spears, swords, and even two hand guns used in the 1281 invasion are also there.

From then on Kubilay Khan limited himself to more peaceful enterprises. His system of roads and canals was unsurpassed anywhere. He maintained a postal service throughout the twelve provinces into which he divided China. He produced paper currency, printed by woodblock printing. When Francis Bacon described the three Chinese inventions of printing (improved to movable type in Kubilay's era), gunpowder, and the

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magnetic compass, all of an earlier period but all improved under the Yuan, he declared they "changed the whole face and state of things throughout the world."¹⁰⁸ In 1266 Kubilay had sent the uncles of Marco Polo home to the Pope with a request to bring back a hundred men of learning, devoted to Christianity, who would be capable of "proving to the learned of his dominions by just and fair argument that the faith professed by Christians is superior to and founded on more evident truth than any other." The Pope replied by sending John of Monte Corvino, who began an active center of Mongol Catholicism.

Kubilay Khan died in 1294. His dynasty continued until 1369 when the Ming revolution ousted it and a new dynasty began. The Mings took a strong position against all forms of Christianity and within a decade brought about the suppression or extirpation of all churches and the expulsion of Christians from Peking and all government offices. Vigorous persecution broke out against the Christians. Stewart points out that they had to flee the country, abjure Christianity or hide their identity in a secret society, of which many new ones sprang up.¹⁰⁹

The persecution of the Ming dynasty was even surpassed by that of the new ruler of the former domains of the 11 Khans. Tamerlane (Timour the lame), born near Samarkand in 1336, the son of a Turkish tribal chief, began a series of conquests that made him one of the greatest conquerors and destroyers of men and their civilizations in history. From Moscow to the Ganges, from the borders of China to the Aegean Sea, he conquered all. He was a Muslim who combined the savage bigotry of the Holy War with the ruthlessness and skill of Genghis Khan. The pax Tatarus had brought open highways and 7,000 miles of peaceful interchange of commerce; the new rule of the Muslims turned fair lands into deserts, closed the door to the distant merchant and the missionary, and erected an iron curtain between the East and the West.

Tamerlane destroyed cities without mercy. After taking Isphahan, he ordered each of his soldiers to bring in a required number of heads until he had a pile of over 70,000. On the ruins of Baghdad, 90,000 heads were piled up. Delhi fell to him in 1398 with the slaughter of immense numbers, including the execution of over 100,000 prisoners he had collected to help in the labor of the invasion. His final expedition was to conquer China, and he gathered an army of 1,800,000 to march north from Samarkand in 1405. He declared, "I mean to exterminate the idolators of China. We will proceed to this holy war. We will slay the infidels, and mosques shall everywhere rise on the ruins of their vile temples."¹¹⁰ His death that year saved China from a frightful invasion.

Under Tamerlane Christianity was ruthlessly extirpated throughout the vast portions of Asia he ruled. Stewart declares: "When he invaded Georgia ... the Christians who resisted were slaughtered, their churches destroyed and all sacred vessels and furniture given to the flames." Again, concerning a later expedition, he says of Tamerlane: "He did not omit to perpetuate the recollection of his 'immitigable hatred' of Christianity by the destruction of every monastery and every church in the districts on the line of march. Seven hundred towns, hamlets and monasteries, and every church built of stone and probably those built of other material as well, were levelled to the ground in another province. The wretched inhabitants were hunted to their retreats, dislodged and finally slaughtered."¹¹¹ An explorer of the last century, describing what he found in central Asia, says of Tamerlane, "Having laid waste thousands of towns and destroyed countless numbers of men he left a great part of Asia a desert, covered with human bones and bloodstained ruins."¹¹²

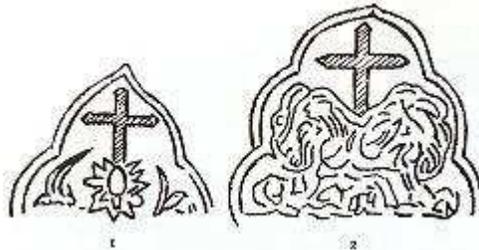
In India the Christian mission of the Church of the East had been very successful in the northern and southwestern regions. A mark of its success was that by the eighth century the Brahmins apparently felt compelled to create a divine figure to compete with that of Christ. Of this Stewart has written, "The fabrication of the incarnation and birth of Krishna was no doubt meant to answer a particular purpose of the Brahmins who were sorely vexed at the progress that Christianity was still making and were afraid that if it were not checked they would lose both their influence and emoluments."¹¹³ He points out that a study of the horoscope of Krishna fixes the date 600 A.D. as the earliest possible date for the invention of the Krishna legend. He footnotes outstanding scholars who consider the eighth century the probable time for the origin of the Krishna story.¹¹⁴

It was not the tricks of the Brahmins, however, but the invasion of Tamerlane's Muslims which did the greatest damage to the Christian cause. In spite of both, one portion of the Christian church, the Mar Thoma church, has survived to the present day. Nonetheless, by 1400, through the Mings of China and the Muslims under Tamerlane, the Christian church was virtually blotted out of Asia. In the two centuries from Genghis to Tamerlane, the Khans succeeded in destroying something like 20 million people. It was not until the modern ruler of China, Mao Tzu Tung, with his estimated 45 million executions, including 200,000 Christians,¹¹⁵ appeared in history that anyone was again responsible for a comparable slaughter of his fellow men.

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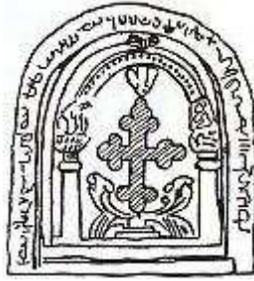


The ancient "Nestorian" Monastery of Rabban Hormizd, founded A.G.R. 873=A.D. 562. It lies about 30 miles to the north of Mosul (Nineveh), close to the village of Al-Kosh, the traditional birthplace of Nahum the Prophet.

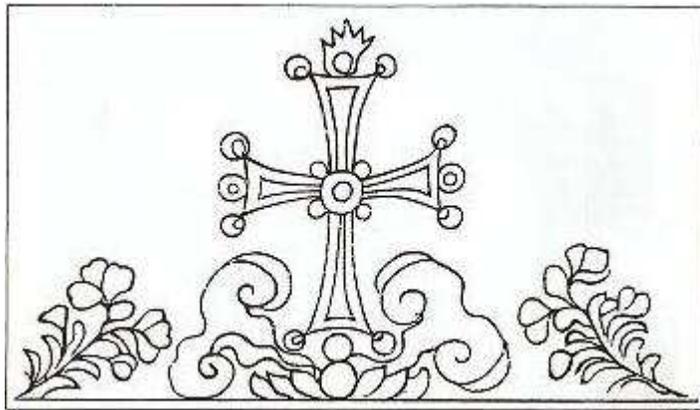


(No. 1) A stone cross found in the ruins of the Shih-tzu-ssu or Temple of the Cross, near Peking, which may mark the site of the cave in which Rabban Sauma, an Ongut Christian, lived for seven years (1270-1277) before becoming the Bagdad patriarch's representative to the kings of Europe. Cross No. 2 stood in the south-east corner of the temple and has a Syriac Scripture (Peshitta) quotation: "Look ye unto Him, and hope in Him" (Ps. 34:5).

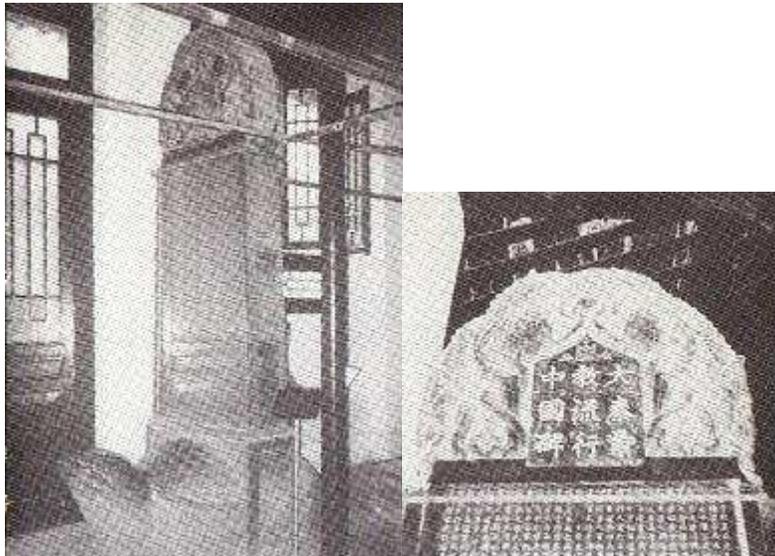
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Altar slab preserved in the Church of St. Thomas, on St. Thomas's Mount, near Madras.



The Cross sculptured on the famous Nestorian Monument-at Hsi-an-fu. It stands in the middle of a dense cloud which is symbolic of Muhammadanism, and upon a lotus, which symbolises Buddhism; its position indicates the triumph of the Luminous Religion of Christ over the religions of Muhammad and the Buddha. The sprays of flowers, one on each side, are said to indicate rebirth and joy.

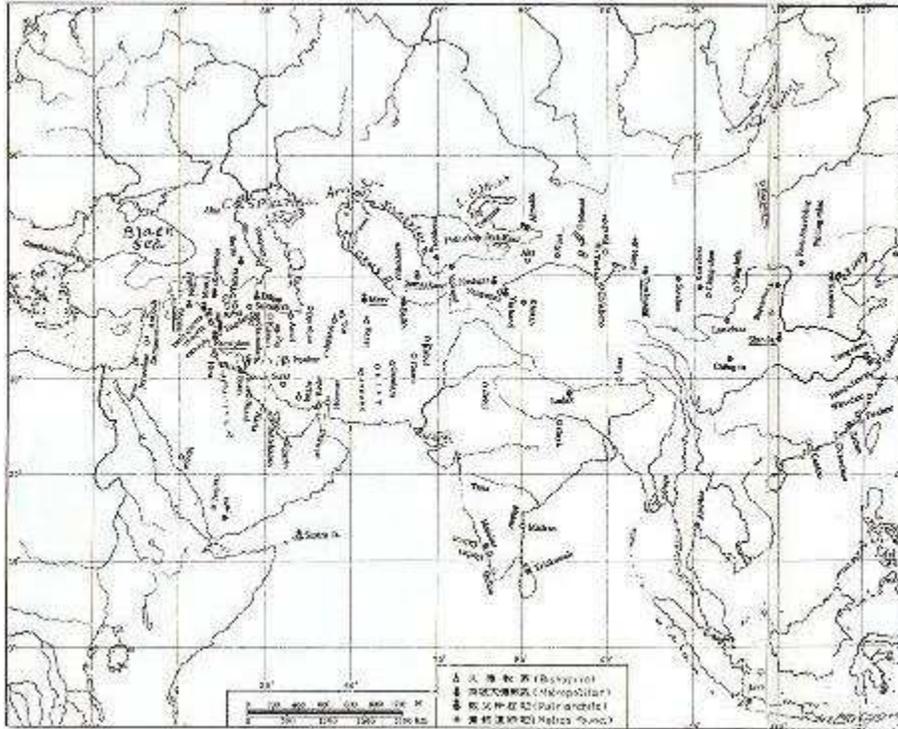


The "Nestorian" Monument, set up in China in 781, as it appears in Hsian today. Its title reads: Chinese Monument of the History of the Luminous Religion (Christianity) of Ta Chin (Syria).

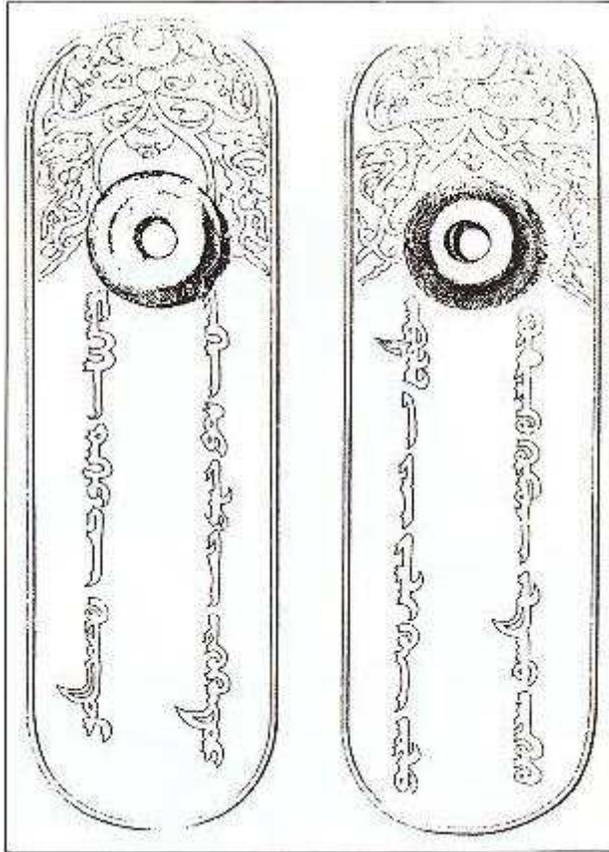
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Maitreya Buddha, image of the future coming Buddha, in the posture of thumb and finger forming a triangle with three other fingers upright, 7th century. It is now in the Kyoto temple designated Tai Shin (for ancient Syria) Uzu mass. Japanese scholar Saeki believes Uzu masa to be derived from the Syrian Yeshu Meshia for Jesus Messiah.



Map showing the Distribution of the Nestorian Churches.



The obverse and reverse of a silver Paizah, with an inscription in the Uighur character. The Paizah was worn on the breast, being suspended from the neck by a chain which passed through the moulded iron ring near the rounded end. The Uighurs were one of the first Mongolian tribes to convert to Christianity in the 8th century. The Paizah was a symbol authenticating the bearer as an official messenger of the khan, the leader.

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Portrait of Kublai Khan, the son of Hulagu Khan, Emperor of all China (died 1294).

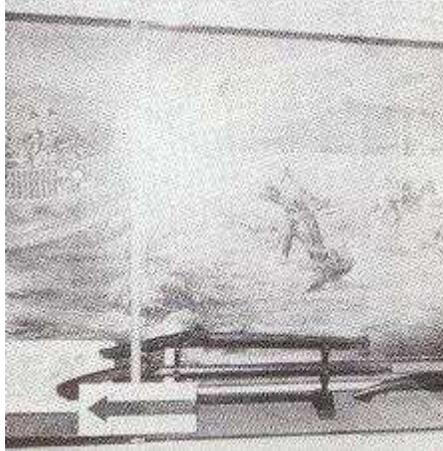


Temujine, the son of Yessugai and Ogelou, commonly known as Chingiz Khan. Born about 1160, died 1227.
From a portrait preserved in the old Imperial Palace at Peking.



Mongolian general's helmet left on the beach after the retreat of the invading Mongols in 1281. The helmet bears a carving of a shield or heart with a Christian cross in the center. It is in the Nichiren Museum in Fukuoka, Japan.

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Painting of the 1281 Mongolian invasion of Kyushu, Japan, with two preserved hand guns in the foreground. Nichiren Mongolian Invasion Museum, Fukuoka.

PART II THE NESTORIAN CONTROVERSY

Chapter 5

Nestorius and "Nestorianism"

The Fifth-Century Church's Concept of "Nestorianism"

Nestorius, according to Socrates,¹¹⁶ was born in Germanica, a city of eastern Cilicia, but neither the date of his birth nor the events of his early life are known. He doubtless studied at the theological school of Antioch under Theodore of Mopsuestia, its most famous teacher. It was Theodore who developed a christology in which our Lord's two natures were held so rigidly apart that he was accused of making Christ into two persons and of being the real founder of the heresy later known as Nestorianism.¹¹⁷ He was also a proponent of the doctrines of man's free will and non-inherited sin, having written a treatise "Against the Defenders of Original Sin" that favored Pelagius's view.¹¹⁸ As a monk and priest of the monastery of Euprepus, by the walls of Antioch, Nestorius became famous as an eloquent preacher. His character, however, has been summed up in these words: "He was an honest man, of great eloquence, monastic piety, and the spirit of a zealot for orthodoxy, but impetuous, vain, imprudent, and wanting in sound, practical judgment."¹¹⁹

In April, 428, the emperor had him installed as patriarch of Constantinople, and in his first sermon he declared a campaign against heretics, implementing it that week by having an Arian chapel demolished.¹²⁰ He had strict laws passed against various sects but treated favorably the Pelagian leaders who were in the city, having been banished from Rome as heretics.¹²¹ The first incident of what was soon to be the Nestorian controversy was occasioned by a sermon of his Antiochene chaplain, Anastasius, in which he proscribed the use of the popular term *theotokos* for Mary, doubtless emboldened to do so because Theodore had vehemently repudiated it in the school of Antioch. When a furor was raised in the city over what was considered to be an insult to Mary and a denial of the true deity of Christ, Nestorius preached a series of sermons upholding the view of Anastasius. Very quickly copies of these were sent to Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, who thereupon attacked Nestorius in sermons and letters to the Egyptian monks, as well as in lengthy and acrimonious rebuttals to Nestorius.

From that point matters moved to a climax quickly. Nestorius called a local council to condemn his local antagonists¹²² and wrote the pope of Rome to justify his position and gain that bishop's backing. Instead, his letters and sermon reports previously sent there from critics in Constantinople were turned over to a John Cassian of Marseilles who wrote violently against Nestorius as renewing Pelagianism and Ebionitism. "He (Cassian) misunderstands and exaggerates the teaching of his opponent, but his treatise is important," writes a Catholic significantly, "because it stereotyped once for all a doctrine which the Western world was to accept as Nestorianism."¹²³

It should be noted, however, that Nestorius himself has pointed out that when in Constantinople he first heard of the disputation about *theotokos*, before he or his chaplain ever preached on the matter, he called in the disputing leaders and, finding that neither party wanted to deny either the true deity or true humanity of the Lord, he told them that in using the term *theotokos* "we sin not; but ... let us make use of that which is very plainly (affirmed), that is, of the Word of the Gospel: Christ was born, [*Christotokos*]."¹²⁴ Loofs also points out that "even in his first letter to Pope Celestine, after having expressed his strong aversion to the term *theotokos*, he nevertheless wrote *□The term may by tolerated*!."¹²⁵ And in a sermon in the spring of 429, known to Cyril before he wrote, Nestorius stated, "If you will use the term *theotokos* with simple faith, it is not my custom to grudge it to you,"¹²⁶ which he repeated in a sermon a year later adding his usual stipulation, "only do not make a Goddess of the virgin."¹²⁷ Nestorius blames Cyril for the controversy's continuance. "Now the clergy of Alexandria, who were in favor of his [Cyril's] deeds, persuaded them (of Constantinople) as persons deceived that they should not accept the word 'Mother of Christ,' and they were stirring up and making trouble and going around in every place...."¹²⁸ That Cyril was very jealous of the "upstart" see of Constantinople, a learned but very unscrupulous man, is the verdict of history.¹²⁹

Cyril sent his correspondence with Nestorius to Rome along with some sermons of the former and five treatises designated "Contra Nestorium." In the latter he charged Nestorius with heresy on the grounds of teaching "that the Blessed Virgin is mother of one nature, not of the person" and of saying, "No one can bring

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forth a son older than herself."¹³⁰ Mary did not bring forth the Word of God but the man Jesus as His temple, "the animated purple of the King."¹³¹ Nestorius, Cyril claimed, held that "the Incarnate God did not suffer and die, but raised up from the dead him in whom He was incarnate ... There are two natures, he says, and one person; but the two natures are regularly spoken of as if they were two persons, and the sayings of Scripture about Christ are to be appropriated some to the Man, some to the Word."¹³² Such were the basic charges brought against Nestorius.

The pope called a synod in Rome, and on the basis of these charges Nestorius's views were declared heresy, and he was given ten days to recant or be deposed and excommunicated. Cyril was given the authority to proceed to implement the sentence. He too called a local synod which brought in the same verdict and prepared 12 anathemas against the views of Nestorius. It propounded the Alexandrian "hypostatic union" view--"the Word . . . united by *hypostasis* to flesh," a "union by nature," *henosis phusike*, in Christ.¹³³ Cyril claimed apostolic succession for his doctrines, "the true confession of the blessed Fathers."¹³⁴ Nestorius countered with his own anathemas, and the emperor called for a Council the next summer, 431, to meet at Ephesus to settle the controversy.

