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From Antioch to Xi'an: an Evolution of 'Nestorianism'

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Symbolic representation of Antioch. A fragment of the Peutinger map – a medieval copy of the 4th century Roman road map. Source: California Map Society.

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Abstract

What is misleadingly called ‘Nestorianism’ constituted an important piece of the religious and cultural mosaic of medieval China. The Chinese studies would be incomplete without understanding of its evolution. This text provides an overview of the three phases of historic developments in ‘Nestorianism’: a theological doctrine in the Roman empire, a political affiliation in the Persian empire, and a religio-cultural identity in China.

Three phases of Nestorianism

‘Nestorianism’ is a misleading term. It was coined pejoratively by the opponents of the tradition, which had been born in Antioch and became adopted in the eastern parts of the Roman Syria. Only for the matters of convenience we will call it ‘Nestorianism.’ The ‘Nestorians’ did not call themselves in this way. They believed that they represented an Orthodox theological tradition as it developed in the fourth century AD in confrontation with Arianism. Archbishop of Constantinople Nestorius (428-431), after whom this tradition was branded, did not invent it. He only promoted it, and for this reason was condemned by the council of Ephesus in 431. Some other names had more rights to be associated with this tradition than the name of Nestorius. One of them was the name of its real founder, Theodore of Mopsuestia.

The name ‘Nestorianism’ reduces this tradition to the theological formulas only. However, it evolved to something much wider than just a set of doctrines: it became a complex cultural phenomenon that featured a number of non-theological identities. These identities included political and cultural ones. There are at least three phases distinguishable in the evolution of the eastern Syrian tradition. One was theological, when this doctrine was born in the Antiochian school of biblical exegesis as a certain method of interpretation of the Incarnation. This interpretation in its extreme form was not accepted by the majority of the church in the Roman empire. As a result, it exacerbated a conflict between the eastern Syrian population of the empire, which had adopted ‘Nestorianism,’ and the imperial and ecclesial centre — Constantinople. The old rival of the Roman empire, Persia, used this conflict to weaken Byzantium and to advance to its territory. The Persian kings granted to the dissident Christian groups the freedom to believe in their doctrine, and secured their comfortable stay on the territories under the Persian control. Thus ‘Nestorianism’ passed to a second phase of its development, which can be identified as political. The ‘Nestorian’ church, relatively unestablished in the Persian empire, enjoyed enough freedom to develop an impressive mission to Central Asia and China. There, the ‘Nestorian’ missionaries tried to accommodate their teaching to the local culture.

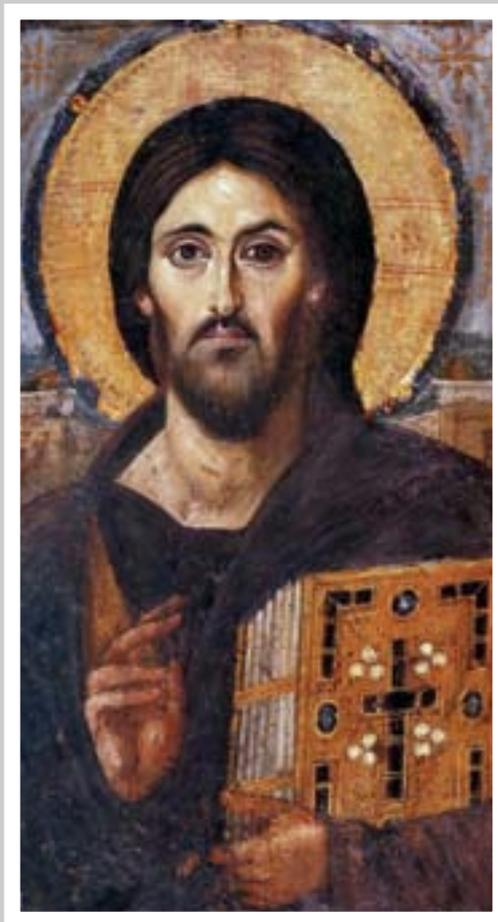
In China particularly, ‘Nestorianism’ turned to a cultural phenomenon that featured Christian doctrine on the one hand, and Chinese cultural elements on the other. It identified itself with the Chinese culture and thus turned to a cultural identity. Now we will investigate in detail each of the three phases of ‘Nestorianism.’

Phase one: theological identity

Initially, ‘Nestorianism’ emerged as a certain interpretation of the Incarnation. Incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ became a central issue of the theological and philosophical discussions in the period of late Antiquity and early Middle Ages in both the eastern and the western parts of the Roman empire. This issue urged theologians and philosophers to develop further the philosophical language of Platonism and Aristotelianism. The list of keywords of this language now included the categories of nature, hypostasis, energy, will, freedom, *etc.* It is possible to say that discussions about incarnation of God was a main driving force behind all serious intellectual developments in the world of late Antiquity.

