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THE HARP

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Editorial

This is Volume V of the Harp. We have combined the three issues together to enable the readers to have the articles of the Syriac Conference in SEERI (1990) in one or two volumes, rather than in many scattered issues. In the last Volume of Harp (Vol. IV) we had made available to our readers papers on eighteen topics selected from the papers presented by the various international scholars at the Syriac Conference held at SEERI between 3rd and 8th of September 1990. In this Volume we are publishing another twenty one articles presented in this conference. Deviating a little from our practice, in this volume we are including four articles in languages other than English. The article by Manel Nin O.S.B. in Italian, the articles by Dalmais, Mimouni and Deprez are in French.

The article by Dr. Jacob Thekeparampil in this volume deals with "the prayers for the departed in the West Syriac Liturgy". This was read at the 5th Symposium Syriacum (1988) in Louvain, Belgium.

We hope Vol. IV and Vol. V of the HARP would give material for reflection and study, and provoke further research from Syriac Scholars.

THE HARP

Vol. V., No. 1.2.3., July 1992, 7-14

John Madey*

The Syro-Antiochean Sanctoral - an Expression of a Church's Religious Conscience

It is a common feature of all the Churches of God that they have developed a particular cycle of feasts and commemorations of their saints. In the course of time, these calendars have undergone developments. New feasts have been introduced while others have been suppressed, especially when, in practice, they had fallen into oblivion.

The calendars of the different churches developed after the persecutions of Christians in the Roman empire had ceased. The sanctoral of a particular church is composed of feasts and commemorations common to the whole Christianity, but it is also witnessing to the local past of a region or an eparchy or even a certain church.

This may also be the reason why the dates on which the feasts fall, sometimes differ. We are presenting below the calendar, as given by the late Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Severius Ephrem Barsoum in his Arabic work published in Jerusalem in 1929, which was eventually translated into English and edited in New York. For the sake of comparison, we have sought information in the 1991 edition of the *Calendar of the Syrian-Orthodox Church of Antioch*, published at Losser (The Netherlands) by the

*Dr. John Madey, gives lectures on Ecumenism at the Johan Adam Moehler Institute, Paderborn, and at the Paurastya Vidyapitham, Vadavathoor, Kottayam, India.

publishing department (Bar-Hebraeus-Verlag) of the Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese for Central Europe headed by Metropolitan Mar Julius Yeshu Cicek. Here we have added some feasts introduced in more recent times by the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch as well as those mentioned in the source study of Chorepiscopus Paul Hindo¹, but which are not mentioned elsewhere. They are indicated in angular brackets [...].

According to the Losser and other
Calendars

According to Patriarch Mar
Severios Ephrem Barsoum

January

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Circumcision of Our Lord,
St. Basil and St. Gregory | Circumcision of Jesus, the two
brethren Basilus and
Gregorius Church Teachers |
| 6. Holy Epiphany | Baptism of Christ |
| 7. Praises of St. John the
Baptist | John the Baptist |
| 8. St. Stephen the
protomartyr | St. Stephen, the head of the
deacons, protomartyr |
| 15. Our Lady of the Seeds | Our Lady of the Seeds |
| 17. Mor Antonios | |
| 19. Mor Semun (Simeon)
of Kartmin | |
| 31. Mor Severios the Great | |

February

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. St. Elias, Prophet | |
| 2. Presentation of Our Lord
in the Temple and Mor
Simeon the Elder | Presentation of Our Lord in
the Temple and St. Simon |
| 13. St. Elias III, Patriarch | |

* Feasts marked by * are celebrated according to the Roman Catholic calendar.

** Feasts marked by ** are also found in the Byzantine calendar.

1. Cf. *Paul Hindo, Disciplina Antiochena Antica - Siri, IV: Lieux et temps sacres - culte divin - magistere ecclesiastique - benefices et biens temporels ecclesiastiques* [= *Sacra Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale: Codificazione Canonica Orientale, Prot. N. 550/43: FONTI, serie II - fascicolo XXVIII*], Vatican City 1943, 79-97, 110-126.

25. Mor Afrem and Mor
Theodoros

March

9. 40 Martyrs of Sebastia 40 Martyrs of Sebastia
13. King Abgar of Edessa
19. *Syrian Catholics:*
 St. Joseph*
25. Annunciation of the Annunciation of the Bl. Virgin
 Bl. Virgin

April

15. Mor Ahō
20. Mor Avgin [Eugene]
23. Mor Gheeverghese [George] St. George the Martyr

May

1. St. Michael the Ascetic &
 Mor Yuhanon Dekfōnē
8. Mort S'mūni [Samona]
 and her 7 children
 (*in Mardin*)
11. St. Jacob of Nisibis
12. St. Ozozoyel
15. Our Lady of the Harvest Our Lady of the Harvest
 and Mor S'muel [Samuel]
16. Mor Dōdō