How did it come about that two such ancient sees as Alexandria and Antioch should declare themselves to be so far apart in such a basic matter as an understanding of the person of Christ, and both claim to be the true representatives of the apostolic, Biblical and patristic tradition? An answer to this question by way of comparing and contrasting the origin and nature of the two traditions is necessary for a proper understanding of the controversy and the Nestorianism which emerged from it. The Alexandrian tradition, for instance, was born in an environment where the Platonic philosophy was highly venerated, with its tradition of considering the ideal world as that which had real value, thereby downgrading creation, thus exerting a constant, though often unconscious, influence towards emphasizing the divine nature of Christ to the neglect of the human. The Antiochene tradition, on the other hand, grew up where the Aristotelian philosophy was honored, with its emphasis on the empirical and particular, and consequent scientific impulse, favoring an approach to the study of Jesus from the human side, the one men saw in history as recorded in the gospel narratives. Antiochene Orientals were much less metaphysically minded than the Greek Alexandrians, and found it difficult to distinguish properly the abstract from the concrete. To this day, for instance, a modern eastern Syrian fails properly to differentiate between "man" and "manhood," casually saying "'there is much manhood' in a room when he means that there are many men present."¹³⁵

The Alexandrians were heirs of the Philonic tradition of the allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures, with its quest for the spiritual, hidden meaning, whereas the Antiochenes inherited the scientific approach, and the Jewish reverence for the Scriptures, resulting in an historical interest in--and grammatical, literal interpretation of--the Bible. The former's interpretive method encouraged speculation and led to principal, theological interests, producing the first attempt at systematic theology, while the latter's background led to practical concerns, their monks founding schools and hospitals from which came educators, doctors, and missionaries.

The soteriological interest of the Alexandrians focused on the incarnation, the concept of redemption dominating the fourth century being that of the Son's taking on human flesh and thereby "being humanized that men might be deified."¹³⁶ The view of a leader of the next century has been given the following description:

What rather is really characteristic in Cyril's position is his express rejection of the view that an individual man was present in Christ, although he attributes to Christ all the elements of mans nature. For Cyril, however, everything depends on the possibility and actuality of such an human nature, on the fact, namely, that in Christ a hypostatic union was reached and that this union forthwith purified and transfigured human nature generally. Christ can be the second Adam for men only if they belong to him in a material sense as they did to the first Adam, and they do belong to Him materially only if he is not an individual man like Peter and Paul, but the real beginner of a new humanity. Cyril's view, moreover, was determined as a whole by the realistic thought of redemption.¹³⁷

The Antiochenes, however, starting with the Jesus visible to history, emphasized His resurrection, deliverance from the mortal and mutable (the emphasis is here rather than from sin) being won for mankind by the resurrection, and consequently they proclaimed Christ's perfect obedience as freed man's example to follow. Both schools seemed to have had universal concepts of the extent of the work of Christ¹³⁸ as well as to have believed in the natural ability of men to accept that work and to work with Christ towards their own perfection.

The Alexandrian tendency was to contemplate the mystical nature of the weaving together of the human and divine in Christ and in the Christian, their inclination being to think in abstract terms of deity and humanity, and the commingling of these "natures" in Christ, leading to a subsequent deification of the humanity which in turn somehow effects a mystical deification of humanity in general, restoring a man's

original nobility and possibility to grow to perfection.¹³⁹ The Antiochenes, however, sought the Jesus of history in the gospels, their tendency being to think in concrete terms of God the Son and Jesus the Man, the two being united in one historical Person through whose resurrection victory is gained over Satan and death, and men are called, through illumination and imitation, to follow -to learn His way of life whose purpose is "to lead all to imitation of himself"¹⁴⁰ to perfection.

To the former the presence or absence of a human soul in Christ was no theological concern, this docetic tendency stemming from their concept of the fusion of the Godhead with the flesh of man into one nature, one center of self-consciousness, although in 381 they accepted the "two natures in one hypostasis" formula, which to them meant two natures in one being or person. Harnack speaks of "this perverse formula . . . The proposition that *before* the Incarnation there were two *phuseis*, but *after* it only one, is however, of special importance for Cyril's conception of the Incarnation."¹⁴¹ To the Antiochenes the presence of a soul in the human nature of Christ was an important theological concern, for the redemption of the whole man, body and soul, required that the Saviour be a complete man, body and soul, which resulted in their emphasizing two centers of consciousness and two distinct natures, unmixed, in the one person, Jesus Christ.

In Alexandria the *Logos-sarx* conceptual framework developed (with its implications that no human soul existed in Christ) the claim being made that the divinization of the flesh made possible all predicating of the words and actions of Christ to the Logos (the divine nature), either as He is in Himself or as He is according to His humanity, an *antidosis*, or *communicato idiomatum*, being held to have taken place. On the other hand, in Antioch the Logos-anthropos formula developed, with the emphasis that the eternal Logos is not the subject of the human activity of Christ but that such activity must be predicated of the man Jesus.

The Alexandrian christological tradition held to two *ousiai* or substances, human and divine, in Christ, one *physis* or nature, in the sense of being, and one *hypostasis* or person, whereas the Antiochenes held to two substances, two distinct natures, two *hypostases in the Nicene sense, (when distinguishing the natures) and one prosopon* or person (when considering the union), or two *prosopa* in the sense of the personal characteristics of the two natures (though never of two *prosopa* before the union or in abstraction from the union of the natures)¹⁴² and one *hypostasis* or *prosopon* in the person Jesus Christ.¹⁴³ A fragment from Theodore of Mopsuestia reads, "But if we consider the conjunction, we speak of *one* person (and *one* hypostasis) . . . If then we try to distinguish the natures we say that the man is perfect in his hypostasis and the God perfect in his. But if we want to consider the union, we say that *both the natures are a single person (and hypostasis)* and acknowledge that because of its union with the Godhead the flesh receives honor beyond all creatures and the Godhead fulfills everything in him."¹⁴⁴ The bracketed parts are thought by some to be interpolation since the formula "one prosopon and one hypostasis" is not otherwise used by Theodore and also another quotation of this fragment omits them. If, however, they do belong, as it has been said, "We have the Chalcedon formula here for the first time in Eastern Christology."¹⁴⁵

With this understanding of the differing theological, especially christological, traditions with which the Alexandrian and Antiochene disputants approached the Council of Ephesus in 431, we are in a better position to understand the significance of what transpired there, and at Chalcedon 20 years later, to fix the Church's concept of "Nestorianism" and attitude towards it. The Council was called to meet at Ephesus on Pentecost, but John of Antioch failed to arrive. After waiting 16 days, Cyril convened the Council in spite of the protest of more than 60 bishops and the refusal of Nestorius and 48 of his bishops to attend. With over 160 bishops in attendance, however, Cyril had his letters to Nestorius read, one of Nestorius' to him in reply, and selections from the Fathers chosen to rebut some six basic, disputed propositions of Nestorius. The latter were that Nestorius separated the Godhead and manhood so as to make of Christ two persons; he refused to call Mary *theotokos*; he proclaimed that "the suffering and crucified Christ is not the Logos"; he would not confess "that the Logos, inasmuch as He assumed a body from Mary, was made man"; he held that the union of the natures was by an external connection (by which a moral union was meant) ; and his doctrine implied two sons, one who assumed the man and another the man who was assumed by God.¹⁴⁶ In these points the Church's concept of what constituted "Nestorianism" is seen.

On that first day Nestorius was judged guilty of gross heresy, deposed and excommunicated. Within five days John arrived and, on hearing the news, set up his own Council, deposing and excommunicating both Cyril and the bishop of Ephesus, Memnon. The emperor's representative, Candidian, declared the Council of Cyril to be invalid and sent a report of the proceedings to the emperor. Cyril too sent a report, which apparently reached the emperor first, but with the arrival of Candidian's, the emperor confirmed the latter's invalidation of Cyril's proceedings and demanded that a collective Synod be held to discuss the dogma.

Meanwhile the Roman legates arrived and in the interests of promoting the primacy of their bishop persuaded Cyril to call another session of the Council. At this meeting they stated that since the pope of Rome

had already pronounced Nestorius a heretic no other action was needed from the Council but to declare its acceptance of this verdict. Hefele adds, "They now gave, partly in silence and partly expressly, their adhesion to the papal view."¹⁴⁷

Bossuet, however, points out that in the emperor's call for the Council to meet in Ephesus it was specified that all previous actions against Nestorius, which included the Roman pope's excommunication after ten days of no repentance, be suspended pending the universal Council's verdict, and that this will of the emperor was honored at Ephesus. The evidence for this was that Nestorius had been called upon by the Council, during its first session, to take his seat as a bishop. "For this expression, 'to take his seat,' is distinctly written; and it is added, 'in order to answer to what was charged against him'."¹⁴⁸ Although the Roman legates made every endeavor to leave the impression that the Council was only accepting the verdict of Rome on Nestorius, the fact is clear that at the Council "a judgment of the Roman Pontiff concerning the Catholic Faith, uttered and published, is reconsidered. What he had approved, and what he had disapproved, is equally examined, and, only after examination, confirmed."¹⁴⁹ Cyril's Council, even in confirming the Roman pope's judgment, revealed its belief that a universal Council had the authority to sit in judgment on any ecclesiastical verdict, including the Roman pope's.

At the last session of this Council of Ephesus, the Western Church's acts condemning Pelagius and his ally Coelestius were approved. Hefele points out that Nestorius

seems to have regarded as correct their [the Pelagian] doctrine of the sufficiency of man's free will for the accomplishment of what is good; but not their view of original sin ... The sympathy which Nestorius had with them is shown by his letter to Coelestius, the well-known friend of Pelagius, in which he bestows upon him the highest titles of honour, and compares him with John the Baptist, with Peter, and with Paul, as the object of unrighteous persecution. "¹⁵⁰

The Council also passed six canons deposing any bishops who would support Nestorius, or John whom they also deposed, but made no effort to write a new creedal statement or to expand the old. The stalemate was finally broken by the action of the emperor invalidating both councils, imprisoning Cyril and bishop Memnon of Ephesus, and placing Nestorius under house arrest. Desperate pleas were made to the court for the former two men, and they were returned home at the end of the summer, but neither John nor others seemed to take further interest in Nestorius.¹⁵¹ He was required to retire to his monastery while John and Cyril tried to bring about a reconciliation between their two sees. This was accomplished in 433 by a Formula of Union which was an important step towards the later Chalcedonian creed. It was prepared in Antioch, but approved by Cyril; it clearly declared "a union of two natures took place," and that it was an "unconfused union," the grounds of confessing Mary *theotokos*. There was no "mixture or confusion or blending of God the Word with the flesh." When speaking of the two natures as of one person it is permissible to "interpret the God-befitting ones [phrases] in connection with the Godhead of Christ, and the humble ones of the manhood."¹⁵²

Within two years Nestorius was banished to an oasis in southern Egypt where he busied himself in study and writing, preparing a large book defending his position. Using a pseudonym, he called this book *The Treatise of Heraclides*.¹⁵³ Cyril died in 444, and his successors fostered their interpretation of his one nature union in a way he did not. The leading spokesman for this monophysitism was Eutychus, an Egyptian monk, who "maintained in effect, either an absorption of the human nature in the divine, or a fusion of the two natures, resulting in a sort of a *tertium quid*."¹⁵⁴ He held "that His body was not consubstantial with ours,"¹⁵⁵ holding that the human attributes were assimilated to the divine in Christ. His views were condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 448, but he appealed to Leo in Rome. Leo replied with a Tome summarizing the Western christology, which was another important step towards the Chalcedon formula. In brief, his statement declared that the person of the God-man is identical with that of the divine Word; the divine and human natures coexist in this one person without mixture or confusion; the natures are separate principles of operation, although they always act in concert with each other; and the oneness of the Person postulates the legitimacy of the communication of idioms.¹⁵⁶ This formulation went a long way to influence the Chalcedonian creed of 451 with its following statement:

. . .in two natures, unconfusedly [asuggutosl, immutably [atreptosl, indivisibly [adiairetosl, inseparably [achoristosl, (united), and that without the distinction of the natures being taken away by such union, but rather the peculiar property of each nature being preserved and being united in the one Person and subsistence, not separated or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son...¹⁵⁷

Nestorius himself considered that Leo's Tome was an acceptable presentation of his own view,¹⁵⁸ and in the last pages of his treatise he says of Leo that "he has indeed held well to the faith."¹⁵⁹ It is even believed that

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the emperor invited him to attend the Council of Chalcedon. Sarkissian refers to a Nestorian source and says, "Marcian had invited Nestorius to Chalcedon before his death."¹⁶⁰ Another reference to this declares that a "Coptic life of Dioscorus claims that he [Nestorius] was summoned to the Council of Chalcedon but died before the summons reached him."¹⁶¹ Thus he was not to learn of what he surely would have considered the ultimate triumph of his views by those who again condemned his person. Loofs quotes a fragment from one of his letters, now in the British Museum, in which Nestorius declares, between 448 and 451, concerning Leo's and Flavian's effort to condemn Eutychus the monophysite: "It is my doctrine which Leo and Flavian are upholding ... Believe as our holy comrades in the faith, Leo and Flavian."¹⁶² Nestorius wrote in the Bazaar as follows:

When the bishop of Rome had read what had been done against Eutyches, he condemned Eutyches of impiety. Now when I came upon that exposition (sc. Leo's Tome) and read it, I gave thanks to God that the Church of Rome was rightly and blamelessly making confession, even though they happened to be against me personally.¹⁶³

Chapter 6

Nestorius' Christology

What then did Nestorius believe and confess? What was his position, his christology, over against that of his detractors? It was not that of their concept of "Nestorianism." His great concern was "that no one should call the Word of God a creature [in opposition to Arianism] or the manhood which was assumed incomplete,"¹⁶⁴ [in opposition to Apollinarianism], and his fear was that the Alexandrian formulation did not adequately protect the truth at these points. His apology, the Bazaar, frequently refers to the charges of his opponents and repudiates them. The editors of the English translation in their introduction give an interesting summary of the charges:

1) He denies that the unity of Christ is a "natural composition" in which two elements are combined by the will of some external "creator." 2) He denies that the Incarnation was effected by changing godhead into manhood or vice versa, or by forming a *tertium quid* from these two *ousiai*. 3) He denies that God was in Christ in the same way as in the saints. 4) He denies that either the godhead or the manhood of Christ are "fictitious" or "Phantasmal," and not real. 5) He denies that the Incarnation involved any change in the godhead, or any suffering on the part of the Divine Logos who, as divine, is by nature impassible. 6) He denies that the union of two natures in one Christ involves any duality of sonship. 7) He asserts that the union is a voluntary union of the godhead and manhood. 8) He asserts that the principle of union is to be found in the *prosopa* of the godhead and the manhood; these two *prosopa* coalesced in one *prosopon* of Christ incarnate. 9) He asserts that this view alone provides for a real Incarnation, makes possible faith in a real atonement, and provides a rationale of the sacramentalism of the Church.¹⁶⁵

The charges for which he was principally abused and with which "Nestorianism" came to be identified in the public mind, however, were these: a rejection of *theotokos* for Mary, a distinction of the two natures in Christ to the point of making two persons, two sons, and a consequent unwillingness to affirm that God died on the cross (as if the One who died was not God the Son) ; and basing the union of the natures on a conjunction or juxtaposition due to a mere moral union. As to the first, we have already noted that in his first letter to the pope of Rome he acknowledged the manner in which the term *theotokos* could be used. The problem with calling Mary the mother of God for him was that mother meant originator or former, and this, of course, he could not say of her for the Logos. He was willing to say, however, "God passed (*transit*) through Mary."¹⁶⁶ Indeed, in one of his sermons surprisingly enough he did use the title *theotokos*.¹⁶⁷

He did very decidedly distinguish the two natures. He disliked the *communicatio idiomatum* concept as it meant to him the method of Apollinarius that considered the natures fused together, or the substances becoming one. Thus he insisted that the attributes of humanity must not be ascribed to God, by which he meant the Godhead. This is the explanation of such controversial statements as "I cannot term him God who was two and three months old."¹⁶⁸ Socrates, however, seems one of his few contemporaries who did not think such statements a denial of Christ's deity. He wrote, "I have already alluded to his faults, I shall in like manner be unbiased by the criminations of his adversaries ... I cannot then concede ... that he denied the Divinity of Christ."¹⁶⁹ Yet, on the other hand, Nestorius felt that as much as possible the ascribing of the attributes of either nature to the other nature should be avoided by making both human and divine predicates of "one and the same" Christ. He did this by avoiding the word Logos and using such titles as Christ, Son and Lord, and making all predications of the one Person by such a title, the title by which He was referred to in the gospels. To Cyril he wrote, "You start in your account with the creator of the natures, not with the *prosopon* of the union [i.e., the appearance of the Christ of history]. It is not the Logos who has become twofold; it is the one Lord Jesus Christ who is twofold in his natures. In him are seen all the characteristics of the God-logos, who has a nature eternal and unable to suffer and die, and also all of those of the manhood, that is a nature mortal, created and able to suffer, and lastly those of the union and the incarnation."¹⁷⁰

Nestorius preferred the title "Mother of Christ" to that of "Mother of God" for Mary. He did this on the basis that Christ was the one born. But to him Christ meant both natures, so on his own presuppositions to speak of the birth of Christ was to speak of the birth from Mary of the divine nature as well. Had he not been so prejudiced against the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum* he might have seen in it, used not as a means of ascribing the attributes of one nature to that of the other nature, a means by which to solve the predicament by ascribing the attributes of either nature to the divine Person, the divine, incarnate Person being declared the final subject in Christ. Such a formulation would have enabled him to see that there was no need for making the denials, such as the objection to *theotokos*, so obnoxious to the people of his time, and possibly

would have brought Rome on his side before ever there was a controversy with the Alexandrian see, thus sparing himself and the Church from the tragedy of Nestorius.

Nestorius vigorously rejected the idea that in the union of the two natures they are "together in love and not in the ousias,"¹⁷¹ in other words he denied that he conceived only of a moral union in which the two natures lived together in love, "conjoined to God only by proximity and equality of honor and authority,"¹⁷² as Cyril charged. He replies, "Nor yet do I speak of a conjunction of love and proximity, as in the case with those who are apart and are united by love and not as to ousias; nor again do I say that the union is one of equality, of honour and authority, but of natures, and of complete natures; and by bringing together of the ousias I posit a union without confusion."¹⁷³

Cyril even pretended to his Egyptian monks, following the signing of the Formula of Union in which he recognized two natures after the union, that this recognition, and the position of the other Antiochenes, was quite different from Nestorius' formulation. The reason for this was that the great majority of his monks were monophysites, as they thought Cyril to be, and he feared they might turn against himself because of his making peace with the Antiochenes on the basis of two natures. (Eighteen years later at Chalcedon both his fears and the Egyptian monophysitism were given shocking support when the thirteen Egyptian bishops present refused to sign the new creed with the cry, "We will be killed! We will be killed if we do!"¹⁷⁴) So Cyril explained the Formula of Union to his monks by claiming, "Our brethren of Antioch speak of a difference of natures as recognizing, only and merely mentally, those things of which Christ is known to be constituted."¹⁷⁵ That it was only a mental or logical distinction of natures Nestorius denies vigorously, for it was not one just in the minds of men but a real distinction.

This matter of the nature of the union conceived of by Nestorius lies at the very heart of an understanding of his christology, for after all, the basic charge against him was that he thought of two persons, two *prosopa*, in Christ, improperly distinguishing, or failing to unite, the human and divine natures in Him. To see how he would conceive of the union we must first consider the terms he uses for that which he would unite: the basic terms of *ousia* (essence), *hypostasis* (substance to him), *physis* (nature), and *prosopon* (to be understood in a different sense from the modern use of the word person).