The two questions that were discussed particularly can be articulated as *what* became united in Christ and *how* this became united? In the fourth century, the church was particularly interested in answering the former question. The two key antagonistic groups of the theological controversy in this century, the Arians and the Niceans, had different answers to this question. For the Arians, not the real God, but the most perfect creation of God, the Son of God, united with humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. The Son of God did not share with the Father the same nature, so the Arians believed. Son’s nature was created and thus different from the nature of the Father. The answer of the Arians to the question, what became united in Christ, was: the most perfect creature and a fallen creature.

For the Nicean theologians, who at the council of Nicea (325) rejected Arianism, the Son of God was not a creature, even though a perfect one, but God proper. He shared with the Father the same divine nature and thus was *consubstantial* (ὁμοούσιος) with him. Therefore, the Nicean



An encaustic icon of Christ the Pantocrator from St Catherine's monastery on mount Sinai in Egypt. Created at the late stage of the Christological controversies (6th century). With the two different facial expressions on either side the icon emphasises Christ's two natures as fully God and fully human.

answer to our question was: in Christ, the true God united with the true man. The Niceans insisted on this thesis, because they believed that it was the only possibility of salvation for the human nature. They rejected the Arian interpretation of the Incarnation, because this interpretation implied unity of the human nature with someone who is created himself and thus unable to provide salvation for humanity. Only unity with *God* can save the human nature from sin.

The Niceans argued with the Arians until almost the end of the fourth century. Finally, the council of Constantinople in 381 confirmed the decisions of the council of Nicea and thus awarded winning of the argument to the theological party of Niceans. This did not, however, put an end to the Christological controversies. They continued in the fifth through the seventh

centuries as attempts to answer the question: *how* divinity and humanity of Christ became united in his person?

The answer that became dominating in the church, was adopted at the council in Chalcedon in 451. The definition of the council, on the one hand, stressed the unity of Christ as a single being. On the other hand, it clearly distinguished in Christ full humanity and full divinity, which were called ‘natures.’ The council preferred to describe the unity of divinity and humanity in Christ not in positive terms, but negatively. It stated not what the unity *was*, but what it *was not*:

‘Following the holy Fathers we teach with one voice that the Son [of God] and our Lord Jesus Christ is to be confessed as one and the same [Person], that he is perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, very God and very man, of a reasonable soul and [human] body consisting, consubstantial with the Father as touching his Godhead, and consubstantial with us as touching his manhood; made in all things like unto us, sin only excepted; begotten of his Father before the worlds according to his Godhead; but in these last days for us men and for our salvation born [into the world] of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God according to his manhood. This one and the same Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son [of God] must be confessed to be in two natures, unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably [united], and that without the distinction of natures being taken away by such union, but rather the peculiar property of each nature being preserved and being united in one Person and subsistence, not separated or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten, God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Prophets of old time have spoken concerning him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us, and as the Creed of the Fathers hath delivered to us.’¹

This answer was drafted on the basis of writings of two theologians: Cyril the Archbishop of Alexandria (412-444) and Leo the bishop of Rome (440-461). They represented two approaches to the interpretation of the how of the divine-human unity in Christ. Cyril supported an approach that stressed the unity in Christ. Christ, for him, was one single alive being

¹ *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church*, trans. H. R. Percival, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, (repr. Grand Rapids MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1955), XIV, 264-265.



An ecumenical council discussing the natures of Christ. 16th century's fresco in the monastery Stavronikita at Mount Athos in Greece.

(ἐν ζῴῳ)² in whom divinity and humanity were distinguished only theoretically. When speaking about humanity of Christ, Cyril preferred to use the word ‘flesh’ (σάρξ) and not ‘nature’ (φύσις). His most famous formula of the unity of Christ was ‘the one nature of the incarnate Word’ (μία φύσις τοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένου)³. He obviously hesitated to call Christ’s humanity nature, because he was afraid that this could be interpreted as if Christ did not just have *humanity*, but was a *man*. The fear of Cyril was that if Christ’s humanity were called nature, this would imply that it was self-sufficient and self-standing, as any human individual is. It would mean that Christ was not one person, but two persons: a man and the Son of God. This

² *Ad Succensum*, in: *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum. Series Prima*: Ed. Eduard Schwartz (Berlin and Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1914-1940), vol. I.1.6, p. 162:9.

³ *Quod unus sit Christus*, in G.M. de Durand, *Cyrille d’Alexandrie. Deux dialogues christologiques* (Sources Chrétiennes 97. Paris: Cerf, 1964), 737.2-3 and elsewhere.

fear urged Cyril to adopt an anthropological paradigm, which can be characterised as minimalist. This paradigm stressed the unity in Christ and did not pay enough attention to his humanity. It does not necessarily mean that Cyril undermined the humanity of Christ or considered it reduced. It means that Cyril was afraid to consider Christ's humanity as self-standing or, to use the term of that time, hypostatic.