June

1. Mor Semun d-Zaytē
15. First Church built in Atrīb
 named after the Bl. Virgin
24. [Nativity of St. John
 the Baptist]
29. Sts. Peter and Paul The Apostle Paul and the
 Apostles Peter
30. Twelve Apostles

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July

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 3. | Mor Tûma [St. Thomas] | The Apostle Thomas |
| 15 | Mor Kuriakos the Martyr | Mor Kuriakos and his mother Yulitta, Martyrs |
| 20. | Mor Elias the Prophet and Mor Hadb'sābo | |
| 30. | Mor Jacob Burdōnō and Mor Grigorios Barhebrōyō | |
| 31. | | <i>in Mardin:</i> Mort S'mūni and her seven children |

August

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 1. | Mort S'mūni and her seven children | |
| 2. | | <i>in some places:</i> Mor Ahudemeh |
| 6. | Transfiguration of Christ | Transfiguration of Christ |
| 7. | Sts. Abraham and Abel | |
| 10. | Virgin Mary's Lent [5 days] | |
| 15. | Transition [Assumption] of the Bl. Virgin Mary <i>also called</i> Memory of the Bl. Virgin, "Protectress of the vines [raisins]" | Transition [Assumption] of the Bl. Virgin Mary |
| 16. | Mor Sōbō | |
| 18. | Martyrdom of Mor Philoxenos of Mabbug | |
| 29. | [Beheading of St. John the Baptist] | |
| 31 | St. Gabriel | |

September

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Mor Melkē | |
| 8. | Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary | Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary |
| 9. | St. Julian | |
| 14. | Exaltation of the Holy Cross of Our Lord | Exaltation of the Holy Cross |

18. Mor Jacob the Recluse
[Hbisōyō], Mor Mattai the *in Mosul : Mor Mattai the*
Ascetic and Mor Ahudēmē Ascetic
24. Mor Dimet

October

1. Mor Adai and Mar Abai [Syriac] NEW YEAR's day
7. Sts. Sarkis [Sergius] and
Bacchus
15. Sts. Isaiah and Asya of *in Mosul : Mort S'muni and*
Aleppo her children
18. *Syrian Catholics:*
Mor Efrem*
20. *in Bartelleh near Mosul :*
Mor Daniel

November

1. *Syrian Catholics:*
All Saints' Day*
8. [Sts. Michael, Gabriel and
Raphael, archangels]
15. Mor Salitō *in Mardin : Mor Isaia and Mor*
Asya of Aleppo (*see* October 15)
21. [Presentation of the
Bl. Virgin in the Temple]
27. Mor Jacob M' faksō
29. Mor Jacob of Sarug

December

4. Sts. Barbara and Juliana
6. St. Zōhe [= Nicholas]
8. Nativity of St. John
the Baptist
Syrian Catholics:
Immaculate Conception
of the Bl. Virgin*²

2. This feast is also known in the Syrian Orthodox Church. It is celebrated on December 9 under the title of the *Conception of St. Ann*, as in the Churches following the Byzantine rite.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 10. Martyrdom of St. Behnam and St. Sara | Mar Behnam, his sister Sara and his companion, the 40 Martyrs |
| 15. Beginning of Christmas-Lent | |
| 23. Departure of St. Gabriel | |
| 25. Nativity of Our Lord | Nativity of Our Lord |
| 26. Praises of the Mother of God | Praises of the Virgin Mary at the Lord's Birth |
| 27. Slaughter of the Innocent of Bethlehem | Slaughter of the Innocent of Bethlehem |

Other, locally celebrated feasts honour saints like Mor Kowmeh in the church of Diyarbakir, Mor Aaron in Kharpoot, Mor Malkeh the Ascetic in Tur-'Abdin, Mor Philoxenos in Midyat, Mor Julian and Mor Mūsē the Ethiopian in Syria and Jerusalem.³

In order to give the reader a fuller vision of the Antiochean heritage, we are rendering here also the sanctoral of the *Syro-Maronite Church* according to the new calendar established in connection with the recent liturgical reform. Although the Maronite sanctoral begins with the month of November (while the Syrian year begins on 1st Tisrin [October]), we follow the above given pattern starting from January. The feasts celebrated by the Maronite and the Syro-Antiochean churches alike, are printed in italics, and, if on different dates, reference is made to this practice.

The Maronites who are in communion with the Church of Rome since at least the Middle Ages, adopted the Roman Calendar almost fully for rather a long time.⁴ It seems that the Roman borrowings in the Syrian Catholic calendar have their origin rather in this calendar, since the Maronites gave shelter

3. Cf. *Mar Severius Ephrem Barsoum*, *The Golden Key to Divine Worship: With Commentary on the Ritual of the Syriac Church*, New York 1951, 95-99.