The term *ousia* coming from the verb "to be" (Latin *esse*) has a primary significance of essence, reality, real entity as opposed to illusory. Grillmeier, in one of the most lucid presentations of Nestorius' use of these terms says, "Nestorius further narrows down the concept of 'essence' (*ousia*) to mean the 'essential content' or 'specific being' of the nature."¹⁷⁶ Nature too has a primary meaning of reality as opposed to unreal, but natures can be complete or incomplete. Body and soul are incomplete natures, but man is a complete nature. What makes a nature complete and distinguishable from another are its properties, characteristics and differences. The *hypostasis* is the *ousia* "in so far as it is determined by the whole complex of properties. Nestorius calls this complex of properties the *prosopon*."¹⁷⁷

In christology, however, a different meaning presses into the foreground: *prosopon* as the form, image, appearance of a nature. In this significance the *Liber Heraclidis*, too, speaks of two "natural *prosopa*" in Christ. For each of the two natures has its permanent individual determination, the Godhead in the natural *prosopon* of the Son, the manhood in what Nestorius describes as the "*forma servi*." The "natural *prosopon*" has its reality from the reality of the nature whose mode of appearance it is. But without the natural *prosopon* the natures are incomplete, unrecognizable and indistinguishable. Thus the "natural *prosopon*" is the complex of the properties, the differences and the characteristics by which a nature is differentiated, limited and finally determined. If two natures no longer preserve their *prosopon naturale*, in their union they are no longer differentiated but mingled. Thus "nature" in its "natural *prosopon*" is the "*hypostasis*." In fact, *hypostasis* coincides with the *natura completa*, but formally it describes the completeness of the *natura completa*.¹⁷⁸

We see then that for Nestorius the *prosopa* are not two persons in the sense of person as we understand that word, but are the sets of personal properties which distinguish one nature from another, both alike being rooted in the *hypostasis* and *ousia* as the concrete realities. Nor is *hypostasis* "person" in our sense in his christology, but rather it is the nature as expressed in its personal properties, the *prosopon*, the mode of appearance. It is the *prosopon* which makes the *ousia* the *hypostasis*, the complete nature. But the *prosopa* are identified with the natures which distinguish the union, it always being thought of as a union of natures. "Of what am I guilty," Nestorius asks, "who confess the indistinguishable union of the two natures in one *prosopon*?"¹⁷⁹ The *hypostasis* is the nature in its *prosopon*, but this does not make the *hypostasis* the Person of Christ, for He was a union of two distinct natures in their *prosopa*, a union of two *hypostases*, two *ousiai*, without confusion and without mingling.

This is certainly not a "two-person" Christ in the modern sense of the word person, nor even in the "Nestorian" sense of the fifth century. Nor is it an identification of person with nature as Nestorius is still

accused of doing in the following quotation: "Nestorius was as confused as his master [Theodore of Mopsuestia] when attempting to account for the existence of two natures in Christ. Both seem to regard [nature' and person' as one and the same."¹⁸⁰ That Nestorius did speak of two prosopa related to the two natures of the one person Christ is clear in such passages as this. "The Incarnation is conceived (to consist) in the mutual use of taking and giving, but Divine Scripture sometimes after the prosopon of the divinity and sometimes after the prosopon of the humanity, names him Son and Christ and Lord."¹⁸¹ But for him the prosopon of the union, the Person Christ, is constituted through the union of the divine and human natures, each of the natures in Christ making use of the natural prosopon of the other nature. So he says, "The natures subsist in their prosopa and in their natures and in the prosopon of the union. For in respect to the natural prosopon of the one the other also makes use of the same on account of the union; and thus (there is) one prosopon of the two natures."¹⁸² This has been called Nestorius' original contribution:

Nestorius' own original contribution was the suggestion that, each nature subsisting in its own prosopon (i.e., external, undivided presentation), there was at the incarnation a mutual exchange of prosopa resulting in the emergence of a common prosopon. Thus "prosopon of the union," by which he in effect understood the historical figure of the Gospels, was identical with neither the prosopon of the Word nor the prosopon of the humanity but resulted from the coming together of the two.¹⁸³

The core of the problem of the incarnation is how to conceive of the union of the two essentially different natures of God and man. Nestorius emphasized that it was an intimate union and taught that the humanity made use of the divinity, and vice versa. "In Christ the two ousiai penetrate each other without confusion to form the unity of the one person ... It is the mutual penetration of the two natures in respect of the prosopon which he [Nestorius] takes as the ground of this unity."¹⁸⁴ According to Wolfson, Nestorius envisages a union of composition in the Aristotelian sense "of a bundle made up of individual things of different natures or species - say wood, iron, [et cetera] ... When bound together into a bundle, all these different individual things form one individual thing.' Within that one, however, Wolfson says, the various individual things still continue to exist in their own natures, though not as individual things. "So also the two natures ... do not become one nature, even though Jesus is regarded as one person; they still continue to exist as two distinct natures within that one person of Jesus."¹⁸⁵ He contends that the bond of union for Nestorius is the Theodorean idea of "God's good pleasure," which, as we have seen, Nestorius denies. Wolfson concludes, "Logically his assertion that the union is by God's good pleasure really implies that Jesus is a mere man."¹⁸⁶

Wolfson himself points out that "the union of the two persons results in a new person ... whereas the union of the two natures does not result in a new nature."¹⁸⁷ As Braaten has pointed out,¹⁸⁸ however, Wolfson seems to overlook this difference when trying to interpret the union on the basis of the Aristotelian analogy. Nestorius, to be sure, might recognize its appropriateness as an analogy of the union of the natures, but not of the union of the prosopa, for in the latter union it is an important conception for him that the prosopon of one nature "makes use" of that of the other. Nestorius constantly rejected the idea of two persons in Christ, insisted on the union being one of two distinct natures in one Person, Jesus Christ, a union which, though not a mixture or confusion, was far more intimate than any mere moral union of love and proximity, and declared that it was a union of such a nature that the attributes of either nature can be ascribed to the Person Jesus Christ. It does not, therefore, seem reasonable to conclude otherwise than that Nestorius was not a "Nestorion" in the sense his opponents charged and the word Nestorianism has meant ever since.

In his other basic doctrines, Nestorius generally speaking followed the tradition of the Antiochene school. He had a high view of Scripture infallibility and followed the historico-grammatical method of interpretation. It is interesting to note how he used the analogy of his christology to repudiate Cyril's eucharistic interpretation, a forerunner of the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. He starts with his concept of the coexistence of the two natures and two ousiai in Christ. He points out that Christ did not say the bread was not bread, or the body not body, but uses the terms body and bread as "showing what it is in ousia. But we are aware that the bread is bread in nature and in ousia. Yet Cyril wishes to persuade us to believe that the bread is His body by faith and not [so] by nature: - that which it is not as to ousia, this it becomes by faith."¹⁸⁹ Nestorius held that Cyril's doctrine of the union of the natures transmuted the human ousia into the divine ousia with the result that the human ousia becomes just an idea, losing its real existence. He sees a parallel in this to Cyril's doctrine of the Eucharist in that Cyril seems to be trying to remove the real existence of the bread and wine by an act of faith so that they are no longer bread and wine by nature, but, supposedly, only such as an idea. "The view of the Eucharist which is represented as that of Cyril's school, it is evident,

approximates closely to the doctrine of "transubstantiation," comments Bethune-Baker, "whereas Nestorius champions the view that they remain in their own ousia."¹⁹⁰

It is interesting to note also how Nestorius conceives the relation of the doctrines concerning man and redemption:

Because in fact He took this (likeness) in order to abolish the guilt of the first man and in order to give to his nature the former image which he had lost through his guilt, rightly He took that which had proved itself guilty and had been made captive and had been subjected to servitude, with all the bonds of dishonor and disgrace ... Those who come (to Him) He persuades of their own will to depart from him (Satan), and not against their will ... God became incarnate in the man through His own prosopon and made his prosopon His own prosopon ... that He might show all henceforth that whatever exaltation there is comes about by (previous) condescension ... for our sake: that He might be led away and die for the sake of our redemption ... it was necessary that the incarnation of God the Word should take place for the whole nature of rational beings, that we might learn to participate in His grace ... that He might make men participate in His image ... in order that he may be restored again to that which he was ... He bore even death itself and paid for us the penalty justly due by substituting for our death that death which unjustly came upon Himself ... He died on our behalf as on the behalf of the deceived ... not that He might obtain victory for Himself but that He might secure the exaction of our own (ransom) and conquer not for Himself but for all men. For as the guilt of Adam established all under guilt, so did His victory (or acquittal) acquit all ... Christ has remained. ... that those who are in Christ might comport themselves after the likeness of Christ, not only by the grace of the Resurrection but also by the works and manner of life of each of them; for the former is universal, but the latter is individual.¹⁹¹

In these excerpts from several pages we can see something of his construction. As a result of Adam's sin all humanity was captive to Satan and guilty. The assumption of our likeness in Christ was to abolish this guilt and restore human nature to the image it had before the fall. The typical lack of differentiation between the concrete person of Adam, with his nature, and the abstract nature of the humanity of us all is here. Men now have a freedom of the will to come to Christ and to leave Satan. The humiliation of Christ brings the exaltation of man,¹⁹² an idea basic in Barth's construction in our times.¹⁹³ The death of Christ was for the redemption of all men, being a substitution for the death of all. The ransom brings a victory over death and Satan and the incarnation is "to show all" that "we might learn" to participate in His grace of the resurrection and follow His example of good works. The idea of a universal atonement, through a substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, covering the original guilt of all men, and of mankind's free ability to come to Christ seem to be the motifs here.

The Syrian-Persian Church's Concept of "Nestorianism"

That the church which spread east into Syria and Persia throughout the fifth century held doctrines similar to those of Nestorius is apparent from their earliest creeds. It was at the Synod of Mar Akakios, patriarch in 486, that the following canon was subscribed: "It is the faith and confession of us all, that there in God is one nature and three perfect personalities (*kename*), who are one true eternal Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."¹⁹⁴ In the Syrian prayer book there has been preserved another ancient confession which deals with the natures of the Messiah. It reads in part as follows:

One Messiah, the Son of God, worshipped by all, in two natures. According to His Divinity He is born of the Father, without beginning, before time; according to His humanity born of Mary, at the fullness of time, united with a body. His divinity is not from the nature of His mother; and His humanity is not from the nature of His Father: the natures are kept in their own personalities. In one person of one Sonship. And like as divinity (Godhead) consists of three personalities (*kename*), one being, so is His Sonship of the Father.¹⁹⁵

The similarities here to the teaching of Nestorius are apparent. Indeed, this same church in an early writing states that the name "Nestorians" was given to them by "the Catholics in the West," and that they thought of Nestorius as "a very pious and good man" whose "doctrine is true ... and who was unjustly judged ... but he was not the head of our church, and we do not like to be called by his name, 'Nestorians,' for that is not our right name."¹⁹⁶ A modern "Nestorian" writer, seeking to explain their christology, gives the following description:

Now there are three Syrian words commonly used ... : 1) *Parsufa*, (Greek: *Prosopon*) which means a person ... (we confess) that Jesus Christ has one *parsufa*, in the like manner as we confess in the western church. But they [the Syrian churches] also teach that Jesus Christ has two *kejane* or natures: the divine and human, like as we confess. And besides,

By Foot To China
Mission of The Church of the East, to 1400

they teach that he has two *kenuine* or as they say: 'One person double in natures and their *kenumé*.' And it is this last word which causes the difficulty here in the western Church [as it did also in the eastern in the early controversies when Nestorius was excommunicated.] The question is., What did Nestorius and what do the Syrian Christians in our time really mean by it? ... They mean by the *kenumé* of the natures of Christ about the same as what we mean by 'personality,' i.e. the attributes, taken collectively, that make up the character of an individual, that which distinguishes and characterizes a 'person.' Rev. Wigram, M.A., calls it a 'set of characteristics.'¹⁹⁷

That this analysis of the "Nestorian" doctrine of the Church of the East bears out the analysis of Nestorius' christology made above will be apparent. The concept of *kenumé* was not used in the Western Church. There was no specific theological term for it in their language, and no reference to it appears in their theological discussions. To equate *kenumé* with any of the terms appearing in the Western discussions would be a serious mistake. Although the Church of the East spoke of three *kenumé* in the Trinity and two in Christ they did not mean by this to identify two persons in Christ. If they had meant that they would have used *parsufa*. They held that in Christ there was only one *parsufa*, one person. When using the Greek language, Nestorius did speak of the divine *prosopon* and the human *prosopon* in Christ but that he was using the Greek word in his sense of *kenumé* and not ours of person is apparent, for very forthrightly he denies holding that Christ is more than one person. For him the *prosopa* (*kenumé*), the personal set of characteristics of the divine and human natures, unite in Christ in the *prosopon* of the union. "The natures subsist in their *prosopa*," he declared.¹⁹⁸

Of the ancient treatises extant, the nearest to a confession of faith of the Church of the East is the *Book of the Pearl* of 1298. The following is from its English translation:

His Godhead is not from the substance of His mother, neither His Manhood from the substance of His Father; but the Natures and Persons subsist in the one Parsopa of this one Filiation. And as there are in the Godhead three Persons, One Self-Existent, so the Filiation of the Son is of the two Natures and one Parsopa.¹⁹⁹

On the tombstone of the patriarch Mar Shem'on who died in 1538 these words are written:

And I acknowledged God, the First Light. And I confessed and believed in His Son Jesus Christ, perfect God and perfect Man, two Natures and two Persons--one Parsopa. And I loved His Spirit.²⁰⁰

Clearly they held to two natures (duophysite), each with its own personal characteristics (*kenumé*, "person"), in one Person (Parsopa), Jesus Christ.

The Verdict of Modern Protestant Scholarship

Since the discovery of the Syriac manuscript of Nestorius' *Treatise of Heracleides*, and its translation into French and English early in this century, there has been a decided change of opinion concerning whether Nestorius was a "Nestorian" or not. Grillmeier, a Jesuit scholar, admits that generally speaking "The Catholic authors maintain a negative attitude" towards Nestorius' doctrine.²⁰¹ As we have seen, however, scholars like Bethune-Baker, Loofs, Driver and Hodgson and Seeberg all concede that he was not a "Nestorian." The latter has even made the very strong statement, "In his christology there is evidently nothing heterodox. It was only the usual doctrine of the Antioch school."²⁰² Prestige has written, "The orthodoxy of Nestorius is positive: with his peculiarities of presentation once for all eliminated, the substance of his doctrine was accepted as the faith of Christendom at the Council of Chalcedon in 451."²⁰³ Kelly declares, "One thing which is absolutely clear is that he was not a Nestorian in the classic sense of the word."²⁰⁴ Vine thinks it is possible to "develop from his a Christology at once orthodox and powerful."²⁰⁵ Sellers concludes, "From all this it seems clear that Nestorius is hardly deserving of the title 'Nestorian'."²⁰⁶ In his later work he argues that the two cardinal principles of the oneness of the Mediator in whom there are "the two substances of the Godhead and the manhood " are really basic in the christologies of Cyril's Alexandrian, Nestorius' Antiochene and Leo's Western traditions so "the Council of Chalcedon may be called the place where three ways met."²⁰⁷ Grillmeier, torn between objective scholarship and loyalty to the position of his Church on the infallibility of its ecumenical councils, finds it difficult to make an ultimate judgment on our question. He speaks of "the new element in his [Nestorius'] writing, that more than anyone else before him he utilized an insight, the method of which was correct, in that he looked for the unity and the distinction in Christ on different levels, the unity on the level of the *prosopon* and the distinction on the level of the natures."²⁰⁸

Yet he would fault Nestorius for "his imprudence and lack of clarity in theological thought," while charging Cyril with being too much motivated "by personal, church-political and terminological concerns," and saying of Pope Celestine that he had "insufficient knowledge of the true situation and the intentions of the Patriarch of Constantinople."²⁰⁹ Then he writes the following of the Church's reaction to Nestorius and his doctrine:

An investigation was made to discover all the consequences which this denial might objectively have (a doctrine of two Sons, of two persons in Christ). All possible lines were drawn to other heresies of earlier periods (Adoptionism, Judaism). In this way an objective, impersonal picture of heresy was formed, which was then assigned to Nestorius as its originator. All this results in a "popular" image of a heresy and a heretic which chiefly corresponds with the demands of the Church's preaching rather than with those of historical accuracy.²¹⁰ Grillmeier concludes, "[He [Nestorius] could justly be supposed to be in direct opposition to orthodox christology."²¹¹ But he adds, "because Nestorius in fact sees the difference or distinction in Christ only on the level of the two natures, he cannot be accused of teaching such a doctrine of two persons in the strict sense, at least, not as he himself intends it."²¹²

Concluding Summary

Nestorius' religious sense was molded by his Antiochene education where the Aristotelian philosophy was popular and the *Logos-anthropos* christology was first formulated. Consequently he became a vigorous defender of the complete humanity of Christ, man's Saviour, and opponent of anything which might be thought to militate against the impassibility of the Word. This tradition led him to react negatively to the title of *theotokos* for Mary, an ascription he heard frequently used in his new parish of Constantinople in 428. Being asked to mediate in a controversy he found revolving around the use of the word that summer, he at first only advised against it, recommending the use of *christotokos*, but at the end of the year, in support of those advocating his position, he preached sermons against using *theotokos*.

Those in Constantinople who came from the Alexandrian tradition, on the other hand, were long used to the title *theotokos*. Their christology was held in the *Logos-sarx* framework with its docetic tendency. Of the seven points of difference in the emphases of the two traditions described earlier, this *Logos-anthropos* versus *Logos-sarx* differentiation was doubtless the most obvious. It was also the most basic, providing as it did the basis for the Antiochene distinctive emphasis of two distinct natures (with two *ousiai* or *hypostases*) in the one person of Christ versus the Alexandrian hypostatic union which, in the minds of most Alexandrians, meant two *ousiai* but one after the union, with a *communicatio idiomatum* of the divine nature to the human. This divinization of the human nature to all intents eliminated it and thus produced the Alexandrian Eutichian monophysite heresy.

Behind the controversy which immediately broke out over this matter, between the sees of Antioch on the one side and Alexandria and Rome on the other, and the calling of the Ephesian Synod which deposed Nestorius in 431, lay some significant political and personal factors. The relatively new patriarchate of Constantinople was viewed by Rome with some trepidation as a potential challenge to its increasing claim to primacy in authority. Rome saw very clearly the possibility of that patriarch's obtaining great power through his influence on the emperor. This possibility was also an occasion of jealousy for Cyril of Alexandria, who felt that ecclesiastical leadership throughout the east should belong to him, patriarch of its largest city and one of its oldest churches.

There is no evidence that Rome's christology differed from that of Nestorius, and in the whole controversy the pope carefully avoided discussing that basic matter. Indeed, Leo's Tome of 448 was held by Nestorius to be a clear reflection of his own christology and in his later apology he praised Leo for his doctrine. Yet the pope determined to exert the full power of his position against Nestorius making the focal point the latter's rejection of *theotokos*, even though Nestorius had written him that he could accept that term so long as it was not used so as to make Mary a Goddess. Rome's reasons seem to have been twofold. First, Nestorius appeared to be setting himself up as a doctrinal leader of the whole Church by challenging the time-honored concept of Mary as *theotokos*. Secondly, Nestorius' friendship for and implied defense of the two Rome-banished Pelagian leaders in Constantinople carried the implication of the equality of his judgment with, if not its superiority to, that of the Roman pope. Rome therefore used Cyril as its instrument for the removal of Nestorius without ever revealing that its own christology was basically similar to that of Nestorius.

The "Nestorinism" with which Nestorius was charged at the Council of Ephesus centered in the accusation that he so stressed the independence of the two natures in Christ as to make two persons joined in a moral union. They held that in his view the Word associated with Himself a complete, independently existing man, an approximation of the adoptionist heresy. Christ was thus a God inspired man rather than the incarnate

God-man, with the indwelling Son making two Sons, two persons, held together by a moral union of "God's good pleasure" in Jesus Christ.