Leo of Rome, on the contrary, did not hesitate to call the humanity of Christ nature. Moreover, he insisted that it be called nature. He did not take much care about avoiding the danger of autonomisation of Christ's humanity that bothered Cyril. Actually, Leo allocated to Christ's humanity some autonomy, which was hardly acceptable in the east. He implied that humanity of Christ was a subject of its own will. He effectively introduced an idea that became a subject of fervent discussions in the seventh century, about two willing and acting subjects in Christ: one divine and one human. Leo, thus, represented a different anthropological approach than Cyril. This approach can be called maximalist, because it stressed the fullness of Christ's humanity.

The idea of fullness of the humanity of Christ related to the idea of unity in Christ dialectically. Those who stressed the former often undermined the latter, and *vice versa*. The council of Chalcedon tried to reconcile these two ideas and to reach a dialectical synthesis between them. In the Chalcedonian definition, the two anthropological approaches, minimalist of Cyril and maximalist of Leo, successfully converged. In their extreme developments, however, they became irreconcilable. The extremes of the two approaches became known as 'Monophysitism' and 'Nestorianism.'

According to the *extreme* minimalist anthropology, which became associated with the name of the Constantinopolitan monk Eutyches (c. 370 — after 454), humanity of Christ was incomplete and passive. Moreover, it changed as a result of its unity with the divinity. In effect, it was not our humanity anymore. These views were condemned as heretical by the council of Chalcedon. The rationale of this condemnation was primarily soteriological. If the humanity of Christ was reduced and not identical to ours, then our humanity cannot be saved, because,

as Gregory of Nazianzus had stated in the fourth century, ‘that which He has not assumed He has not healed; but that which is united to His Godhead is also saved⁴.’

Less radical was anthropology of another group, which, on the one hand, supported Cyril of Alexandria, and on the other, rejected Chalcedon. This group accepted that the humanity in Christ was full and remained unchanged in the Incarnation. At the same time, they refused to apply the word ‘nature’ (φύσις) to it. This group thus shared the anthropological minimalism of Cyril. Their own minimalism, however, was stronger than Cyril’s and at the same time milder than Eutyches’. This group failed to reconcile with the church majority supported by Constantinople, and eventually established their own ecclesial structures, mostly in Syria and Egypt. It is sometimes called a western Syrian tradition. Theologically, it was opposite to the eastern Syrian tradition of ‘Nestorianism.’ The modern descendants of this group are the so-called ‘Oriental’ churches: Coptic, Syrian, Armenian, and Ethiopian.

‘Nestorianism’ developed as an extreme anthropology opposite to the ‘Monophysite’ one. It insisted on the fullness of humanity of Christ. Christ, from the perspective of this anthropological paradigm, not just had *humanity*, but was *a man*. His humanity, in the Nestorian interpretation, featured self-sufficiency and autonomy. The unity between divinity and humanity in this model was loose. It was more apparent than real. According to the Nestorian interpretation, Christ *appeared* to be one single being. Effectively, however, he was two beings. These two beings were bridged by one veneration and appearance, which the Nestorians called πρόσωπον. This term goes back to the Greek theatre where the actors wore the masks-*prosopa*.

This interpretation of the Incarnation was rejected at the council of Ephesus in 431. Cyril of Alexandria was a protagonist of the struggle with Nestorianism. The rationale of this struggle was, as usually, soteriological. The ‘Nestorianism’ implied, according to its opponents, that salvation was confined to the man Jesus Christ only. Because he was an autonomous being, the divine salvation could not go beyond him and reach other human beings.

⁴ *Epistula Theologica* 101, in P. Gallay, *Grégoire de Nazianze. Lettres théologiques* (Sources Chrétiennes 208. Paris: Cerf, 1974), 32:2-3.



Cyril of Alexandria, a key interpreter of the doctrine of Incarnation. 13th century fresco from the Sopoćani monastery in Serbia.

Nestorian anthropological maximalism was extreme. There were however, more moderate versions of it, which became acceptable from the point of view of Orthodoxy. For instance, Leo's anthropology fitted well the criteria of Orthodoxy of that time.

Less extreme was also the anthropological maximalism of Diodore of Tarsus (d. around 390). Diodore enjoyed a high authority in the Christian east as a polemicist against Arianism. Emperor Theodosius listed him as one of a few theologians who constituted criterion of Orthodoxy in the course of the Arian controversy. Diodore's theology, however, precursed the 'Nestorian' Christology.

Diodore was foremost an interpreter of the Scripture and one of the founding fathers of the Antiochian school of exegesis. This school featured a literal and historical approach to the text of the Scripture. In this, it differentiated from the Alexandrian school, which was

highly allegorical. Both schools recognised a difference between the letter and the spirit of the Scripture. However, they presented the spirit each in its own way and treated the letter differently. The Alexandrians tended to explore words or phrases, without considering much the narrative. The Antiochians, in the contrast, valued the narrative and used the biblical stories to expound the spirit of the Scripture. They engaged poetic images and were less fascinated by abstract concepts. In this regard, they were closer to the Semitic patterns of thinking than to the Greek abstract thinking, which was employed by the Christian exegetes of Alexandria. It is possible to say that the Antiochians were more phenomenological in their approach to the text, while the Alexandrians were more metaphysical. The differences between the two approaches were both intellectual and cultural.