Nestorius himself vigorously denied that he was such a "Nestorian." He did not hold to two Sons in Christ nor to a mere moral union, a conjunction of love and proximity. He held that the characteristics of the two *ousiai* were their natures with their separate *prosopa*, by which he seems to have meant personal properties, in their mode of appearance, and that in the incarnation a union of natures (*synapheia*) took place (which may be understood as a "connection" or "juxtaposition" in the Aristotelian sense) without mingling or confusion, but indivisible, in the one Person, Jesus Christ. At the same time a prosopic union took place on a different basis. The two *prosopa* united, but the result was one person, the *prosopa* not remaining distinct as did the two natures after the union. Nestorius emphasized that the union was of the natures, but his new insight was to look for the distinction and unity in Christ on two different levels, the distinction on the level of the natures and the unity on the level of the *prosopon*.

The characteristic of the Syrian language to fail adequately to distinguish the abstract from the concrete resulted in their having one word, *kenume*, to refer either to the set of characteristics which identify personality (personal characteristics in the abstract) or to the person concretely. As the need for differentiation later arose, the Syriac *parsufa* (presence) was used to denote clearly when the concrete person was intended. Nestorius believed that Jesus Christ had two *kejane* (natures) and two *kenume* (referring to each of the two sets of personal characteristics of the divine and human natures) in one *parsuf a* (concrete person). Nestorius and the "Nestorians" were duophysites holding that Christ was One person with two natures, each nature with its distinctive characteristics. Church theologians of later times, including the Protestant Church, recognized clearly that each nature had its own will, the duothelite concept.

Nestorius' early negativism, denying *theotokos* and declaring, "I cannot term him God who was two or three months old" (by God he meant the Godhead), without an adequate positive formulation was imprudent and disastrous. His apology, written during his exile, called by his translators "The Bazaar of Heracleides," is a positive attempt at a constructive formulation and an answer to his opponents' arguments. Neither the Syrian-Persian Church of the East nor modern Protestant scholarship accept "Nestorianism," but neither does either hold Nestorius to have been a "Nestorian" or a heretic.

The closing days of Nestorius' life, when he realized that both Leo and Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, were contending against the Alexandrians for a christology which was essentially his own, reveal Nestorius quietly rejoicing for the triumph of truth but lacking the old truculence. The last words of his book are very touching: "Rejoice for me, O desert, my beloved and my foster-parent and the home of my habitation, and my mother, (the land of) my exile, who after my death will guard my body unto the resurrection by the will of God. Amen." He died a man misunderstood by the Western Church, rejected by the Eastern Church and unjustly condemned by the politics of both.

With this understanding of Nestorius and "Nestorianism" behind us, then, we must now go on to evaluate their influence on the mission and faith of the first Christian missionaries in north China by a study of the documents written by those missionaries and preserved there to this century.

THE CHINESE VERSION OF THE
"GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO"
FOUND AT TUN-HUANG IN 1908

景教三威象度讚

光上諸天深教數天地重念善安和人元
真性蒙依止三才慈父而羅訶一切善教
至誠禮一切慈性稱讚我一切合真畫歸仰
蒙靈慈也救離魔障尋無及正真
常慈父明子淨況王於諸帝中為師帝
於諸世等善法皇常居妙明無畔界
光威靈察有界授自始無人奪得見
復以色見不可相惟獨能決清淨德
惟獨神威無等力惟獨不釋微然存
衆善根本復無救我今一切念慈恩致
彼妙樂此同你等音尊大聖子
廣度苦界救無億常命王慈善善
大善能苦不辭勞前捨群生積重罪
善護真性得無懸聖子端任父右座
其座復起無罪高大師前彼乞衆請降
機使免火江漂大師是我事慈父大師
是我等聖主大師是我法王大師能為
善救度大師慈力助諸靈諸目瞻仰不
整移復與枯壤降甘露所有蒙潤善
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PART III AN APPRAISAL OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE OF CHINA

Chapter 7

The Twelve Early Christian Documents

During the past half century a total of nine early Christian documents in Chinese have been discovered in northwest China; they, together with the famous stone Monument inscription, make a total of ten Chinese Christian treatises to be examined. In addition, two Syriac manuscripts dating from a slightly later period than the last of the Chinese ones have been found. These twelve manuscripts come roughly from five different periods in the four hundred years between the seventh and tenth centuries and will be introduced here according to the chronological order of their writing, as far as that can be determined. Although the Nestorian Stone Monument was not written until the late eighth century, reference to and quotations from it will have to be made to help in the dating of the others, since of all the documents it alone makes some effort to present a chronological sequence.

The First Literature - Seventh Century

The earliest group of documents seems to include four coming from a period between 635 and 641, the period when, according to the Monument, the first Nestorian missionaries, led by Alopen, or Abraham, reached the capital of Chang-An, later called Hsi-an. In what is probably the latest of these four, and longest, "The Lord of the Universe's Discourse on Alms-Giving," appears the following statement: "Though it is only 641 years since the time of the birth of the Messiah, consisting of [the five attributes,] yet (His name) is known in all parts of the world."²¹³ The significance of the reference to "the five attributes" will be considered later, but here we note a date that pinpoints the time of writing of this document. This date fits in with the time given on the Nestorian Monument for the arrival of Alopen's party, and the translation work done by them, as described there in the following statement:

In the ninth year of the period Chaang-kwan (A.D. 635), he [Alopen] arrived at Chaang-an. The emperor sent his minister, duke Fang Hsuanling, bearing the staff of office, to the western suburb, there to receive the visitor and to conduct him to the palace. The Scriptures [Christian literature] were translated in the Library. (His Majesty) questioned him about his system in his own forbidden apartments, became deeply convinced of its correctness and truth, and gave him special orders for its propagation. In the twelfth Chang-kwan year (638), in autumn, in the seventh month, the following proclamation was issued ... let it have free course throughout the empire.²¹⁴

The imperial record of Chinese dynasties and rulers has been kept with great precision so these dates of 635 to 638 can be assumed to be accurate, testifying as they do of Alpen's arrival and translation work, before 641.

The other three manuscripts of this group seem to be linked together by notations at the end and are doubtless the ones written prior to 641, that is, between 635 and 638. The first of the three is "The Jesus-Messiah Discourse," the second-longest of the four; it is obviously intended as an effort to present the essentials of the Christian religion to the imperial court. Starting with the necessity for revelation to know God, it proceeds through a summary of the Ten Commandments, the virgin birth, life, and sacrificial death of Christ, with the last part of the manuscript missing. The astonishing feature is the extent to which the writer relied on Buddhist expressions, perhaps another indication of the early nature of this manuscript, revealing the new missionary's lack of knowledge of the language and complete dependence on a Buddhist translator. At one point "the Buddhas" are spoken of as seeing God in Heaven, while the Chinese ideographs chosen to give the phonetic sound to the foreign names are often rude ones whereas, with real effort, noble ones could have been found, and did appear in later manuscripts.

The next document which seems to fit in with this group has no title, but at the end is written "The Parable, Part II." Saeki has given it the title "A Discourse on Monotheism" which appears to be what it is. The third, almost as long as the first, is called "The Discourse on the Oneness of the Ruler of the Universe, Part I," and like the others has much Buddhist phraseology. The fourth, with the '641 date, covers the material in the Sermon on the Mount and the highlights of the Gospels, and shows a much improved understanding of the meaning of the

characters chosen for phonetic sounds. All four of these manuscripts, which are associated with the arrival of the first Christian missionaries, were obtained in China by two Japanese scholars in 1916 and 1922²¹⁵ and are now in Kyoto, Japan.

The Cyriacus Literature, Early Eighth Century

The next group of manuscripts, also including four, is said by Saeki to be written by a Bishop Chi-lieh early in the eighth century whom he identifies with a Bishop Cyriacus whose name appears on the "Nestorian" Monument. In 1908 a large find of manuscripts was made in northwest China by Sir Aurel Stein. These are described by Moule in the following words:

It is now well known that a horde of manuscripts, which had lain for centuries sealed up in a small room cut in the rock in the Ch'ien fo tung near Tun-huang on the extreme northwest frontier of China, had been found by the local priests near the end of the nineteenth century. Sir Aurel Stein was able to bring away a large number of the manuscripts and these are now in London.²¹⁶

A number of these were Christian although apparently Stein did not take any of them. A few weeks later Paul Pelliot of France came and took two to Paris. Others were last heard to be in the hands of a private Chinese collector. One of these is entitled "The Ta-Ch'in Luminous Religion Discourse on the Origin of Origins" and has at the end the date corresponding to 717. It is short but speaks of the Law-King sitting in the city of Nazareth in the country of Ta-Ch'in. Another very short one is called "Hymn in Adoration of the Transfiguration of Our Lord" and has at the end a date corresponding to 720. Saeki points out that a notation in the imperial records refers to "Chi-lieh, a Persian priest" in the year 714.²¹⁷ He states further that the Nestorian Monument refers to Chi-lieh as one of the noble men "who joined together in restoring"²¹⁸ the failing cause of Christianity and that he was presented at court with a new delegation of missionaries, the imperial record indicating the year being 732.²¹⁹

In addition to the above two documents, Saeki feels Bishop Chi-lieh (Cyriacus) wrote two others. One is entitled by Saeki "A Nestorian Motwa Hymn in Adoration of the Trinity," the word motwa being a Syriac "word designating that the Hymn is to be sung while the congregation is sitting."²²⁰ Moule, however, has called it "The Chinese Version of the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo""²²¹ of the Eastern Church, following Mingana.²²² It can only be said to follow the Gloria, however, in a very general way, each line of the Gloria being expanded to a four-line verse. Yet the theme of each line of the Gloria can be found in each verse. The fourth of this group is called "The Discourse on Mysterious Rest and Joy." Although relatively long it contains almost nothing of a distinctly Christian nature but has the Messiah give Taoist teaching as the way to rest and joy.

The "Nestorian" Monument Narrative

With the third chronological period from which we have a Christian writing we come to the famous stone Monument of 781; to its discovery and historical elements we have already alluded. For a brief description of the contents as a whole the following summary of Legge is good:

The contents are threefold: Doctrinal, Historical, Eulogistic. The first part gives a brief outline of the teachings of the Religion, and the Ways and Practices of its Ministers; the second part tells us of its first entrance into China, and the patronage extended to it for the most part for nearly 150 years by various emperors; in the third part to which, though it be the shortest, the two others are introductory, the Christians express in verse their praise of God and their Religion, and also of the Emperors whose protection and favours they had enjoyed.²²³

The Book of Praise - Tenth Century

The last of the ten Chinese writings, according to Saeki, comes from a period about a century and a half later. Its literal title is "Honor Discourse," but Saeki has given it the name "The Book of Praise." He sees it as the Nestorian Diptych, "since the main object of a Diptychs [sic] or Triptychs [sic] in use of the ancient churches - the Eastern and the Western -- was originally no other than to offer prayers and thanksgiving for the living and the dead,"²²⁴ and this discourse calls for prayers for many deceased saints by name and offers thanks for many books by name, including the second group of four mentioned above. In a postscript there is reference to 530 Nestorian writings and to priest Ching-ching (the Adam of the Monument) as the translator of thirty of them. Saeki does not believe, however, that he is the author of this one since the T'ang

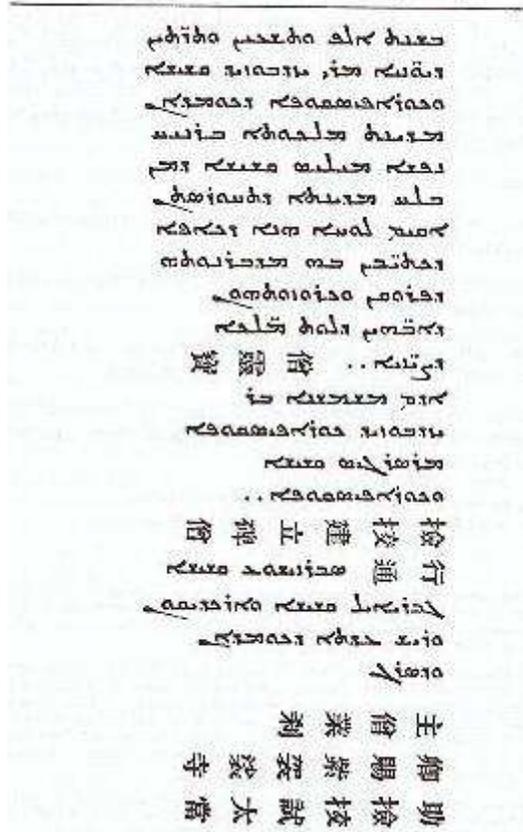
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dynasty is referred to without the prefix "Great," an impossible omission if written in that era. The T'ang dynasty ended in 906, and the stone cave in which these manuscripts were found was sealed in 1036,²²⁵ so it seems to have been written at some time between those dates.

The Syriac Hymns - Eleventh Century

The fifth and last group of manuscripts are in Syriac. According to Saeki, the later of them were found by Dr. Le Coq in 1905 in Kaoch'ang, China, and represent sheets from a Nestorian Church Service Book, written between the tenth and twelfth centuries.²²⁶ These particular hymns seem to be in adoration of Mary. In addition to these sheets, photostatic copies of other hymns were brought to Tokyo from the Peking Library in 1929. These are considered to be at least a century earlier than the others.²²⁷ Prayers to the deceased saints for their help are frequent in these hymns.

十三 碑國中行流教景



THE NESTORIAN MONUMENT

(Below the Inscription, partly in Syriac and partly in Chinese, are the notices)

IN SYRIAC. In the year one thousand and ninety-two of the Greeks (1092-311=A.D. 781) my lord Yezdbuzid, Presbyter and Chorepiscopos of Kumdan²²⁸ the royal city, son of the departed Meles, Presbyter of Balh, city of Tehuristan, erected this stone tablet, wherein are written the disposition of our Saviour, and the preaching of our fathers to the kings of the Chinese.²²⁹

IN CHINESE. The priest Ling-pao.

IN SYRIAC. Adam, Deacon, son of Yezdbuzid, Chorepiscopos; Mar Sergius, Presbyter and Chorepiscopos.

IN CHINESE. Examiner and Collator at the erection of the stone tablet, the priest Hsing T'ung.

IN SYRIAC. Sabran Yeshu, Presbyter; Gabriel, Presbyter and Archdeacon, and Head of the Church of Kumdan and of Sarag.

IN CHINESE. Assistant Examiner and Collator, the Presbyter Ye-li, Chief of the Monastery, Director of the Sacrificial Court, and gifted with the Purple Cassock.

On the two sides of the monumental stone there are about seventy names in Syriac of individuals, connected with the monastery or monasteries, of various ranks, from bishop down to deacon, the clerical names in Chinese of most of them being also given.

On the latest rubbing also, and obscuring some of the Syriac names, there is this note in large Chinese characters: `After its erection 1079 years, in the ninth year of the reign Hsien-fang (1859), I, Han T'ai-hwa of Wu-lin, came to see the monument, and, glad to find the characters all perfect, I rebuilt the shed that covers it.

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Alas, that my old friend, Wu Tsze-pi - the Treasurer - has not been able to accompany me on the visit! I grieved long because of his absence.'

We do not know who this Mr. Han was, nor what authority he had for doing what he did; but the record of his visit shows the interest which intelligent Chinese scholars still take in the monument.

Reproduction of Syriac and Chinese names of missionaries and church officers at the end of the inscription on the Nestorian Monument, 781. From The Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an Fu by James Legge, pp. 30-31.

Chapter 8

The Theology Reflected in the Early Missionary Literature

We must now examine these ancient documents of the Christian missionaries in China to see what we can learn about their theology. Is there evidence that it follows the lines of "classical" Nestorianism, that heretical view his opponents charged Nestorius with holding, or does it seem to follow the orthodoxy of the Antiochene and eastern churches which Nestorius professed to be his? In particular, we are interested in their christological views, but, as in our study of Nestorius, for background orientation and awareness, their views concerning the Scriptures, man and his redemption, and the sacraments also need to be considered before we seek to determine to what extent their theology influenced their missionary effort or its final failure.

That the missionaries had a very high view of the Scriptures and made great efforts to translate and teach them is quite apparent. An unusual witness to this is an imperial proclamation of 745 in which their faith is referred to as "The Persian religion of the Scriptures, starting from Ta-Ch'in, [with men] coming to preach and practise, has long existed in the Middle Kingdom [China]."²³⁰ Speaking of the virgin-born Holy One, the Nestorian Monument of 781 declared, "He fulfilled the Old Law, as it was delivered by the 24 holy ones," which Legge in a footnote indicates is a reference to the 24 Old Testament books.²³¹ Of the number 24, as we know, "all Jews accepted only 24 books, our 39, as Scripture. Those 24 included none of the Apocryphal books. This was the canon of the Jews at the time of Christ."²³² It was also evidently the canon of the early Christians in China.

The same paragraph of the Monument which speaks of the 24 books of the Old Law also includes this statement: "His mighty work being thus completed, at noonday He ascended to His true (place). He left behind Him the 27 standard books."²³³ Saeki in commenting on this raises this problem: "This is rather difficult to harmonize with the ordinary view, for the Syriac churches accept only 22 of our New Testament books. The Nestorians of East Syria were slow to accept the four disputed general Epistles and the Book of Revelation. Nor did these ever find their way into the Peshito [sic] version."²³⁴ Hagenbach, however, states, "Since the sixth century, however, it [Revelation] has been in the Greek canon. Athanasius ... receives as canonical those [books] we now have."²³⁵ From the evidence of the "Nestorian" Monument it is clear that the "Nestorians" accepted the Scriptures as we have them today.

There is no evidence of allegorizing the Scriptures, or of much use of typology, but in the very first of their writings the Scriptures are used as the very Word of God. In "The Jesus Messiah Discourse" Christian morality is set forth with references to the commandments of the second table of the ten and to the Gospels. "The Lord of the Universe's Discourse on Alms-Giving" presents a summary of the gospel revelation beginning with the Sermon on the Mount. In it is an accurate quotation from Isaiah 53:7 and of the Great Commission from Matthew 28:19 and 20.²³⁶ Indeed, one of the chief causes found for rejoicing in the concluding poem on the "Nestorian" Monument was that the early missionaries brought the Bible to the Chinese in their own language. There we read these lines:

The brightest and most brilliant of all teachings,
The teaching of the Luminous Religion [Christianity], Took root deep and firm in our Land of Tang,
With the translation of the Scriptures And the building of monasteries.²³⁷

As for man, the missionaries spoke clearly as to his original pure nature and subsequent fall, after being created and given dominion.

The original nature of Man was pure, and void of all selfishness, unstained and unostentatious, his mind was free from inordinate lust and passion. When, however, Satan employed his evil devices on him, Man's pure and stainless (nature) was deteriorated.²³⁸

Sin came through Adam: 'Sin is (of the nature) of Adam ... That man [Adam] not obeying the commandment of the Lord ate the fruit of that tree ... From the moment when he ate of the tree he made himself (equal to) 'the Lord'... he lost peace with God ... Women's first predecessor in the world, credulously and carelessly conveyed to Adam that lie which had been told to her and which brought all the sins of mankind into this world.'²³⁹

In the "Jesus Messiah Discourse"²⁴⁰ there is a somewhat similar statement about sin's origin. "All the sins themselves have come to this world, because our original ancestor committed the sin of disobedience in 'the Garden of seed-and-fruit bearing (trees)'.--Commission of sin is now universal. "All the living beings,

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however, have turned their face away from God and committed sins and finally rebelled against the Lord of Heaven."²⁴¹ But a day of reckoning is coming. "All the people in this world will either be rewarded or punished ... If you do not worship (Him), then you ... shall be carried to 'the dark earth prison' (Hell) ... to live together with the devil and demons forever."²⁴²

A nineteenth-century missionary to China, described as "one of the most zealous living missionaries," was asked "to what he attributed its [Nestorianism's] failure. His reply was, [How could it succeed? There was no Gospel in it]."²⁴³ This has been a rather widely held view, but when we consider what the "Nestorian" documents had to say about the subject of redemption it seems invalid.

Starting with the "Jesus Messiah Discourse" we read:

The Messiah gave up His body to these [wicked men] to be sacrificed for the sake of all mankind and made the whole world know that a human life is so very precious [serving] as a candle light. Thus in love He gave up His life for the sake of all mankind, suffering death for them.²⁴⁴

The "Discourse on Alms-Giving" elaborates the significance of the death of Christ to a still greater extent.

What the Messiah did was all in accordance with what had been foreordained ... He did the work of sanctifying transformation in a limitless measure ... He did not open His mouth but remained so silent when He was examined and He came to suffer the punishment of His body in accordance with the law. Thus He suffered in love for you in order that the seed and nature of Adam in you may be won and transformed by Him ... Behold! The Messiah had arisen and departed! ... After this, those who came to Him all went away filled with faith in Him. The disciples of the Messiah understood clearly what to do and went forth into all parts of the world [to preach the gospel]... Behold! Heaven opened and the Messiah, coming into the transparent place of heaven, appeared in the sky. Up in heaven there was a figure of man sitting with the Spirit of Great Mercy. Thus the Great Sanctifying Transformation of all mankind was done.

When they were given the Holy Spirit they had power to teach all nations and races of mankind of the Messiah, and could make the whole of mankind to see clearly the judgment of the Lord of Heaven. Behold! Who is this that has come to this world from your Father and perfected the work of sanctifying transformation?

For our own transgression and sins, from His own choice He made His own Person responsible and suffered the death of His "five attributes of the body." And in three days, He rose from the dead, and this was by the power and strength of the Lord of Heaven high above ... Those who want to be saved, hearken unto these words and do what is commanded ... If there be any who neither delight nor listen to what is preached here, they are in company with the devil. They shall be cast out into Hell forever.²⁴⁵

In the latest Syriac manuscript also the theme of redemption appears:

The Lord of all was pleased to renew our image which had, become corrupt ... The Good Tidings of reconciliation ... that men were to be freed from the bondage of destruction ... Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary tidings of peace, saying: King Messiah is born in the mean habitation and passed (his days) in the house of Adam (i.e., a mortal man). He with His body cleanses all blemishes of His race and with His bloodshed pays the debt. Blessed be the Father who sent His beloved Son!²⁴⁶

That the missionaries had a universal concept of atonement appears in several of the above quotations and again elsewhere as well. In spite of such passages as the following, however, it was not a universal salvation that they taught. "The Lord of Heaven Himself received the bitter suffering, then beginning the raising up of humanity . . . He then exclusively devoted Himself to the work of raising people."²⁴⁷ That they believed in men being eternally lost is clear from the quotations about hell, but the universal nature of their concept of atonement appears in many places, the following being some examples:

He, therefore, bore all the sins of mankind, and for them He suffered the punishment Himself.²⁴⁸ In His own death He was hanged on high ... Thereby all men without exception might be raised from the dead and ascend up to Heaven even as He ... The Lord of the Universe has now been reconciled to all human beings.²⁴⁹ The wiles of the devil were defeated. The vessel of mercy was set in motion to convey men to the place of light, and thereby rational beings were saved. His mighty work being thus completed, at noontime He ascended to Heaven.²⁵⁰ (Or: He set in motion the vessel of mercy by which to ascend to the bright mansions, whereupon rational beings were then released, and thus having completed the manifestation of His power, in clear day He ascended to His true station.)²⁵¹ ... He took human form that through Him salvation would be made free to all.²⁵²

The atonement of Christ was thus held by the missionaries to be for all mankind; Christ's suffering for all paid the debt and released all from bondage to the devil so all may believe, However, their writings clearly indicate that for the missionaries Christ's death for all did not mean salvation for all. Rather, His death appears to achieve a gracious freeing of all men that enables them by their own ability to believe and receive eternal

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life. Their theology at this point seems to be a precursor to that of Wesleyan Arminianism by a thousand years. The following quotations will throw further light on this matter and their attitude towards faith and works:

Those whom the Lord of the Universe gains to Himself, He rescued them all from a state of misery... All the human beings who have faith will come to the Lord of the Universe. If there are any who have no faith in this, it must be said that because of their unbelief their eye cannot see Him ... Those who have faith (in Him) indeed will be taken to the abode of the Messiah ... Those who have full knowledge of one God, and His right way [taught] in the good Scriptures, and yet do not themselves do what is commanded therein, or those who do not obey the determined will of the one God, still continuing to do wicked deeds, worshipping the devil and demons or Yakchas and Rakchasas, shall all fall into Hell together.²⁵³ Meritorious deeds of giving things to others in charity can be done only here in this world ... If you worship the Lord of Heaven with the utmost sincerity all your sins will be forgiven ... He bore all the sins of mankind, and for them He suffered the punishment Himself. No meritorious deed is necessary. This man of boundless forgiveness has already appeared ... Let a man worship this one God. Let him obey only what is commanded by this one God. Unless you understand the meaning of a meritorious deed in this sense, it is not a meritorious deed at all.²⁵⁴ A voice sounded in empty space saying: The Messiah is my Son. All the people in the world must do what is told by the Messiah, obeying His command to do good ... If any living being should hear these words, let him give up serving these false gods. Let him stop evil deeds, and forthwith do good works in faith.²⁵⁵

Concerning the sacraments not a great deal is said in these documents. In the Monument there is a reference seemingly to baptism. It comes immediately after the reference to the 27 books resulting from Messiah's coming and appears to read as follows: "Admission to the rule [i.e., the Way] is by the cleansing of water (baptism) and the Spirit for washing away vain glory and for purifying."²⁵⁶ Four of seven of the English translations consulted inset the word "baptism" in their translations here while all admit that to be its reference, although a literal rendering would be more like "washing water." "The Jesus Messiah Discourse" refers to the baptism of Jesus by John to which Saeki gives this rendering, "He went to Yao-ku-bun (John) and was immersed for washing."²⁵⁷ That the Church of the East practiced partial immersion and affusion is the testimony of a missionary who worked in one of their last large groups, in remote mountains, over a century ago. He attributed the survival of this society of more than 140,000 to their location, which he describes in these words:

The Nestorians of Koordistan inhabit the wildest and most inaccessible parts of the Koordish mountains. Some of the districts occupied by them are so rough that no beast of burden can travel over them, and even men find it difficult to climb about from cliff to cliff.²⁵⁸

The claim of these people was that they had faithfully preserved the traditions of their fathers, their written language being the ancient Syriac. His description of their method of baptism follows:

The ceremony of baptism (Umada) among the Nestorians, like most of their religious rites, is simple, compared with the forms of other oriental sects. They have a room in the church which is devoted to baptism ... The children are divested of their clothing and anointed on the head and breasts, in the form of a cross, with consecrated oil. ... They are then set into a vessel of tepid water, which extends up to the neck, and held there by a deacon, while the priest takes up water with both hands three times and suffuses it over the head, repeating one person of the trinity each time... The Nestorians observe no rule in relation to the age at which infants shall be presented for baptism.²⁵⁹

The Nestorian Monument also has a reference which appears to be to the Lord's Supper. "Once in seven days, they have 'a sacrifice without the animal' (i.e., a bloodless sacrifice). Thus cleansing their hearts, they regain their purity."²⁶⁰ In the last Syriac manuscript there are other references:

Behold! The body and the blood of the Holy One who pardons (our sins) are offered upon the Altar of Life, in the midst of the holy congregation of holiness ... Thou hast given us thy body and blood to eat, but our mouths tremble at thy name ... And make the living and the dead who have eaten thy body and drunk thy blood to rejoice according to thy promise in the Kingdom.²⁶¹

Perkins has written of the Church of the East's communion service of his day as follows:

Children from the age of three years, or younger, are allowed and encouraged to partake of the elements, which all seem to regard as possessing a magic charm, that will somehow tend to prepare them for heaven, or rather entitle them to it, without reference to any influence exerted on their characters ... Both elements are extended to all the communicants ... They do not worship them in the superstitious manner of the Papists, nor hold to real presence in the Papal sense of the term. They, however, appear to cherish a kind of homage for the bread and wine which is not very intelligent nor scriptural, and great

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particularity is observed in the preparation of these elements ... The consubstantiation of the Lutherans would very well define the Nestorian belief in relation to their ordinance.²⁶²

When we come to the doctrine of christology and Christ's relation to the Trinity we find some very significant statements in these documents. Concerning the Father and the Son, for instance, from the earliest group of documents, in the "Discourse on Monotheism," we have those statements:

There truly exists only one God from the beginning. Though He Himself *is* invisible, yet there has been indeed two manifestations. For instance, there may be likened to one's right and left hand,³ or legs. But there are no such distinctions as before and after, or superior and inferior. They are so alike that one cannot be distinguished from the other. Likewise, one God (from) one substance and form sent forth one God . There can be only one God in the universe, as there can be neither two nor three.²⁶³

The "Jesus Messiah Discourse" speaks of the Holy Spirit in relation to the conception of Mary:

The Lord of Heaven, therefore, made the Holy Spirit enter a virgin named Mary ... Suddenly Mary became pregnant. This was done by the Lord of Heaven because He knew that the virgin had no human husband yet, and because He also wanted to show the whole world that without a human husband a virgin can be made pregnant ... After her conception, Mary gave birth to a son named Jesus, whose father was the above mentioned Holy Spirit.²⁶⁴

The "Nestorian" Monument refers to the Trinity in its opening paragraph and to one of the Persons as well. The statement reads, "Is this not the mysterious Person (*shen*) of our Three-in-One (*san i miao shen*) 三一妙身 the true Lord without beginning, A-lo-ha?"²⁶⁵ It is susceptible of other renderings so needs to be examined more carefully.

There is general agreement as to the meaning of A-lo-ha. Legge notes that it is "the phonetization in Chinese of the Syriac term for God, equivalent to the Hebrew אֱלֹהִים (*Eloah*)."²⁶⁶ Wigam, the historian of the Assyrian Church, states that "'Aloha' (sic) is the name common to all three Persons of the Holy Trinity."²⁶⁷ However, in the "Motwa Hymn" we read, "Thou art Aloha, the Merciful Father."²⁶⁸

The problem lies in how to understand the word *shen* in relation to the Trinity. Does it mean "Person" as one of the members of the Trinity, as suggested above, or does it refer to the being of the trinity as Legge translates it, "our Eloah, with His marvellous being, Three-in-One, the unoriginated True Lord?"²⁶⁹ Since the word *shen* in relation to God appears twice more in the Monument and once in one of the other documents, it is necessary to look at these.

The fourth paragraph of the Monument begins, as Moule, I believe, correctly renders it, "Upon this the divided Person of our Three-in-One (*san i fen shen*) (三一分身), the brilliant and reverend Mishihe [Messiah], veiling and hiding His true majesty, came to earth in the likeness of man."²⁷⁰ The next reference is in the opening of the poem at the end. "The divided Person (*shen*) appeared on earth, redeeming and saving without bound."²⁷¹ The only other reference is in "The Book of Praise," which opens as follows:

Let us reverentially adore Aloha who is the Almighty Father and the Mysterious Person; and Messiah who is the Almighty Son and the Incarnate Person; and the Holy Spirit [in phoneticized Syriac] who is the Witnessing Person; these above Three Persons are united together in One substance, (*san shen -- i t'i*).²⁷²

The literal meaning of *shen*, according to Wilder and Ingram, is "the body, the trunk: one's self; personal; the whole life."²⁷³ To take it as "being," as Legge does, and refer it to the Trinity does not seem to be as suitable as rendering it "person" and understanding it as referring to one person, "the mysterious Person" of the Trinity, an expression used for the Father in "The Book of Praise." Saeki's rendering of the phrase, *san i miao shen* as "the Triune, mysterious Person,"²⁷⁴ holds to the "Person" translation but inappropriately refers to the whole Trinity as one Person. The next reference to a Trinity member he translates, "Whereupon one Person of our Trinity, the Messiah . . ."²⁷⁵ not rendering the very significant word *fen* (to divide, to separate)²⁷⁶ at all, other than referring to the Person as "one Person." Legge renders this sentence, "Hereupon our Triune (Eloah) divided His Godhead, and the Illustrious and Adorable Messiah..." To this he adds the following comment:

Literally, "our Three-in-One divided His body (or person)." I must take *fen shen* actively as expressing the act of the Triune. The peculiar dogma of Nestorius underlies the expression, - the dogma of "two persons in Christ"; one of the many vain attempts to fathom "the great mystery of godliness."²⁷⁷

This active sense, however, does not fit the next occurrence of the phrase, *fen shen* so well, although we see Legge here in his comment recognizing "person" for *shen*, though then applying it to the Trinity. The last Monument occurrence of *fen shen* has the phrase *fen shen ch'u dai* (分身出代), which Legge renders rather poetically "His separate Godhead, men then saw" and Saeki renders, "Dividing His God-head, He took human form,"²⁷⁸ although the words mean literally "the divided Person (or separated person) issued forth to His dynasty (or age)." These last two passages Wylie renders, "Thereupon, our Trinity being divided in nature," and the last, "Divided in nature, He entered the world,"²⁷⁹ taking the same phrase to refer to different "natures" of the Trinity (taking "natures" as the equivalent of persons) in the one case and to the divided natures of Christ in the other. This, of course, has the weakness of inconsistency. As for Legge's reading into this phrase "the peculiar dogma of Nestorius . . . [two persons in Christ]," it seems entirely gratuitous, for as we have seen Nestorius never held such a view, nor did the "Nestorian" churches.

Further, Legge himself does not translate *fen shen* in his active sense, "divided His Godhead," in the last Monument passage but renders it "His separate Godhead," which construction is similar to "His divided Person." That *shen* was intended to denote a personal subsistence, a person, seems the best conclusion. It is unclear, however, whether by *fen* the author meant the separate natures of Christ or the separating act in which He left heaven to come to earth.

In the same paragraph of the Monument containing the second reference to the Trinity, there is another mention of the Trinity without the use of *fen* or *shen*, but with a reference to the Holy Spirit. Legge translates it, "He [Messiah] appointed His new doctrines, operating without words, by the cleansing influence of the Triune [Three-in-One] [*san i ching feng*] [三一淨風]." ²⁸⁰ As Saeki points out, *ching feng* (pure or holy wind) is the equivalent of *pneuma hagio*, Holy Spirit.²⁸¹ If this above sentence were given its word order translation, it could read: "He appointed the Three-in-One's Holy Spirit, Silent (Wordless) Operator of the New Teaching." Moule, Saeki and Wylie all do render Spirit here for *feng* and, interestingly enough, at the end of this paragraph, in the passage previously discussed as probably referring to baptism, where we read *sui feng* (水風) Legge translated "water and the spirit!"²⁸²

To sum up, then, it would seem that what Adam, the writer of the "Nestorian" Monument inscription, is giving here, in the first three references to the Trinity, is an introduction to each member separately. The three passages would thus read as follows, taken in the actual word order of the Chinese characters:

Our Three-in-One's Mysterious Person, Originating True Lord, Aloha.
Our Three-in-One's Divided Person, Illustrious, Noble Messiah ...
He appointed the Three-in-One's Holy Spirit, Silent (Wordless) Operator of the New Teaching, Who forms in man the capacity for well-doing through correct faith.

With this understanding of the last passage we would doubtless have here a reference to the unseen, regenerating operation of the Holy Spirit. It must remain an unsolved mystery whether in the second passage the *fen* gives us a clear reference, in the mention of the second Person of the Trinity, to the Antiochene and "Nestorian" emphasis on the one person Christ being divided (*fen*) into two distinct natures (which concept then is repeated in the end poem, "the Divided Person issued forth") ; or whether the *fen* refers to Christ as one who separated from heaven to sojourn on earth.

The interpretation of these passages in the Monument as being references to the three persons of the Trinity is borne out also by the introductory statement of "The Book of Praise," a later document, where, as quoted earlier, the three members of the Trinity are referred to as "Mighty Father, the Mysterious Person," "Mighty Son, the Incarnated Person," and "the Holy Spirit, the Witnessing Person," in each case the word *shen* being person. The summary statement, previously quoted, which immediately follows this description of the Trinity members, reads: "These above Three persons (*san shen*) are united together in One substance (i Vi)." This *san shen i t'i* formula for the Trinity is almost identical with that used in twentieth-century Chinese theology to express the Trinity, *san wei i t'i*, where *wei* is the most honorable classifier for persons and is used instead of *shen*, with either phrase meaning "three Persons in one substance." The "Nestorian" Monument and "The Book of Praise" would thus give us a definite Constantinopolitan (381) trinitarian formula and the Antiochene christology.

The doctrine of the two natures in Christ comes out very clearly in the second Syriac manuscript, where the missionaries were not hampered by the effort to render their theology into Chinese where the religious terminology was conditioned by Buddhist and Taoist nuances. His human nature, for instance, is emphasized in these statements:

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Behold! The virgin conceives and bears a Son! And His name shall be called Emmanuel ... For this day to you a Saviour is born from Mary in our nature. The Messiah is born in the City of David ... Christ was born with flesh and blood like ours.²⁸³

The above is followed by such statements as these emphasizing His divine nature:

Because it was impossible that He should appear in the nature of His Godhead, He put on our body and joined it to His essence... For He is the divine Mystery who chose our Lady and dwelt in her, and made the body one with Him by the partnership of His glory ... The good tidings of peace [the angel] Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary, saying: King Messiah is born in the mean habitation and passed (His days) in the house of Adam.²⁸⁴

This distinction of the natures does, however, appear in the Chinese manuscripts in various places in addition to those already noted. For instance, in "The Oneness of the Ruler" the Messiah's preexistence is brought out. "In His previous existence He dwelt not in the womb. Hence we know that He existed long before He was born from His mother's womb."²⁸⁵ Again, "What He [Messiah] did shows that He is not the seed of man. On the contrary, what He did shows that He is the seed of the Lord (of the Universe)."²⁸⁶ In the "Discourse on Monotheism" the divinity of the Son is strongly asserted in a statement obviously intended to refute Buddhist concepts:

Continual existence is non-extinction, and continual extinction is nonexistence ... This one God is of non-creation, and He is of continual existence and of exhaustlessness. Wherever God is there is His Holy Son always. Though invisible, this Holy Son indeed, is with the One God throughout all time ... Each Person is Holiness itself, and is, indeed, exhaustlessness itself.²⁸⁷

The humanity of Christ is frequently indicated by the phrase appearing in the following assertion previously quoted: "Though it is only 641 years since the time of the birth of the Messiah, consisting of [the five attributes,] yet He is known in all parts of the world."²⁸⁸ The phrase "the five attributes" occurs many times in "The Oneness of the Ruler." The first reference there reads, "Both the soul and mind are made up of `the five attributes.' They, therefore, can see all, can hear all, can speak all, and move at will."²⁸⁹ Again, a little further in the Discourse, the eyes, ears, nose, mouth and hands are referred to, and then it is stated, "What is said here about `the five attributes' is not applicable to what comes to existence in the world except to what comes to existence in the mother's womb."²⁹⁰ Speaking of the coming day of resurrection it is said, "Surely the soul shall return again to the body consisting of `the five attributes!'"²⁹¹ From these various usages it would seem that the expression "the five attributes" refers to the 88

body of the senses, the personal properties of which go to make up the human nature. "A human being consists of both `the five attributes' and the soul, forming one complete person."²⁹²

This phrase of "the five attributes" seems to be a favorite way to refer to the humanity of Christ, especially in His birth and death. In addition to "the birth of the Messiah consisting of [the five attributes]" noted above, we have such expressions as these:

The Messiah suffered death in His body of "the five attributes" . . . A flesh relation of "the five attributes" of the Messiah ...