These differences influenced the Antiochian and Alexandrian distinct ways of interpretation of the Incarnation. Christology as a theology of Incarnation thus became a continuation of the Biblical exegesis. The sophisticated allegorism made the Alexandrian theologians contemplating Christ primarily in his divinity. The invisible side of Christ sometimes became for them more important than the visible, human one. This allegorical attitude contributed to the aforementioned anthropological minimalism of the Alexandrians.

The Antiochians, in the contrast, paid more attention to the historical narratives of the Scripture and, thus, to the human manifestations of Christ. Literal and historical approach to the Scripture inspired the Antiochians to see Christ as a human being, in unity with God. This hermeneutics contributed to their anthropological maximalism. However, the hermeneutical principles laid down by the exegetes like Diodore, did not necessarily lead to the extremes of Christology. One of the disciples of Diodore, John Chrysostom the Archbishop of Constantinople (397-403), avoided any kind of theological extremes. At the same time, he flourished as an interpreter of the Scripture who applied literal and historical method of exegesis.

Another disciple of Diodore was Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350 – 428/429), who has to be credited with the actual authorship of ‘Nestorianism.’ He obviously went further than his teacher

Diodore in stressing humanity of Christ, and applied to the Incarnation the language of indwelling and assumption. Thus, the *Logos* indwelt in a man:

‘He became man,’ they (the fathers of the council of Nicea) said. And it was not through a simple providence that he lowered himself, nor was it through the gift of powerful help, as he has done so often and still [does]. Rather did he take our very nature; he clothed himself with it and dwelt in it so as to make it perfect through sufferings; and he united himself with it.’⁵

In another passage, Theodore stated that in the Incarnation, the whole man was assumed by the *Logos*:

‘Our holy Fathers also said “who was incarnate” so that you would understand that it was a perfect man that he took <...> And he took not only a body, but the whole man, composed of a body and an immortal and rational soul. He assumed him for our salvation and through him he won salvation for our life.’⁶

For Theodore, God and man in Christ were bridged by one united ‘I’, which signified his ‘common person’: ‘So our Lord, when he spoke of his manhood and his Godhead, referred the pronoun “I” to the common person (πρόσωπον).’⁷ Theodore was aware that the word *prosopon* conventionally means a concrete being. In application to Christ, however, it has another meaning. It signifies one single honour, greatness, worship, dignity, *etc.*: both of the divinity and of the humanity. It is a way of appearance and revelation of God through the humanity, which he assumed:

‘*Prosopon* is used in a twofold way: for either it signifies the hypostasis and that which each one of us is, or it is conferred upon honour, greatness and worship; for example “Paul” and “Peter” signify the hypostasis and the *prosopon* of each one of them, but the *prosopon* of our Lord Christ means honour, greatness and worship.’⁸

⁵ *Catechetical homily 7*, in *Homiliae catecheticae (Liber ad baptizandos)*; in Syriac; CPG 3852), ed. by R. Tonneau & R. Devreesse, *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste. Reproduction phototypique du Ms. Mingana Syr. 561, traduction, introduction, index* (StT 145, 1949), 161.

⁶ See *Catechetical homily 5*, 19 (Tonneau & Devreesse, *Les homélies catéchétiques*, 127).

⁷ *Commentarii in Iohannem*, 8. 16 (CPG 3843); ed. by J.M. Vöstedé, *Theodori Mopsuesteni commentarius in Euangelium Iohannis Apostoli* (CSCO 115, Louvain, 1940 (Syriac text); CSCO 116, Louvain, 1940 (Latin translation)), CSCO 116, 119.

⁸ CPG 3859. This fragment preserved in Syriac has been discovered relatively recently. Published by L. Abramowski, ‘Ein unbekanntes Zitat aus Contra Eunomium des Theodor von Mopsuestia’, *Muséon* 71 (1958), 101.



安提阿的象徵。一張四世紀羅馬地圖的中世紀複製品(局部)。來源：
加利福尼亞地圖學會

由安提阿到西安——聶斯托利派的演變

修士大司祭基里爾博士(郭臥龍)

摘要

被錯誤命名的「聶斯托利派」(Nestorianism)是中國中古時期宗教和文化馬克賽中重要的一片。要完整地研究中國的「聶斯托利派」，了解其演變的過程是必須的。本文將概述「聶斯托利派」的三段歷史發展時期，分別為羅馬帝國時的神學教義，波斯帝國時的政治立場及中國宗教及文化上的身份。此文是根據2013年10月至11月在北京首都師範大學、中國社會科學研究院、清華大學及北京語言大學的演講內容輯錄而成的。