They at once went into the tomb and looked for "the five attributes" but found nothing.²⁹³

This studied carefulness to designate Christ's humanity, or else His Person as the Messiah, as that which is born, suffers and dies, is characteristic of the Antiochene tradition, and is quite evident in our two Syriac manuscripts also. There the equivalent of *theotokos* never appears but the equivalent of *Christotokos* does frequently. For instance, in the first manuscript we read:

The holy Virgin Mary, blessed among women, the mother of Jesus our Saviour ... The holy Virgin Mary, Bearer of Christ ... worthy to carry in thy womb, Emmanuel. . . The holy virgin, the Mother of Jesus, the Saviour of all.²⁹⁴

In the second document we have these statements:

From Mary, the Mother of Christ ... Mother of Christ! Virgin! Glorious dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit.²⁹⁵

Our conclusion can only be that throughout these documents, on the basis of this whole investigation, a picture of "Nestorian" heresy does not appear, but only a picture of the traditional Antiochene theology. The

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theology of these documents certainly precludes their having been written by the Jacobite sect,²⁹⁶ some of whose people are thought to have reached China, for theirs was the monophysite theology, and this error does not appear in these manuscripts. The nature of the theology which appears in these seventh-and-eighth century Chinese documents is that of the Antiochene tradition of the fifth century.

Chapter 9

Reasons for the Ultimate Failure of the Mission

What was the source of the missionary zeal of these early Christian witnesses which brought them by foot across the thousands of miles from Chaldee to China? Was it something unique in their theology? Because their evangelistic zeal was so much more pronounced than that of the rest of the churches to their west and because they were held to have a different christology from the others, some may wonder whether it is in their christology we can seek for the source of the missionary zeal of the Church of the East. But as we have seen, there was nothing particularly different in their doctrine of the person of Christ. They emphasized that He was truly man, of our flesh and blood, but at the same time that He was God from heaven, both the divine and human in the one incarnate Person. But this was the orthodoxy of the Church universal by the middle of the fifth century.

We will have to look elsewhere for that source, and perhaps the answer can be found in some implications of their Antiochene tradition. The Eastern Christians were inclined to be activists, using that term in a good sense to apply to those whose Christian faith led them to put the emphasis on service rather than meditation. This activism stemmed out of their Antiochene tradition of concern with particulars rather than the theoretical. This outlook was in full conformity with their literal approach to Bible study, even stimulating their detailed study of the life of Christ in the Gospels that they might correctly follow His example and do the good works obedience to Him required. The Gospels closed with the Great Commission to take the message of Christ to all the world, and doing this was seen by them as the climactic act of obedience. The following quotation from an early bishop of Nisibis summarizes this viewpoint:

He [the Savior] gave Himself in our stead, that we should imitate Him and give ourselves for the truth ... The Gospel calls us to what is contrary to the nature of men and their characteristics and manners, viz. love of enemies, doing good to those who wrong us, avoiding all desires, denying every inclination, and giving oneself up for the salvation of all mankind.²⁹⁷

If it is true that the theology of the Alexandrian tradition, in Harnack's words, "admitted no independent object to our present life; the work of the Christian consisted wholly in preparing for death,"²⁹⁸ then it might not be too much to say that the real (i.e., consistent) outlook of the Antiochene tradition and its missionaries was to consider that the work of a Christian consisted in preparing for life, to lead the obedient life of service themselves and to lead others into it and into life eternal for the age to come.

The missionaries' belief in a universal atonement, and the consequent native ability of men to respond in faith of deliverance from death, Satan and sin, doubtless encouraged many of them with a false optimism. But they were convinced that Christians were called to evangelize! In the "Discourse of Alms-Giving" they wrote that after the resurrection of Christ:

[of] those who came to Him, all went away filled with faith in Him. The disciples of the Messiah understood clearly and decided distinctly what to do; they went forth into all parts of the world, saying, "Preach ye my words to all the races of mankind. . ."²⁹⁹

Taking the Scriptures literally, they believed the fulfillment of this command was vital to their obedience and going on to perfection. Following the example of Jesus meant a sacrificial life of service, and the medical schools of Edessa and Dschondisapur in Khuzistan,³⁰⁰ the theological schools of Edessa and Nisibis, their hospitals and medical service, their missionary effort in India and across to China, all testify to the extent of their effort to render that service and to the extent of their missionary zeal. Yet all of this effort was eventually to fade away, and for reasons that went far beyond false optimism or a misinterpretation of the extent of the atonement. Why then did they fail?

In an article in *The Mainichi* of Tokyo, Dr. Saeki has given what he considers to be ten causes of their failure: 1) "Nestorianism" in China was a foreign religion from the beginning and remained so to the end; 2) the excellence of the Chinese civilization, material and spiritual, was superior to that of London at the opening of this century; 3) the fall of the Persian Empire in 642 was to the militant Mohammedans; 4) the "Nestorian" church members in China were foreigners, not Chinese, and mostly from the despised mercenary soldiers of the Uigur and Tungu tribes, "barbarians" from the Mongol plains; 5) in China they failed to train native leaders, lay and clergy, as indicated by the "Nestorian" Monument where, of 72 names, only one might be

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Chinese; 6) the loss of the imperial favor and support occurred in the ninth century, with the outlawing of Christian and Buddhist monasteries in 845; 7) the Huang Chao Rebellion, in which many great cities were captured and their people slain, included the decimation of most of the "Nestorian" remnant; 8) the monogamic principle of the Christians was unpopular with the polygamic Chinese and Mohammedans; 9) there was constant badgering and sometimes violent persecution from the Mohammedans; 10) and the converted tribesmen in the armies of the Mongul Khans died like flies as these mercenaries fought the wars of conquest, or were lost through the sinking of the invading fleet off Japan in a typhoon, while the eventual destruction of the civilizations from Delhi to Damascus, under the ruthless Tamerlane,³⁰¹ decimated masses of Christians.

All of these are factors contributing to the failure of the mission to found a lasting church in China, with the first, second, fourth and fifth causes perhaps being especially responsible for the inability of the missionaries to implant convictions which would survive the disasters described in the others. Certainly the high cultural level of the Chinese court, with the sophisticated philosophies of the Buddhists and Taoists, along with the prevailing ethics, all constantly discussed by the intelligentsia, presented a difficult barrier for these Syrian missionaries to penetrate with the simple gospel. Starting at the top level of society, as they did, and unable to win converts there, doubtless had much to do also with their failure to train a Chinese leadership, for the men were thus not available for training.

What is probably the major cause for their failure, however, is one not mentioned by Saeki, except in terms of culture under the second point. The major mistake, and the one which ultimately doomed their mission to failure, was their constant effort to phrase the gospel message in the philosophical terms of the court, to make it intellectually acceptable to that society, even though those terms had a strictly Buddhist or Taoist connotation, thereby, to the extent it was done, lessening the uniqueness of the gospel as the Word of the Holy God to sinful men. Instead of the gospel's reaching those cultured but needy hearts with the power, authority and unction of the living God, calling on them for a heart conversion, its voice was muffled and confused when heard in the terminology of pagan religion. Eventually, as we see in the last manuscript in Chinese, the gospel itself was entirely missing, while it is very little in evidence in some of the others, notably the long "Discourse On Rest and Joy."

The writings of the early missionaries of 635 show that they did have the gospel, and obviously they wanted to communicate it, but they faced the impossible task of quickly fulfilling the emperor's order for an immediate translation of some of their doctrinal writings when they did not have the language. Foster gives us a vivid picture of their predicament:

We can imagine them sitting in the great Library with their scribes. The translator would find chapter and verse in His Scriptures, and explain its meaning in halting Chinese to the clerk. The clerk would ask for further light upon this point and upon that. Then, often only half comprehending, he would write down what he thought was meant. After each sentence or paragraph he would read his Chinese version. The translator would try to check it ... Phrases bore a meaning different from that which he intended, but they were unfamiliar, and he had to accept them on trust. It was weary work -especially for the scribe, whose heart was not in it. Once attention began to flag, all manner of mistakes crept into the text. But the Emperor had commanded them to prepare samples of their gospel, so however ill-equipped for the task, they must proceed.³⁰²

No wonder the later missionaries, in listing the thirty translated manuscripts in "The Book of Praise" for which they gave praise, did not mention the first ones translated before 638! Those later missionaries, however, with their superior knowledge of the Chinese language and religions, were far less excusable for dimming the light of the gospel with the wisdom of this world. In the "Discourse on Rest and Joy," for instance, we read such assertions as this purporting to be from Jesus to Peter:

Know you Simon Samgha [Peter] that if any of" you wants to prepare himself for "the Victorious Way," as a rule he must get rid of both "motion" and "desire" before every thing else ... If he is of "non-desire" and is of "non-action," then he may be pure and serene ... understand and demonstrate (the truth) ... be all illumining and all prevading. And to be all illumining and all prevading is nothing but the concatenation of cause and effect which will lead (people) to the state of rest and joy.³⁰³

Non-desire and non-action are Taoist terms while the latter ones are Buddhist. Lao-tsu, founder of Taoism, was known to have ten heavy wrinkles on his face. In the continuation of the above passage we find Jesus calling the attention of Peter to the "curious markings on my face. But all these 'ten streaks' may be assumed to signify my attainment of wisdom . . ." ³⁰⁴ Then shortly later, "If you cut yourselves off from the things that defile you, then you could be as pure as the state of pure-emptiness itself."³⁰⁵ The discourse ends with these words, "Hearing too much may lead you into doubt,"³⁰⁶ a Taoist concept but hardly a Christian one! Both the Monument and the Motwa Hymn speak of either the "Vessel of Mercy"³⁰⁷ or "the salvation raft,"³⁰⁸ of which Saeki says, "As far as the Chinese are concerned, it corresponds to Kwan-yin, the Goddess of Mercy, who is called 'the Boat of Mercy' or 'Salvation Raft'."³⁰⁹

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Coupled with this compromising of the gospel presentation by the language used, there was another great weakness in the missionary ministry. This was their readiness to take advantage of the superstitious mind of the emperor and court personnel by using that item in their beliefs which appealed to the pagan mind, and which doubtless was the primary reason for their receiving the court's reimbursement, that is, their willingness "earnestly to offer prayers for the living and the dead," as the Monument puts it.³¹⁰ Praying for the dead is a form of worship recorded in the earliest religious records of Oriental peoples. Moore speaks of ancestor worship in China "at the most remote time of which any record is preserved,"³¹¹ and points out that it was in India long before any transmigration of souls was taught.³¹² Different motivations for praying to or for the dead have been present. In some instances it is for the comfort of the living, in satisfying their desire for continued fellowship with the dead. Anezaki claims this is a common one in Japan.³¹³ Again it is for the comfort of the dead, in some cases it being held that such prayers "saved from the torment of revengeful spirits" in hell, a belief in some Japanese Buddhism.³¹⁴ Or with Buddhists, prayers for the dead are held to bring merit to the deceased in their transmigrations and enable that the offerer "himself will be led up more closely to the realm of bliss."³¹⁵ But with a great many the motivation is fear that the deceased spirit will make trouble in this life for the relative who fails to pray to it, a common belief in Japan. "If their wants were not supplied, they might avenge the neglect," writes Moore of a similar belief in India.³¹⁶

Of the "Nestorians," Latourette writes, "While opposed to the doctrine of purgatory, they prayed for the dead."³¹⁷ Coleman says concerning recent times that "while the Nestorians thoroughly reject the doctrine of purgatorial fire, they still say prayers over the dead."³¹⁸ These prayers probably began as marks of veneration for the martyred dead. In the latest Syriac manuscript of China the purpose of the prayers to the deceased martyrs is seen to be both to praise them and to secure their protection and help. The opening sentence runs, "In the midst of our injuries, may we be guarded by your prayers, ye Blessed Ones." Further on we read, "Be a suppliant for all of us that we may be counted worthy of forgiveness."³¹⁹ Among the blessings listed on the Monument as resulting from the early Christian religious efforts we read, "The dead can have joy."³²⁰ The Monument also states that the imperial portraits were hung up in the state-built monastery.

He gave orders to ... carry the faithful portraits of the Five Emperors and to have them placed securely in the monastery, and also to take the Imperial gift of one hundred pieces of silk with him. Making the most courteous and reverent obeisance to the Imperial portraits, we feel ... the gracious Imperial faces are so gentle... The Imperial tablets hung high in the air and their radiance flamed as though vying with the sun. The gifts of the Imperial favour are immense like the highest peak of the highest mountains in the South, and the flood of the rich benevolence is as deep as the depths of the Eastern sea.³²¹

The five emperors were the immediate ancestral predecessors of the reigning monarch, and apparently the missionaries were well rewarded for praying for them. "Seven times a day [i.e., at the canonical hours] we worship and praise, a great protection for the living and the dead," the Monument reads.³²² Foster comments:

Without doubt one of the strong appeals of Christianity in ancestor-loving China was the message of a future life and that the piety of the living could contribute to the peace of the dead. Buddhists living side by side with Christians in Ch'an-An were not slow to see that this was the most attractive feature of their rivals. They were making preparations at this very time to compete with Christianity in this regard by the addition of such practices within Buddhism.³²³

The leader of this [competitive] movement within Buddhism was an Indian monk, Amogha Vajra, who lived as the near neighbor of the Christians in Ch'ang-An. One of the Palace eunuchs, a man of great wealth, had built a magnificent new Buddhist monastery in the capital. It was here, in the year 766, that the completion of Amogha Vajra's work of Buddhist "masses for the dead" was first displayed. On the fifteenth day of the seventh moon a solemn service was held, with prayers for the ancestors of the reigning dynasty (763-780) seven generations beyond the Emperor Tai Tsung (627-650). The portraits of the "Five Sages" already hung in the Nestorian monastery, but they went back only to T'ai Tsung himself. The Buddhists were now attempting to show that they could beat the Christians at their own game.

Not only so, to this was joined a "Feast of Wandering Souls," a Buddhist All-Souls Day. Prayers were said and offerings made on behalf of all who had departed this life without the blessing of sons of their own to arrange the proper masses for them. This feast continues still in ancestor-loving China. A monastery may arrange for similar ceremonies at other times whenever there are well-disposed people to pay the costs. Thus they acquire merit for themselves, and for these needy, lonely souls a speedier release from Purgatory.³²⁴ A still further development is seen in the "Pure Land School" of Buddhism. Here there is a festival of masses for the souls of the dead which continues for forty-nine days, ending in a day of solemn feasting. There is little doubt that here we have the Buddhist counterpart of the Nestorians' observance of Lent and Easter, known to them in Ch'ang-An in the days when the chorepiscopus Yazdbozid [father of deacon Adam who set up the Nestorian stone Monument in 781] "assembled the monks for reverent service and proper worship to fulfill the whole of the Quinquagesima." In China today masses for the dead are one of the most popular features of Buddhism. It is strange to see surviving there practices copied from the Nestorian Christian Church which disappeared so many centuries ago.³²⁵

But these practices of prayers for the dead - so utterly foreign to original Buddhism where there existed no place for souls, no prayers, faith, hell, nor a Pure Land Paradise (as man was held to have no soul and nothing was held to exist beyond this visible world to pray to nor to go to) - not only became the most popular feature of Chinese Buddhism but revolutionized Japanese Buddhism as well. During the years 804-806 two Japanese Buddhist priests visited China to learn more about their religion. Both lived in Ch'ang-An, and one of them, Kobo Daishi, is known to have lived in a Buddhist monastery just a few blocks from the mission compound.³²⁶ Furthermore, he returned to Japan with a copy of the very Buddhist manuscript which Adam (Ching-ching) and the Indian Buddhist Prajna translated together, until the emperor forbade them to work together on the project on the grounds that neither knew the other's language adequately, and each should be solely occupied with his own religion.³²⁷ Saeki writes:

Prajna was still enjoying good health and was known by the title of "The Master of Tripitaka" in 804 A.D., and that Prajna kindly presented three bundles of Patra-sutra, together with a copy his "newly translated Satparamitta Sutra" in ten volumes, which Prajna himself translated anew single-handedly in 788, after he had separated from our priest Chingching in the work of translating that sutra.³²⁸

When Kobo Daishi and his companion, Dengyo Daishi, returned to Japan, both began new sects of Buddhism whose basic tenets were new to Japan yet soon became the most popular form of Buddhism. Dengyo became the founder of the Tendai sect whose "comprehensive teachings included esoteric mysteries, abstract contemplation, and faith in the saving grace of Buddha Amida."³²⁹ From this developed the Jodo faith that the repetition of Amida Buddha's name at death would bring assurance of rebirth in the "Pure Land." Kobo founded the Shingon sect, teaching that "a person could make himself identical with Buddha in his life by the performance of mystical signs with the fingers, by the recitation of magic formulae, and by meditation. He also believed that an esoterically adept person could invoke the power of deities and assure by this means wealth, recovery from illness, plentiful rain, good harvests, and other mundane benefits."³³⁰ How much of this did he get from watching missionaries make the sign of the cross (as they did before they touched anything of significance), chant in Syriac and pray for the living and the dead?

A Japanese scholar speaks of Kobo being "a philosopher of all absorbing syncretism" and adds, "The affinity or connection of Shingon Buddhism with Manichaeism or the Alexandrian theosophy is a question of great interest."³³¹ With the Christian worship so near it seems hardly necessary to pass it by in order to attribute Kobo's new, syncretistic ideas to the Manichaeans. At all events, as the result of the new teaching introduced into Japanese Buddhism by these two men, that faith became tremendously concerned about life after death and the need of influencing the welfare of the departed souls through prayers and offerings made here. Indeed, today, holding religious services and prayers for the spirits of the ancestors is considered by the average Japanese to be the main function of Buddhism and the main task of the Buddhist priest. The greatest religious festival of the year is the summer "All Soul's Day" when the whole family offers prayers for the spiritual welfare of the deceased ancestors.³³²

In that early day of foreign missions, the causes which led to the undoing of the early Christian effort were without doubt never understood by them to be the seeds of their future failure. Faced with the world's vastest empire at the zenith of its cultural, intellectual, and governmental attainments, with the most sophisticated religious and ethical systems with which they ever had to deal, with a people who had long lived in the environment of religious syncretism, and with an ancient language of which they knew little, it was no wonder that those early missionaries should make many mistakes. The tragedy was that as time went on and some of these factors changed, notably their knowledge of the language, culture and religious concepts, they did not make a more serious attempt to disentangle themselves from the use of terminology and practices which make it increasingly difficult to distinguish between the superstitions of the pagan religions and their own rites. In modern terms it could be said that the missionaries' concern to make their message understandable in the context of the people to whom they went, accommodating their language to the religious phraseology of the people, resulted in an overcontextualization, a syncretism with pagan thought by which the uniqueness of Christ and His Way was lost.

The heresy of the Christians in China was not their christology but their necrolatry. It was the concept and practice of this which grew until it dominated their worship and consumed their religion. Strange it is indeed that the mission which set out with such vision, zeal, sacrifice and promise to bring life to lost men, should end its day engrossed in prayers for the dead. But stranger still if the profoundest effect the Christian mission to China was to have was to change Chinese and Japanese Buddhism from its emphasis as a way of life to a

religion for the service of the dead!³³³ The missionaries set out with the glorious gospel of salvation through Christ, God's Son, but faded into oblivion engrossed with superstition and necrolatry. Today the ancient "Nestorian" Monument stands in the Tang capital of the old Empire of the Middle Kingdom, tombstone to the memory of a mission that failed. But let us who live never forget that those early missionaries did leave their homelands and travel by foot and horse some 6,000 miles of the wildest roads, in obedience to Christ's command to take His gospel to all the world; and that their failure still leaves that responsibility with us to fulfill the unfinished task.

Concluding Summary

During the twentieth century nine ancient Chinese manuscripts, and two Syriac ones, all dealing with Christian teaching, have been found in north China. Dates on some of them reveal they were written between 637 and 641, while others indicate an origin between 717 and 720. The large Ta-Ch'in (Syrian) stone monument of 781, and Chinese records, indicate that Syrian Christian missionaries came to China during these periods and prepared manuscripts of their faith in Chinese. These missionaries came from the Church of the East, and a careful study of their documents reveals their Antiochene theology. Their Bible apparently had the same number of books as ours today, and there is no evidence of their having given it an allegorical interpretation. Their documents present a clear picture of the creation of man, his fall through Satan's temptation and all mankind corruption through this fall. They believed in a substitutionary atonement; although they also held it was a universal atonement giving all men the ability to appropriate it and, through faith and the proper use of the sacraments, to come to Christ for eternal life. In this they revealed the thought seen to be in Nestorius' presentation. However, they did not teach a universal salvation but sternly warned of hell for unbelievers. They taught baptism by "water and the Spirit," the former being practiced on infants by partial immersion and pouring. Their concept of the Lord's Supper was not that of transubstantiation although they seemed to hold a real presence of the Lord in the elements with a cleansing from sin accompanying the reception of them.

The documents make it clear that their doctrine of the trinity was Nicene-Constantinopolitan. Their christology is seen to be Antiochene, the Messiah being referred to as "the divided Person," with both the human and divine natures being in the one person. The omission of the title *theotokos*, and the use of *Christotokos*, also point to Antiochene conceptions. So also does the frequent designation of the humanity of Christ (referred to as "the five attributes") as being that which was born, suffered, and died. The christological presentation is thus "Nestorian" in the traditional Antiochene sense but not in the heretical sense condemned at Ephesus.

The Aristotelian concern for the particular rather than the abstract had left its impression on the Antiochene school of thought, with the result that those stemming from that tradition were more inclined to be activists than theoreticians, occupied with service, as they endeavored to follow the example of Christ they learned from the Gospels, rather than being devoted largely to meditation. Church-centered schools, theological and medical colleges, medicines, new vegetables for diet improvement, libraries, linguistic centers for Scripture translation, written languages for illiterate tribes, foreign traders and international envoys bearing the cross, all were fruits of their Christian concern. Yet within a matter of centuries their labor in China had not only ceased but had become almost unknown.

Many factors were responsible for this eclipse, including the difficulty of winning the cultured Chinese who, in their prosperity and abundance of ancient religious beliefs, felt no need for the gospel, and the severe persecutions which arose on several occasions. Yet as important a factor as any, perhaps, was their temporizing with Buddhist concepts in their eagerness to make the gospel intellectually acceptable to the court elite, thereby causing it to lose its uniqueness. To this must be added their necrolatry, which especially appealed to the Chinese with their ancient ancestor worship. The T'ang emperors of the eighth century were willing to finance the Christian missionary churches in return for their prayers for the imperial ancestors, a subtle temptation to conform to the court's wishes to those who had little revenue and who wished to maintain a good connection with the emperor. The record reveals that this work of saying prayers for the dead eventually became the major activity of the Christian presbyters, prayers being said seven times a day. Thus not their christology but their necrolatry was the heresy of the early missionaries in China; over the years it gradually turned them away from their original labor of evangelizing the lost. The evidence indicates that both Chinese and Japanese Buddhism were influenced considerably by some of the Christian necrolatry which in time changed these religions from concern with life to a major preoccupation with the service of the dead. Thus

compromise with pagan concepts was doubtless the major cause for the failure of the first Christian missionary effort in China.

APPENDIX

"Word and Deed" in Relation to Mission Purpose

"Word" and "deed." These two words as descriptive of missionary activity, that is, of the mission of the church abroad, have been at the center of discussion in mission literature. There are those who have equated "word" with the Biblical gospel and "deed" with the social gospel. Others have thought of word as a spiritual ministry and deed as a physical one. There is a not unbiblical sense in the latter as Romans 15:27 indicates.

But can the terms be thought of as exclusive of each other so that one can choose a word ministry and not be responsible for deeds, or vice versa? A more common recent differentiation is to equate word with proclamation and deed with service. But is not one who proclaims the gospel serving, and are not deeds a form of proclamation--a witness to the love and concern of God? Proclamation in a general sense can be verbal or non-verbal, as service can also be. Others have suggested that we could consider word to mean the evangelistic mandate and deed the cultural mandate. But, again, can either of these terms or the mandates be thought of as exclusive of the other as if one could consider himself called to engage in one without being involved in the other?

One's understanding of the nature of the church's mission, of the purpose of missions itself, is reflected in his interpretation of the terms word and deed. Many evangelicals have felt it adequate to state the aim of missions as being the preaching of the gospel for the saving of souls. At the other pole, others have claimed that the missionary's true purpose is to work for social justice and cultural advancement and that such deeds represent the essence of the proclamation of the gospel. To this day this dichotomized understanding of the nature of our mission confronts us.

The Aim of Missions

As the ultimate purpose of all Christian activity is the glory of God, so the aim of missions is to accomplish His glory by doing Christ's declared will in the mission endeavor. His will in the fundamental area of the church's task is clearly enunciated by our Lord on the solemn occasion when, just before he was to return to His glory in heaven, He stood before His apostles. He had chosen them to be the first officers and builders of His church and He commanded them then, and through them all of us, to carry out the stipulations of His new covenant. As Matthew 6:9-13 was given as a model for prayer, so Matthew 28:19-20 was given as the model for missions, the last proclamation of the covenant of life. If the church had grasped this more thoroughly, there doubtless would be today more agreement on the true nature of her mission to the world.

That the primary purpose of the mission is to *make disciples* is clear. This purpose is stated first in the mandate and is an imperative. Until a man becomes a disciple of Christ, he cannot be involved in what follows. To put it another way, until the missionary, the sent one, sees disciples made, he cannot go on to the rest of the task. But the mission does not end with the bringing of men to salvation; rather it only begins there.

The imperative is followed with two participles. There is to be *baptizing* of the converts in the Triune name. This is the work of the church's officers, of the institutional church, by which either established churches are enlarged or new ones are planted. This too is an important objective of missions.

But there is a third element in this mission mandate by which our Lord gives to us our model for mission endeavor. The second participle calls for *teaching* the converts all that Christ has commanded. This teaching goes beyond that of the stipulations to make disciples and initiate them into the institutional church. Since the mission was to go out into all the Gentile world, it would be to people who would have to be taught all that God's word reveals to us, beginning with the facts of His creation and His mission for men.

The Covenant of Life and Mission

The Westminster Catechisms speak of God's covenant of life with men, through Adam, before the fall (note Malachi 2:5 and Hosea 6:7). In that early revelation, particularly Genesis 1:28 (sometimes called the cultural mandate) we are given the details of God's mission to men for life; in brief, that men should be 'fruitful (producing God's seed), subdue the earth (bringing out its potential) and have dominion for God (ruling for His glory). By these means they were to live for God's service, for His glory. In the fall, men lost that aim and in idolatry substituted the aim of glorifying their own sovereignty. God's original mission for men has never been abrogated, although made immensely more difficult because of the curse pronounced on all creation, but

obviously it was impossible of accomplishment for those who remained in rebellion and refused to live for God.

The merciful introduction of the new element of saving grace into the covenant of life proclamation was for the purpose that men might be redeemed and restored to God's favor and service - that they might again respond in obedience to His declared will, His covenant, and fulfill their mission on earth. Covenant here is considered to be an arrangement proclaimed by the sovereign God of love in which He declares His will to His people and binds them to Himself with promise during a particular administration of His gracious rule. The first proclamation of the elements of the covenant of life appear in Genesis 1 and 2, while the proclamation for the new covenant of life is given in Matthew 28:19-20. (See "Theology of Missions, Covenant-Centered," November 22, 1968.)

The stipulations of the first covenant proclamation, with their summary of God's mission to men (Genesis 1:28) clearly inform us of important areas of the teaching we are still enjoined to do by the last covenant proclamation (Matthew 28:20). The cultural mandate and the missions mandate are thus vitally related in the ongoing covenant of life and in the latter mandate's stipulation for Christian education, that is, its requirements to teach all that Christ's Word sets forth. The writer of Hebrews, in calling attention to our appointed mission (2:7-18), refers to Christ as the one who has come to fulfill it for us. But we are called to be His disciples, to be conformed to His image, to follow Him by endeavoring to bring all things into subjection to Him, through His power, in gratitude to Him. Thus we are called to follow His example by fulfilling the stipulations of the covenant ourselves for His glory. The covenants between God and man are not set in a specifically soteriological framework - that is, they are not given to unsaved men to show them the way of salvation. They are given to God's people to show them how to live and witness before God's face in obedient service. Christ's obedient covenant keeping, imputed to us, is our salvation in the Counsel of Peace (Zech. 6:12-13).

Our lives are to be involved in both spiritual and physical ministries. A Christian life involves both dimensions and service to God in both areas. Paul's summary of his missionary activity under the categories of word and deed reveals his concern in both directions (Romans 15:18 and 27), Word and deed seem to be used to summarize his understanding of the manner, the method, by which the mission his Lord sent him on was to be accomplished. The *evangelistic, ecclesiastical, educational* enterprise was to be the mission of the church, but it called for a total commitment of both word and deed.

Word and Deed as Proclamation

Word and deed are both proclamation, for in the general sense proclamation can be verbal or non-verbal. The proclamation of the gospel of Christ is the heart of the missionary's mission. The gospel must not be narrowly construed, however. The gospel of Christ is the good news of God's love toward man; of the Father's forgiveness and acceptance by grace; of the Son's redemption from the power, defilement and penalty of sin, received by faith alone; and of the Spirit's conviction and empowering for the new life in God's kingdom, restoring to God's fellowship and service forever. Proclaiming this gospel by word is to verbalize the gospel (either by preaching or by witnessing through the spoken and written word) with deeds in harmony with that message; proclaiming it by deed is to demonstrate the gospel (through physical help and deeds of mercy) accompanied by verbal testimony in Christ's name. Deeds need words of explanation and words need deeds of demonstration. In the Old Testament the one word *dabar* can cover both, however. A *dabar* is a word, or it can be a deed so eventful that it carries a message in itself. The Bible, however, seldom leaves the deed "word" without verbal interpretation.

To proclaim by word is either to preach or witness. Preaching (as the word "herald" implies, II Timothy 4:2) is an official work of the church, an authoritative work (Luke 10:16) . Personal, verbal witnessing is a task of every Christian, including the preacher. Both have as objectives fulfilling the three stipulations of the missions mandate.

To proclaim by deed is a form of witnessing, the non-verbal form. Jesus said, "The very works that I do, bear witness of me" (John 5:36). Stephen in his death was a silent witness, but he had been a very vocal one. A mere "presence" witness that deliberately omits the name of Christ, or the presentation of His gospel, cannot be justified. Admittedly the best occasion for the verbal witness is not always easy to recognize and is a matter for prayer and wisdom.

The apostles are sometimes thought to have chosen the "word" witness to the exclusion of the "deed" ministry when they chose not to "serve tables" but to give themselves "to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:2-3). The deacons were elected to supervise the physical ministry of "serving tables." But Paul later was actively engaged in raising funds for famine relief, a deed ministry, while at least two of the deacons (Stephen and

Philip) are seen actively proclaiming the gospel, the word ministry! The word-deed differentiation was not an either-or but both-and, with the word ministry being primary for the apostles and the deed witness supplementary. For the deacons the deed ministry was their appointed and primary task and the verbalizing of the gospel their supplementary responsibility.

Objectives of the Deed. Witness

What are the immediate objectives of this deed witness? For one thing, it demonstrates that the Lord we serve is a God of compassion, not just a fearful symbol, when it is undertaken with integrity of heart. It thus opens channels of communication as rapport and confidence are established by the display of loving concern. Jesus said, "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42). Again, "Whoever receives one child like this in my name is receiving me; and whoever receives me is not receiving me, but him who sent me" (Mark 9:37). Somehow receiving a child in the name of Christ is to receive Christ, which is to receive the Father who sent him. It is our mission, too, to demonstrate that truth by deeds, as well as by words - deeds that come from a heart of love. Orphanages, medical work, material relief, schools - all are to that end when undertaken in the name of Christ. When undertaken in one's own name, or that of one's institution, or country, or humanity, or humaneness, the works, though good in themselves, can be idolatrous.

The deed ministry also brings help to people in need - regardless of whether or not they are Christian. Jesus has told us that if we are to be concerned for our brothers only, then we are no different from the people of the nations to whom we go; but that if we are to show ourselves sons of our Father, who does good things for the righteous and the unrighteous, we must show love to all (Matthew 5:44-48). Paul wrote, "So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). Our Christian commitment requires in life, before all men, this dramatization of the transformation the gospel brings and the love and concern it engenders.

These works of Christian compassion are not just acts of pre-evangelism, as important as such works often are for preparing the way for the verbalization of the gospel. Surely our Lord never intended that we should refuse help to a needy man because at the moment it was impossible to speak the gospel to him, perhaps because of a language barrier. We are disciples of the Redeemer, and we too are called to resist the evil effects of sin, to counteract the curse in His name, thereby demonstrating something of the delivering potentiality of the gospel (Matthew 11:4-6). When people who have had little of the benefits of modern scientific discoveries, fruits of God's common grace to men, are in real physical need, we cannot absolve ourselves of any responsibility to them, as James has pointed out (James 2:15-16).

Our resistance to the effects of the curse will sometimes call for medical help when both the administration of antibiotics (counteracting) and education for hygienic care (constructing) should be undertaken; sometimes the need will be for agricultural aid when weed killers (counteracting) and better seed (constructing) are the answer, both to some extent illustrating the missionary's concern to counteract the curse in the name of Christ and bring deliverance to men. And sometimes what is required is the declaration of God's great displeasure with injustice to the poor, inhumanity to widows and orphans, lying and taking of bribes.

But always the goal of bringing to the fore the good news of the Son's redemption and the Father's forgiveness must be maintained. In many cases it is the superstitious beliefs of the heathen, estranged as they are from God and under a curse, that lead to their poor crops, bad diet, unhealthy houses, high infant mortality, needless suffering and early death. We are required, where we can, to do good to them in the name of Christ, for it is a witness to His delivering power.

But our doing good is also to be "especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). The new converts among primitive peoples do not immediately know a different and better way of doing things. They need instruction and aid for their cultural tasks to help them in their effort to subdue the diseases of nature which overpower them, to overcome the soil and climatic problems which face them but for which they lack the scientific knowledge adequately to cope with or to surmount the disasters of nature which destroy their fragile efforts of a lifetime. The early church appointed deacons to serve in this physical capacity, but Paul also was very concerned to gather relief for the saints in Jerusalem. The objectives of the mission model's word-witness were to make disciples, build the church and teach all of Christ's revelation; but the deed-witness also makes an important contribution to reaching these goals and views them as major objectives.

Some Implications Needing Consideration

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In conclusion, it needs to be pointed out that the above understanding of the relation of word and deed to fulfilling the purpose of a mission abroad has important implications for a mission board.

1) There are implications for the choosing of missionaries. Ordained people have a word witness which is primarily verbal, but they must be people with thorough training in the Scriptures and with a deep commitment to a supplementary deed witness in which, through works of love, the significance of the redemption of Christ is exhibited. Unordained missionaries, however, usually have a deed witness, primarily non-verbal, but behind their technical knowledge and assistance must be strong desire and demonstrated ability to explain the gospel, the supplementary responsibility of their task.

2) There are implications for choosing the field. Should a field be entered with physical help where there is no opportunity for church planting or for taking the gospel to the people publicly? Should a field be entered without an ordained missionary? It seems reasonable to hold that where there appears to be little if any opportunity for preaching the gospel to the general public, or for church planting, the entering of such a field is worthy of consideration as long as a distinctive Christian witness can be given by word and deed, whether by ordained or by unordained missionaries, the hope being that this initial situation can be improved to allow for the planting of a church.

3) There are implications for choosing the work to be done on the field. In addition to sending ordained missionaries, a board should be alert to acknowledge glaring physical needs on a particular field and to seek unordained people with special gifts, zeal for witness, and technological skills to help meet those needs in the name of Christ and for the fulfillment of His mission.

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About the Author



John M. L. Young was born in Hamheung, Korea, of Canadian Presbyterian missionary parents, where he received his grade school education, later living in Kobe, Japan, where he graduated from the Canadian Academy. He received the degrees of B.A. (1934) and M.A. (1935) from Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, doing his thesis work in the field of the German Reformation. He attended Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia for two years and graduated in 1938 from Faith Theological Seminary, then in Wilmington, Del., to which he had transferred. That year he was ordained to the ministry.

Mr. Young and his wife Jean Elder served as missionaries in Harbin, Manchuria from 1938 to 1941; he then served as organizing pastor of a church in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. from 1942 to 1948; in 1948 they went to Nanking, China, to continue their missionary work but had to leave at the end of the year due to the communist take over. They moved to Japan where in the next eighteen years he helped plant three churches and was cofounder of the Japan Christian Theological Seminary where he taught systematic theology and was president until 1966. That year his wife died of cancer and he moved with his seven children to Grand Rapids, Mich., where he finished a M.Th. degree at Calvin seminary, writing on Christology. In 1967 he moved to Lookout Mountain, Ga. to become Covenant College's Missions professor. The next year he married a fellow faculty member, Jane Brooks, a member of the English Department. In 1981 he retired and with their daughter they moved to Japan to continue missionary work under World Presbyterian Missions of which he had been president for three years. Since the merger they now are members of the Presbyterian Church in America. Two of his sons also serve with that church as missionaries in Japan.

While in Japan he was editor of *The Bible Times* for fourteen years, wrote his first book, *The Two Empires in Japan* (a record of the Church-State conflict) and a series of ten booklets on *The Motive and Aim of Missions*, since translated and published in Korean as a missionary text. He also published a booklet on *Karl Barth's Doctrine of the Trinity* and has had various articles printed on missions and on covenant theology as a theological basis of missionary effort. In 1961 he received the D.D. degree from Covenant College and Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. He did his early research for this book, *By Foot To China*, while studying the history and theology of the early "Nestorians" during his studies on Christology in 1966-67 and then continued his research on the missionary activity of The Church of the East as its missionaries advanced the gospel across Asia to the Pacific.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Note the many references to the "Nestorians" in William of Rubruck's "The Journey of William of Rubruck," translated by a nun and edited by Christopher Dawson, *Mission to Asia* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966).

² Acts 2:9.

³ G. D. Malech, *History of the Syrian Nation and the Old Evangelical-Apostolic Church of the East* (Minneapolis: private printing, 1910), p. 52f.

⁴ F. C. Burkitt, *Early Christianity Outside the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: University Press, 1899), p. 12.

⁵ Malech, p. 51.

⁶ See John Stewart, *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise* (India: Mar Narsai Press, 1961) first printing, 1928, pp. 332 and 339-340.

⁷ Burkitt, p. 15.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

¹⁰ W. A. Wigram, *An Introduction to the History of the Assyrian Church* (London: S.P.C.K., 1910), p. 124.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² The form was used to affirm that "God was born" of Mary and was objected to by many eastern Christians on the grounds it could imply that the Godhead was born of her. *Theotokos* is frequently translated "Mother of God." See chapter V.

¹³ A. Hamack, *History of Dogma* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., new edition, 1961), IV p. 177. See also my discussion in chapter IV.

¹⁴ See Stewart, Appendix A, pp. 330-336, for his explanation of why "a name of such opprobrious signification" as Nestorian was given to the Church of the East by Rome. Stewart argues convincingly that it was the Church of the East's independency, a challenge to Rome's claim to the primacy of all the churches and supreme authority, that led Rome to label the Church of the East with the Nestorian name and its stigma of christological heresy.

¹⁵ Nicolas Zernov, *Eastern Christendom* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1961), p. 120.

¹⁶ Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church, III* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964; reprint of 1889), p. 731 footnote.

¹⁷ Wigram, pp. 238-240.

¹⁸ Malech, p. 242.

¹⁹ See the appendix for a discussion, in the context of today's missionary effort, of the place of the deed ministry.

²⁰ Malech, pp. 245-246.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 228-229.

²² Stewart, pp. 72-73.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

²⁴ Zernov, p. 120.

²⁵ Stewart, pp. 140-141.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

²⁸ Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York: The Heritage Press, 1946, II), p. 1590.

²⁹ F. Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient*, 1939 (New York: Paragon Book reprint, 1966), p. 35.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 55-56.

³³ P. Y. Saeki, *The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China* (Tokyo: Maruzen Co., Ltd., 1951), p. 15.

³⁴ Hirth, p. 301.

³⁵ Saeki, p. 241.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³⁷ Hirth, p. 304

³⁸ Henry Yule, *Cathy and Way Thither* (London: John Murray, 1926) rev. ad., Vol. I, LXXVI I.