景教的三段發展時期

「聶斯托利派」是一個誤導的用詞。此名是形成于安提阿並在羅馬帝國敘利亞東部被採納的傳統的反對者所捏造的。為方便的緣故，我們且稱其為「聶斯托利派」。至於「聶斯托利派」的信徒，他們並不是這樣稱呼自己的。他們信相他們代表著一個於公元四世紀時對抗亞略主義(Arianism)的正統(Orthodox)神學傳統。雖然這個宗派以君士坦丁堡總主教聶斯托利(Archbishop of Constantinople Nestorius)公元428至431年)的名字命名，但他本人並不是此宗派的創始者。他只是此宗派的倡導者，也正是這個原因使他在431年的以弗所大公會議(council of Ephesus)中受到遣責。有一些名字比聶斯托利更值得與此宗派連繫起來，其中一個是此宗派的真正創始者摩普綏提亞的德奧多若(Theodore of Mopsuestia)。

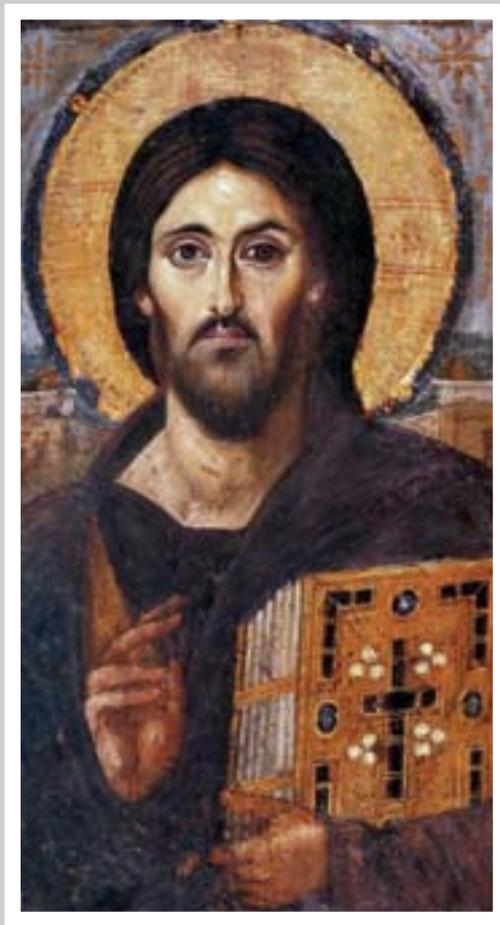
「聶斯托利派」一名把其傳統削減至單純的神學信條。但是，它演變成了比神學教義更廣大的東西：它變成了一個以非神學身份為特色的複雜文化現象。這包括了政治和文化上的身份。在東敘利亞的傳統的演變過程中，有三個可以區分的階段。其中一個是神學上的，當這個神學教義於安提阿的聖經解經流派(Antiochian school of biblical exegesis)形成並被用作某種解釋道成肉身的方法時，它的極端演繹不為羅馬帝國的大部份教會所接納。因此，此教義加劇了採納「聶斯托利派」的東敘利亞帝國的人口與帝國及教區中心的君士坦丁堡之間的衝突。羅馬帝國及波斯的老對手利用此衝突來削弱拜占庭及進攻其領土。波斯國王賦予這些異見基督徒群體擁有自己的神學教義的自由，並在波斯的領土上保障他們安逸的生活。因此，「聶斯托利派」進入了第二個發展時期——政治上演變。雖然「聶斯托利派」的教

會在波斯帝國的發展相對地較不完全，但卻享有足夠的自由發展中亞及中國的傳教事業。在那裡，「聶斯托利派」的傳教士嘗試讓他們的教導迎合本土文化。特別是在中國，「聶斯托利派」成為了一個一方面攜有基督教教義，一方面攜有中國文化元素的文化現象。它以中國文化作自我認同，因此形成了一個文化身份。現在我們將分別仔細研究「聶斯托利派」的三段歷史發展時期。

第一時期：神學身份

當初「聶斯托利派」是作為某種道成肉身的解釋方法出現的。耶穌基督的道成肉身一事成為了古典時期晚期及中世紀初期羅馬帝國東西地區神學上及哲學上的主要議題。這一議題促使神學家及哲學家進一步發展了柏拉圖及亞里士多德的哲學語言。現在，這一語言的關鍵字包括本性的分類 (categories of nature)、位格 (hypostasis)、能量 (energy)、意願 (will)、自由 (freedom) 等等。道成肉身的討論成了古典時期晚期嚴肅學術發展的背後主要推動力。

受到特別討論的問題可以陳述為「什麼在基督內結合在了一起」及「它們是怎樣結合的」。在公元四世紀，教會對回答第一個問題特別感興趣。兩個在當時正進行神學爭論的對立團體——亞略主義者及尼西亞派支持者 (Nicans)，對這個問題有不同的解答。亞略主義者認為，不是上帝本身，而是上帝最完美的創造物——上帝之子，在耶穌基督內與人性結合了起來。他們相信上帝之子並沒有與父分享同一種本性。子的本性是被創造的，因此與父的本性有分別。亞略主義者對「什麼在基督內結合在了一起」這一問題的答案是：最完美的創造物及一個墮落的受造物。



埃及西乃山聖凱瑟琳修道院基督全能者聖像（牆畫）。該畫完成於基督學爭論的末期（六世紀）。基督臉上呈現兩種表情，強調基督作為完全的上帝和完全的人的兩種本性。

對於在325年尼西亞會議中反對亞略主義的尼西亞派神學家來說，雖然亞略主義者認為上帝之子是完美的受造物，但他們依然反對這一觀點，因為上帝之子卻並不是一個創造物，而是上帝本身。祂與父分享同一種神聖的本性，亦因此與父同質。所以，尼西亞派支持者對我們的問題的答案是：真正的上帝與真正的人在基督內結合在了一起。尼西亞派支持者堅持這個觀點，因為他們相信這是人性能獲得救贖的唯一方式。他們拒絕接受亞略主義者對道成肉身的解說，因為這種解說意味著人性與一種被創造出來的事物結合，而這樣的結合無法為人類帶來救贖。只有與上帝本身結合才可以讓人性脫離罪惡。

尼西亞派支持者與亞略主義者的爭論差不多一直持續到四世紀末。最後，381年的君士坦丁堡會議確認了尼西亞會議的決定，亦因此把這個爭議的勝利給予了尼西亞派神學的支持者。但這並沒有結束基督論的爭辯。這些爭議在第5至第7世紀依舊持續，而這時要回答的問題則是：「基督的神性與人性是怎樣在祂身上結合起來的？」

一個在教會內盛行的回答被451年的加采東大公會議採納。是次會議一方面強調基督的結合是單一的存在，另一方面清楚地區分出基督身上完滿的人性及完滿的神性，亦即是所說的「本性」。此會議傾向從一個否定的，而不是肯定的角度去描述基督身上神性與人性的結合。它不指出這結合「是」什麼，而是指出這結合「不是」什麼。

「我們追隨聖教父，一致教導人承認一位聖子，我們的主耶穌基督，有完全的神性也有完全的人性，祂是真神也是真人，有理性的靈魂與身體；按神性來說是與父同質，按人性來說是與我們同質，在凡事上與我們一樣，但沒有罪；按神性說，祂在諸世代以前為父所生，按人性說，在末世是由童貞女馬利亞（神之母），為我們及我們的得救而生，也就是這位基督、聖子、主、獨生的兒子，被認為由兩性，不混淆、不改變、不可分的，而二性的分清不能由於聯合而消失，反而每一性的本質應被保存，同時發生在一個位格、一個生活方式中，並不是兩個位格，乃是一個，就是這同一的聖子，那獨生的子，為道的神，就是主耶穌基督；以上所說的正像先知從起初關於基督向我們宣佈的，與主耶穌所教導的，並聖父的信經所一脈相傳下來給我們的。」¹

1 譯文來自 http://www.cctraining.org/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=3546&Pid=2&Version=0&Cid=252&Charset=big5_hkscs



討論基督本性的一次大公會議。希臘阿托斯聖山斯塔弗洛尼基塔 (Stavronikita) 修道院壁畫 (十六世紀)

這一回答是跟據兩位神學家——亞歷山大里亞的總主教西里爾 (Gyrl the Archbishop of Alexandria) (公元 412 至 444 年) 及羅馬主教利奧 (Leo the bishop of Rome) (公元 440 至 461 年) 的著作的基本原理所擬定的。他們代表著回答「神人二性如何在基督內結合」這一問題的兩種解釋方法。西里爾支持的方法強調在基督內的結合。對於他來說，基督是一個單一的有生命的個體，神人二性只是在理論上被區分。當談及基督的人性時，西里爾傾向用「肉身」一詞而不是「本性」。他最有名的關於基督的結合的表述是「降生的聖言的一種本性」。很明顯，他對稱呼基督的人性為本性一事有所保留，因為他懼怕這會把基督解說為不單只有人性，

而且只是一個人。西里爾的害怕，假如基督的人性被稱作本性，那麼，這就暗示說基督的人性就如其他人類個體一樣是自足和自我存有的。這表示基督不再有一個格位，而是兩個格位：人和上帝之子。這恐懼促使西里爾採取被具有「極簡主義」特征的人類學模式。這一模式強調基督內的聯合，但對祂的人性沒有足夠的關注。但這不代表西里爾削弱了基督的人性或視之為萎縮之物。其實西里爾是害怕把基督的人性視為自我存有之物，或者以當時的說話來說——擁有一位格的實有之物。

另一方面，羅馬主教利奧不擔心把基督的人性稱為為本性。此外，他更強調，這應該被稱為本性。他沒有忌諱煩擾西里爾的基督人性的自主化問題。事實上，他給予基督人性的一些自主性在東方教會是難以接受的。他暗示基督的人性是祂自己意志的一個主體。他成功地引入了一個觀點，並且這觀點在七世紀變成了熱烈討論的一個主題：基督身上的兩個意志及行動：一個是神聖的，及一個是人性的。利奧因此代表了一個有別於西里爾的人類學模式。這模式可以被稱為「極繁主義」，因為它強調基督完滿的人性。