³⁹ Hirth, pp. 160-161.

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- ⁴⁰ G. F. Hudson, *Europe and China: A Survey of Their Relations from the Earliest Times to 1800* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 121.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 122.
- ⁴² Saeki, p. 27, quoting Emmanuel Dizès Chinese book on the monument.
- ⁴³ M. L. Huc, *Christianity in China, Tarfary and Thibet* (New York: P. J. Kennedy, 1897), p. 65.
- ⁴⁴ Gibbon, 11, 1590-1591, note.
- ⁴⁵ Hirth, p. 10, note.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ Saeki, p. 34.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 276.
- ⁴⁹ Malech, p. 273.
- ⁵⁰ Saeki, pp. 462-463.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 463-464.
- ⁵² A. C. Moule, *Christians in China, Before the Year 1550* (London: S.P.C.K., 1930), p. 52.
- ⁵³ See Saeki, Part 11, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 354-399.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 435ff.
- ⁵⁵ Saeki, p. 414.
- ⁵⁶ Stewart, p. 207, quoting Mingana, *Bulletin*, IX, p. 334.
- ⁵⁷ Stewart, pp. 213-214.
- ⁵⁸ See Saeki cover picture and pp. 4-5.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 483.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 350.
- ⁶¹ Moule, p. 65.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 66. See also Saeki's p. 61 and p. 459. The translations of the names are Saeki's, p. 93.
- ⁶³ Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient*, p. 304.
- ⁶⁴ Stewart, p. 190.
- ⁶⁵ Ikuro Teshima, *The Ancient Jewish Diaspora In Japan* (Tokyo: Private Printing, 1973), p. 64.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-63.
- ⁶⁷ J. G. Holdcroft, *Into All the World* (Philadelphia: Mrs. Holdcroft, C/of Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, 1972), pp. 80-81.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.
- ⁷⁰ John Foster, *The Church of the T'ang Dynasty* (London: S.P.C.K., 1939), p. 159.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160.
- ⁷³ E. O. Reischauer and J. K. Fairbank, *East Asia the Great Tradition* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., Inc., 1926), p. 175.
- ⁷⁴ Foster, p. 132.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- ⁷⁶ Stewart, p. 191.
- ⁷⁷ Saeki, p. 369.
- ⁷⁸ See last chapter.
- ⁷⁹ Dawson, *Mission to Asia*, p. 80.
- ⁸⁰ Harold Lamb, Genghis Khan, *The Emperor of All Men* (New York: International Collectors Library American Headquarters, 1927), p. 23.
- ⁸¹ Dawson, p. x.
- ⁸² Saeki, p. 484.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 488-489.
- ⁸⁴ Lamb, pp. 92-93.
- ⁸⁵ Stewart, p. 267.
- ⁸⁶ Stewart, p. 267.
- ⁸⁷ Lamb, p. 157.
- ⁸⁸ Dawson, p. X11.
- ⁸⁹ Lamb, p. 201.
- ⁹⁰ Dawson, pp. 20-21.

- ⁹¹ Stewart, p. 344.
- ⁹² Saeki, pp. 512-513.
- ⁹³ Stewart, pp. 159-160, quoting Mingana, "Bulletin of the John Rylands Library," Vol. IX, p. 312.
- ⁹⁴ Dawson, p. XXIV.
- ⁹⁵ Stewart, p. 165, from Mingana, p. 338.
- ⁹⁶ Dawson, p. 83.
- ⁹⁷ Lamb, p. 223.
- ⁹⁸ Dawson, p. 68.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 162.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145; 172-173; 180.
- ¹⁰¹ Stewart, p. 161.
- ¹⁰² *Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. IV, The Eastern Roman Empire (New York, 1923), p. 645.
- ¹⁰³ Saeki, p. 524.
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- ¹⁰⁵ Dawson, p. XXXII.
- ¹⁰⁶ Dawson, p. XXIX.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*
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- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 286-287.
- ¹¹² L. Huc, *Christianity in China, Tartary and Tibet*, Vol. I (New York: P. J. Kennedy, 1897), p. 421 .
- ¹¹³ Stewart, p. 246.
- ¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 244-246.
- ¹¹⁵ H. H. Martinson, *Red Dragon Over China* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1956), p. 158.
- ¹¹⁶ Socrates Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ad. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1890), 2nd series, Vol. 11, p. 169.
- ¹¹⁷ A. J. MacLean, *Nestorianism, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ad. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), IX, 324.
- ¹¹⁸ J. Questen, *Patrology* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1960), III, 413.
- ¹¹⁹ Schaff, *History*, 111, 715-716.
- ¹²⁰ Socrates, p. 169.
- ¹²¹ Schaff, *History*, 111, 716.
- ¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 720.
- ¹²³ John Chapman, "Nestorius," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, ad. C. G. Herbermann (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), X, 756.
- ¹²⁴ Nestorius, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, trans. from the Syriac by G. R. Driver and L. Hodgson, *Nestorius The Bazaar of Heracleides* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 99.
- ¹²⁵ Friedrich Loofs, *Nestorius*, citing his sermons (Cambridge: University Press, 1914), p. 31.
- ¹²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.
- ¹²⁸ Nestorius, p. 100.
- ¹²⁹ See Gibbon's sarcastic description of "Saint" Cyril who lavishly spent over 2,000 pounds of gold from church coffers to influence the court and buy votes at the Ephesian Council. (Vol. 11, 1560-1570). See also Nestorius, *Bazaar*, p. 349.
- ¹³⁰ Chapman, p. 756. See also "The Third Letter of Cyril to Nestorius," in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, Vol. III of the *Library of Christian Classics*, ed. E. R. Hardy and C. C. Richardson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 349.
- ¹³¹ Chapman, p. 757.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*
- ¹³³ Cyril's Letter in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, p. 353. See also A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (New York: Dover Publications, 1961), IV, 175-186.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁵ MacLean, p. 327.
- ¹³⁶ Athanasius, "On the Incarnation" in *Christology of the Later Fathers*, p. 107. 54

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- ¹³⁷ Harnack, IV, 176-177.
- ¹³⁸ Nestorius, p. 75.
- ¹³⁹ Reinhold Seeberg, *Text-Book of the History of Doctrines*, trans. C. E. Hay (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954, first ad. 1895), 1, 296.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- ¹⁴¹ Harnack, p. 177.
- ¹⁴² J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960, second ed.), p. 307.
- ¹⁴³ Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), p. 359.
- ¹⁴⁴ Theodore, cited by Grillmeier, p. 359.
- ¹⁴⁵ Grillmaier, p. 360.
- ¹⁴⁶ C. J. Hefele, *A History of the Councils of the Church*, from the original documents, Vol. II, A.D. 431 to A.D. 451 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1883), p. 49.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- ¹⁴⁸ Bossuet, *Def. Cler. Gall.*, Lib. vii., Cap. ix. *et. seq.* Abridged. Trans. by Allies, "Historical Introduction" to the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431. Published in P. Schaff and H. Wace, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, 2nd series, "The Seven Ecumenical Councils," (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), XIV, 193.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 194.
- ¹⁵⁰ Hefele, p. 11.
- ¹⁵¹ F. Loofs, "Nestorius," *The New Schaff-Herzog Religions Encyclopedia*, ad. S. M. Jackson (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1910), VIII, 126.
- ¹⁵² "The Formula of Union of 433," *Christology of the Later Fathers*, L.C.C., III, pp. 356-357.
- ¹⁵³ MacLean writes: "The 'Apology' is called in the Syriac the '*Tegurta*' of Heraclides, and Bethune-Baker translates this 'The Bazaar of Heraclides,' suggesting that the original Greek had *emporion*. But Nau (p. xviii), with much more probability, urges that the original was *pragmateia*, which may mean either 'trade' or 'a treatise.' It seems that the Syriac translator blundered, and gave the word the former meaning when he should have given it the latter. That *pragmateia* meant a 'treatise' in Nestorius's own day is clear from the account in Socrates, who uses this word when he says that Nestorius had very little acquaintance with the 'treatises' (*pragmateia*) of the ancients." p. 325.
- ¹⁵⁴ L. Berkhof, *The History of Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), p. 110.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵⁶ Kelly, p. 337.
- ¹⁵⁷ Schaff and Wace, *Father*, 2nd series, Vol. XIV, *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*, pp. 264-265.
- ¹⁵⁸ K, Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church* (London: S.P.C.K., 1965), p. 56, says, "He was even provided with a copy of the Tome, which he found perfectly orthodox."
- ¹⁵⁹ Nestorius, p. 379.
- ¹⁶⁰ Sarkissian, p. 58, note.
- ¹⁶¹ J. F. Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and His Teaching* (Cambridge: University Press, 1908), p. 34.
- ¹⁶² F. Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place in the History of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: University Press, 1914), p. 25.
- ¹⁶³ Nestorius, Bazaar, Bethune-Baker, p. 191. The translator identifies "exposition" with Leo's *Tome*.
- ¹⁶⁴ Bethune-Baker, p. 197.
- ¹⁶⁵ Driver and Hodgson, Bazaar, "Introduction," p. xxxii.
- ¹⁶⁶ Hefele, p. 15.
- ¹⁶⁷ Grillmeier, p. 370.
- ¹⁶⁸ Socrates, p. 172.
- ¹⁶⁹ Socrates, p. 171.
- ¹⁷⁰ F. Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place*, pp. 79-80.
- ¹⁷¹ Nestorius, *Bazaar*, p. 198.
- ¹⁷² Nestorius' quotation of Cyril's charge, Bazaar, Bethune-Baker, p. 168.
- ¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, Nestorius' reply.
- ¹⁷⁴ Seeberg, p. 271.
- ¹⁷⁵ Nestorius, *Bazaar*, Bethune-Baker, p. 169.
- ¹⁷⁶ Grillmeier, p. 436. See pp. 432-452.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 437.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

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- ¹⁷⁹ Nestorius, *Bazaar*, p. 161.
- ¹⁸⁰ R. R. Williams, *A Guide to the Teachings of the Early Church Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960), p. 205.
- ¹⁸¹ Nestorius, *Bazaar*, p. 262.
- ¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 219.
- ¹⁸³ John N. D. Kelly, "Nestorius," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago: William Benton, 1966), *XVI*, 253.
- ¹⁸⁴ Grillmeier, pp. 449-450.
- ¹⁸⁵ H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers: Vol. I, Faith, Trinity, Incarnation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 456.
- ¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 606.
- ¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 455.
- ¹⁸⁸ C. E. Braaten, "Modern Interpretations of Nestorius," *Church History* XXXII Sept., 1963), 264.
- ¹⁸⁹ Nestorius, *Bazaar*, Bethune-Baker, p. 146.
- ¹⁹⁰ Bethune-Baker, p. 146.
- ¹⁹¹ Nestorius, citing both from the *Bazaar*, in Driver and Hodgson's translation (pp. 6275), and from Bethune-Baker's translation (pp. 124-137).
- ¹⁹² The "form of God" humbled Himself, took on the "form of a servant" to live and die for us, and by this humiliation we are exalted to "participate in His image." Unlike Barth, however, Nestorius clearly tied the exaltation of man to the exaltation of Christ also, for "the grace of the Resurrection" is necessary for us to be "after the likeness of Christ."
- ¹⁹³ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. IV, No. I, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, ad. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), pp. 131, 134.
- ¹⁹⁴ Malech, p. 343.
- ¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 345.
- ¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 346-347.
- ¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 348-349.
- ¹⁹⁸ Nestorius, *Bazaar*, p. 262.
- ¹⁹⁹ Budge, E. A. W., *The Monks of Kubalai Khan*, pp. 39-40, quoting from Badger, *Nestorians and Their Rituals*, Vol. ii, Appendix B, p. 380.
- ²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, The Monks of Kubalai Khan, p. 41.
- ²⁰¹ Grillmeier, p. 497.
- ²⁰² Seeberg, p. 262.
- ²⁰³ G. L. Prestige, *Fathers and Heretics* (London: S.P.C.K., 1940), p. 296.
- ²⁰⁴ Kelly, p. 316.
- ²⁰⁵ A. R. Vine, *An Approach to Christology* (London: Independent Press, Ltd., 1948), p. 196.
- ²⁰⁶ R. V. Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies* (London: S.P.C.K., 1940), p. 164.
- ²⁰⁷ R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), p. 203.
- ²⁰⁸ Grillmeier, p. 364.
- ²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 370-371.
- ²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 371.
- ²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 375.
- ²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 378.
- ²¹³ P. Y. Saeki, "The Lord of the Universe's Discourse on Alms-Giving," *The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China*, p. 226. This book contains the full texts of the ten Chinese documents and two Syriac ones, with translations, and notes.
- ²¹⁴ James Legge, "Text and Translation of the Monument," *The Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an-Fu* (London: Trubner and Co., 1888, reprinted by New York: Paragon Reprint Corp., 1966, p. 11. This book contains the full Chinese text of the Monument with translation and notes.
- ²¹⁵ Saeki, p. 115.
- ²¹⁶ A. C. Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550*, p. 52.
- ²¹⁷ Saeki, p. 94.
- ²¹⁸ Legge, p. 17 of Monument translation.
- ²¹⁹ Saeki, p. 93.
- ²²⁰ Saeki, p. 271.
- ²²¹ Moule, p. 53.

- ²²² A. Mingana, "The Early Spread of Christianity in Central Asia and the Far East," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Manchester (July, 1925).
- ²²³ Legge, pp. 39-40. Malech, pp. 253-263, has the translation of the Nestorian Monument of the Sinologist A. Wylie. Cary-Elwes (*China and the Cross*, New York: P. J. Kennedy and Sons, 1956, pp. 285-290) gives the English translation of the Jesuit priest, Semedo, 1655.
- ²²⁴ Saeki, pp. 248-249
- ²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- ²²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 334-335.
- ²²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 315-317.
- ²²⁸ This was the name given to Ch'an-an by the early Mahommedans.
- ²²⁹ See note on the Syriac at the commencement of the Inscription.
- ²³⁰ Moule, p. 67.
- ²³¹ Legge, *The Nestorian Monument*, p. 7.
- ²³² G. D. Young, "The Apocrypha," *Revelation and the Bible* ed. Carl F. H. Henry (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1958), p. 180.
- ²³³ Legge, *The Nestorian Monument*, p. 7.
- ²³⁴ Saeki, p. 83.
- ²³⁵ K. R. Hagenbach, *A Text-Book of the History of Doctrines* (New York: Sheldon and Co., 1861), 1, 319.
- ²³⁶ Saeki, pp. 214 and 219.
- ²³⁷ Saeki, "Nestorian Monument," p. 65.
- ²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 54.
- ²³⁹ *Ibid.*, "Discourse on Alms-Giving," pp. 213, 218.
- ²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, "Jesus Messiah Discourse," p. 130.
- ²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.
- ²⁴² *Ibid.*, "Discourse on Alms-Giving," p. 222.
- ²⁴³ Legge, "A Lecture on the Nestorian Monument of Hsi-An Fu; and the Present Prospects of Christian Missions in China," p. 54.
- ²⁴⁴ Saeki, p. 145.
- ²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 211-230.
- ²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 340-342.
- ²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, "Jesus Messiah," p. 130, author's translation.
- ²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, "Oneness of the Ruler Discourse," p. 185.
- ²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, "Alms-Giving," pp. 211, 224.
- ²⁵⁰ Foster, "Nestorian Monument," p. 137.
- ²⁵¹ A. Wylie, "Translation of the Nestorian Inscription," quoted from Malech, p. 254.
- ²⁵² Saeki, p. 65.
- ²⁵³ Saeki, "Discourse on Alms-Giving," pp. 220-230.
- ²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, "Ruler of the Universe," pp. 184-185. "Meritorious deed," *kung de*, may mean no more than "good deeds," and Saeki himself so translates it elsewhere in this very passage. The passage makes clear that no "good works" are needed for forgiveness, but "faith" and "the blessing and grace of God" only, and that deeds are good only when done in obedience to Him.
- ²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, "Jesus Messiah," p. 142.
- ²⁵⁶ See Malech for Wylie's translation, p. 254; and Moule, p. 37.
- ²⁵⁷ Saeki, p. 141.
- ²⁵⁸ L. Coleman, *Ancient Christianity Exemplified* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1875), quoting the Rev. J. Perkins, a missionary of the A.B.C.F.M. to the Nestorians c. 1840, p. 566.
- ²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 574-575.
- ²⁶⁰ Saeki, p. 56.
- ²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 337, 338, 345.
- ²⁶² Coleman, pp. 575-576.
- ²⁶³ Saeki, p. 164. Saeki has "the one God begot the order," which may be the meaning but is not the literal rendering.
- ²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.
- ²⁶⁵ Moule, p. 35.
- ²⁶⁶ Legge, p. 3, note.

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- ²⁶⁷ W. A. Wigram, *An Introduction to the History of the Assyrian Church*, p. 287.
²⁶⁸ Saeki, p. 266.
²⁶⁹ Legge, p. 3.
²⁷⁰ Moule, p. 31.
²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.
²⁷² Saeki, p. 273.
²⁷³ G. D. Wilder and J. H. Ingram, *Analysis of Chinese Characters*, 2nd ad., (Peking: College of Chinese Studies, 1934), p. 98, No. 291.
²⁷⁴ Saeki, p. 53.
²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.
²⁷⁶ Wilder, p. 65, No. 181.
²⁷⁷ Legge, p. 5, note.
²⁷⁸ Saeki, p. 65.
²⁷⁹ Wylie, in Malech, *op. cit.*, pp. 253, 261.
²⁸⁰ Legge, p. 7.
²⁸¹ Saeki, p. 83.
²⁸² Legge, p. 7.
²⁸³ Saeki, p. 338.
²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.341-342.
²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 181.
²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 213.
²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 167.
²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, "On Alms-Giving," p. 226.
²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.
²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.
²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 179.
²⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 181.
²⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 214, 216, 217.
²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 324, 325, 330.
²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 338-339.
²⁹⁶ Jacob Baradai was the ecumenical (unrestricted) metropolitan of the monophysites of Syria and Persia whose indefatigable zeal for thirty-seven years (541-578) spread the heresy throughout the area (Schaff, III, pp. 773-775), monophysitism eventually even capturing part of the Mar Thoma Church of South India (Foster, p. 35).
²⁹⁷ L. E.. Browne, *The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953), p. 66.
²⁹⁸ Harnack, III, 165.
²⁹⁹ Saeki, pp. 218-219.
³⁰⁰ Schaff, *History*, III, p. 731.
³⁰¹ P. Y. Saeki, □The Christian Mission Beyond the Roman Empire in China and Japan,□ *The Mainichi Newspaper*, Tokyo, July 30th and 31st, 1959.
³⁰² Foster, p. 44.
³⁰³ Saeki, p. 283.
³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*
³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 284.
³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 302
³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, Monument, p. 55.
³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, *Motwa Hymn*, p. 268.
³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 272.
³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.
³¹¹ G, F. Moore, *History of Religions* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914), p. 6.
³¹² *Ibid.*, p. 268.
³¹³ M. Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1963), p. 130.
³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.69-70.
³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.
³¹⁶ Moore, p. 267.
³¹⁷ K. S. Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1929), p. 56.

³¹⁸ Coleman, p. 579.

³¹⁹ Saeki, pp. 320, 325.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 63

³²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

³²² Foster, p. 85.

³²³ *Ibid.*

³²⁴ Since Church of the East doctrine did not include belief in purgatory, the Buddhists could not have acquired this idea from them. However, it is foreign to early Buddhists also, while later ones may have acquired it from an early trade contact with Romanists. Or it may have evolved from the animist belief that souls of the dead wandered on the earth until enshrined on some worshipper's altar, usually a family one.

³²⁵ Foster, pp. 105-106.

³²⁶ Saeki, p. 36.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 463.

³²⁸ Saeki, p. 36.

³²⁹ W. K. Bunce, *Religions in Japan* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1955), p. 62.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

³³¹ Anesaki, p. 130.

³³² Shingon means True Word, reminding one of John 1:1, 9, and 14.

³³³ See Anesaki, pp. 66-70.