基督的完滿人性與基督內的結合有著辯證式的聯繫。重視前者的人往往貶低後者，反之亦然。加采東大公會議嘗試調解這兩個想法並嘗試在當中達成一個辯證式的合成物。在加采東會議的決議中，西里爾的「極簡主義」及利奧的「極繁主義」的這兩種人類學上的解說成功地結合在了一起。可是在他們教義上各自的極端發展中，他們變得不能和合。這兩套思想的極端演繹成為之後為人所知的「基督一性論」及「聶斯托利派」。

君士坦丁堡的修士優提赫(Euynchus)，公元370年至公元454年)的名字常與極端極簡主義聯繫在一起，根據這一觀點，基督的人性是不完整和被動的。此外，它因與其神性的結合而改變。在效能上，

它已不再是我們的人性。這種看法被加采東大公會議遣責為異端。這一遣責背後的根本依據是救恩論。假若基督的人性被削減到跟我們的人性不一樣的地步，那我們的人性便不能被救贖，因為正如納齊盎的格列高利 (Gregory of Nazianzus) 在四世紀所說：「祂所沒接受的，就沒有得到治愈；但那與祂神性結合的就得到了救贖。」

較溫和的另一派，他們一方面支持亞歷山大里亞的西里爾，另一方面拒絕加采東大公會議的決議。這團體接納基督的人性是完整的，並且在道成肉身中維持不變。他們同時拒絕使用「本性」一詞來形容基督的人性。因此這團體擁有與西里爾一樣在人類學上持守「極簡主義」的同一看法。他們自身的「極簡主義」其實比西里爾的更激烈，但同時又比優提赫溫和。此團體未能與君士坦丁堡所支持的大部份教會取得和解，最終在敘利亞及埃及建立起他們自己的教會結構。有時候這被稱為西敘利亞傳統。這套觀點在神學上與東敘利亞傳統所支持的「聶斯托利派」相反。此團體現今的後裔就是所謂的「東方」教會：埃及「東方」教會，敘利亞「東方」教會，亞美尼亞「東方」教會及埃塞俄比亞「東方」教會。

「聶斯托利派」發展成為一個與「基督一性論派」極度相反的人類學模式。它堅持基督的完滿人性。從這套人類學模式的觀點來看，基督不單只擁有人性，並且只是一個人。在「聶斯托利派」的解讀中，基督人性的特徵是自給自足及自主的。神性與人性的結合在這模式中是若即若離的。這個結合是有名無實的。跟據「聶斯托利派」的解說，基督顯現為一個單一的存有。可是祂實際上是兩個存有。這兩個各自獨立的存有是由一個敬拜及一個顯現所嫁接在一起的，「聶斯托利派」信徒將其稱為面具 (prosopon)。這用詞來自希臘劇院中演員臉上所戴的面具。



亞歷山大里亞的西里爾，詮釋道成肉身的關鍵人物。塞爾維亞索博恰尼 (Sopoćani) 修道院壁畫（十三世紀）。

對道成肉身的這種詮釋在431年的以弗所大公會議中遭到否決。亞歷山大里亞的西里爾是與「聶斯托利派」的鬥爭中的一名主力。這鬥爭的依據一般都是關於救恩論的。根據「聶斯托利派」的反對者所指的，救恩只限於耶穌基督一人。由於祂是一個自主的個體，神聖的救恩並不能超越祂並觸及其他的人類。

「聶斯托利派」人類學上的「極繁主義」是極端的。其實它有一些較溫和的版本為正統信仰的觀點所接納。如利奧的人類學符合當時正統信仰的標準。

迪奧多若 (Diodore of Tarsus) (約公元390年) 的人類學上的「極繁主義」是不那麼極端的。迪奧多若在基督教的東方作為一個對抗亞略主義的辯論者，享有很高的威望。皇帝德奧多西 (Emperor Theodosius) 把他列入少數在亞略主義的

爭議時期能建立正統信仰標準的神學家之列。但是迪奧多若的神學卻成為了「聶斯托利派」基督論的前驅。

迪奧多若是解說經文的先驅，也是安提阿的聖經解經學派的其中一位創派教父。這學派以字面及歷史性的角度去解釋經文的內容。在這層面上，它與注重經文寓意性的亞歷山大里亞學派不一樣。這兩個學派皆承認文字及經文的精神之間存在著差異。他們各自以自己的方法展現這個中的精神，並且對待文字的態度也不一樣。亞歷山大里亞學派的追隨者傾向探索經文的個別字句，對經文的敘述沒太多的考慮。安提阿學派的追隨者則重視經文的敘述及運用聖經故事去闡明經文的精神。他們運用詩化的意象，並對抽象的概念不那麼感興趣。在此，相對於希臘抽象的思維，他們比較接近閃米特人的思考模式，而亞歷山大里亞學派的釋經學家則更接近前者。安提阿學派的追隨者就對經文的態度而言，可以說是現象學的，而亞歷山大里亞學派的追隨者是比较形而學上的。兩個態度的差異既是智性上的也是文化上的。

這些差異使安提阿學派及亞歷山大里亞學派對道成肉身的解說出現了明顯的差異。作為道成肉身神學的基督論因此變成聖經註釋的一個延續。複雜精密的寓意性使亞歷山大里亞學派的神學家主要沉思基督的神性。對他們來說，基督不可見的一面有時候比祂可見的人性來得重要。這著重寓意性的態度促成了之前所提及的亞歷山大里亞學派人類學上的「極簡主義」。

而安提阿學派的追隨者卻把更多的注意力放在經文的歷史性敘述，即基督的人性的顯現之上。經文的字面解釋及歷史研究法啟發了安提多學派的追隨，令他們把基督看為一個與神結合的人。這套聖經註釋學促成了他們人類學上的「極繁主義」。這套由像迪奧多若這樣的解經家所制定的聖經註釋學

理論卻不一定會衍生出極端的基督論。迪奧多若的其中一個徒弟，君士坦丁堡宗主教金口約翰(John Chrysostom the Archbishop of Constantinople)(公元397至403年)就避免任何神學上的極端模式。同時，他作為一名運用字面及歷史方法的解經家而名聲大噪。

迪奧多若的另一個徒弟是摩普綏提亞的德奧多若(Theodore of Mopsuestia)(公元350至428/429年)，他被稱讚為「聶斯托利派」的真正締造者。很明顯，他比他的老師迪奧多若更進一步地強調基督的人性，並以「居住於內」(indwelling)及「獲取」(assumption)的語言來解釋「道成肉身」。因此，道住在一個人內：

「『祂成為人』，他們(尼西亞大公會議的教父)說。祂並不是通過簡單的聖意屈降自己，也不是像祂一直以來所做和依舊在做的那樣，通過強有力的幫助的恩賜。祂完全取了我們的本性：祂穿上人類本性的衣服，並居於其內，藉受苦而使它完美，並且祂使自己與之相結合。」

在另一篇文章中，迪奧多若宣稱在道成肉身中，道取得了整個人性：

「我們的聖教父也說『那降生者』，因此你會明白祂取了完滿的人性。祂並不只取了肉身，而是取了由肉身和不朽及理智的靈魂組成的整個人性，祂以這人性承擔起我們的救贖，祂並透過此人性贏得我們生命的救恩。」

對於迪奧多若來說，基督的神性及人性由一個同一的「我」連接起來。這個「我」代表著祂「普遍的人性」：「因此，當我們的主談及祂的人性及祂的神性時，那個「我」所參照的是「普遍的人性」迪奧多若留意到「位格」(prosopon)一詞通常代表的是具體的存在。可是當這詞用於基督時，它有了另一個意義。

它象徵著神性及人性兩者的一個單一的榮譽、偉大、崇拜、尊榮以及其他等等。他假設這是一個上帝通過人性顯現和啟示的方法：

「位格 (Prosopon) 以一種雙重的方法被使用：它一是代表我們每個人的位格，也就是我們每個人所是的，或是被授予榮譽，偉大及崇拜：例如『保羅』和『彼得』代表他們各自的位格和每個人的位格 (prosopon)，而我們主基督的位格 (prosopon) 代表著榮譽，偉大及崇拜。」

總括來說，根據迪奧多若的看法，道成肉身的神學信條如下——基督是由兩個自主的存有所組成，一個人及上帝。透過一個位格 (prosopon)，他們的結合相當鬆散。這位格並不代表一個單一不可分割的個體，而是神性和人性的普遍榮譽。

這一對道成肉身的解說在敘利亞的知識份子中浮現出來。這解說在德奧多若清楚地表明出來後，他的徒弟聶斯托利於428年被選為首都教會的主教時把它帶到君士坦丁堡。聶斯托利並沒有再進一步發展德奧多若的教導。他只是複製了老師的想法。他的基督論信條與德奧多若的十分相似：「那兩個（基督的）本性在一個尊榮和同樣的榮譽中有一個統治權，一個力量或威力，及一個位格 (Prosopon)。」

聶斯托利開始運用他教會的領導身份在君士坦丁堡的教區廣泛傳播這一教導。他甚至嘗試把它外輸到超越他直屬管轄的領土，例如亞洲，呂底亞 (Lydia) 及卡里亞 (Karia)。這引起了正統教會信徒的強烈反對。他們於431年在以弗所召開會議並將聶斯托利的教義作為異端進行了譴責。他被罷免及流放到國外，先是敘利亞，然後是埃及。由摩普綏提亞的德奧多若所清楚表達出來的教導與聶斯托利的名字聯繫在了一起。