4. See *Michel Hayek*, *Liturgie Maronite: Histoire et textes eucharistiques*, Paris-Tours 1964, 119-127. It is the calendar of the Maronite Missal of 1908 based on that edited at Qozhaiya in 1816.

and protection to their patriarchs after the bifurcation of the Syrian hierarchy into a Syrian *Orthodox* and a Syrian *Catholic*.⁵

With their recent liturgical reform, they have purified their sanctoral retaining but a few *Latin* feasts of saints which have become very popular among them.⁶

January

1. *Circumcision of Our Lord, Saints Basil and Gregory*
6. *Epiphany*
7. *Praises of St. John the Baptist*
17. *St. Antonios the Great*
28. *Mor Afrem the Syrian*

February

2. *Presentation of our Lord in the Temple*
9. *St. Maron*
20. *St. Jacob, disciple of St. Maron*

March

2. *St. John Maron*
9. *The 40 Martyrs of Sebastia*
19. *St. Joseph**
25. *Annunciation of the Virgin Mary*
26. *St. Gabriel the Archangel***

April

23. *St. George*
25. *St. Mark the Evangelist* ***

May

- First Sunday:
- Our Lady of Lebanon
10. *St. Simon the Zealot, Apostle***
15. *Our Lady of the Seeds(!)⁷*

June

14. *St. Anthony of Padua**
24. *Birth of St. John the Baptist* ***
(see December 8)
29. *Saints Peter and Paul* ***

July

10. *Masabki brothers, martyrs*
20. *St. Elias the Prophet***
22. *Mor Nūhrō*
23. *Mor Sarbel*
31. *The 350 Maronite martyrs*

August

1. *Mort S'mūni and her seven sons*
6. *Transfiguration*
7. *St. Dometios, martyr***
15. *Assumption*

5. Cf. Jean-Maurice Fiey-Mar Moussa Daoud, From Rejection to Symbiosis: The Syrian Catholic Church, in John Madey-Stanislaus Thomas Erackel, The Future of the Oriental Catholic Churches, Tiruvalla 1979, 53-65.
6. See *Diocese of Saint Maron-USA* (ed.), The Prayer of the Faithful according to the Maronite Liturgical Year, Brooklyn, New York 1982, I xxxiii-xxxv.
7. This feast of the Bl. Virgin Mary is common to all the churches of Syriac tradition while that of January 15 is proper to the Syro-Antiochean church alone.

29. *Beheading of St. John the Baptist** **8

September

1. St. Simeon the Stylite**
2. St. Mammias, myrtyr**
8. *Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary** **
9. Saints Joachim and Ann, parents of the Bl. Virgin Mary**
14. *Exaltation of the Holy Cross** **
26. St. John the Apostle**
29. Mor Ruhānā (*Kuriakos*) the anachorete**

October

6. *St. Thomas the Apostle*** (see July 3)
7. *Saints Sarkis and Bachhus***
9. St. James, brother of the Lord**
20. Mor Shalita (*Artemios*)**

November

1. Saints Cosmas and Damian**
8. St. Michael the archangel**
13. St. John Chrysostom [*Mor Ivanios*]**
18. St. Romanos of Antioch, martyr**
21. *Presentation of the Mother of God in the Temple*
27. Mor Jacob the Intercissus, martyr of Persia**

December

4. *Mort Barbara, martyr** **
8. Immaculate Conception*
20. Mor Ighnacios of Antioch**
25. *Nativity of Our Lord*
26. *Praises of the Mother of God***
27. St. Stephen the Protomartyr**
29. *Slaughter of the Innocent Babes of Bethlehem***



8. Some Syrian Orthodox calendars mention the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist erroneously on January 7, the day of his "Praises" (*Laudes*).

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Vol. V., No. 1.2.3., July 1992, 15-28

Rev. Dr. J. Sanders*

The Beth Gazo or the Octo-Echoes of the West Syrian Church

Introduction

When celebrating the dedication of a church Saint Augustin commenting on Davids words: Sing a new song for the Lord, says: Singing is a sign of love; the new song is for stimulating us to fervent song (sermo 256 De Tempore).

As the love to God and our neighbour is one and the same commandment in the Gospel, love is the most perfect attitude of man. We can find witnesses of this sacred love in mosaics, eikons and also in music. That means that we may consider a book of ecclesiastical songs as an expression of collective enthusiasm reflecting christian love.

The Syrian churches of Antioch and Edessa, later on in Mesopotamia, that means the Syrian Churches of the West and the East have had in common a so called BETH GAZO, a house of treasure, which is a book containing the main tunes and melodies of ecclesiastical chant. It was first of all an instrument for the memory of the singers and for the chief of the liturgy, the bishop, to arrange the variety of songs. Since AD 410 when the synod of Seleucia-ktesiphon was held, the political and since 431 with the council of Ephesus the dogmatic situation too originated a musical tradition special for

*Prof. Dr. J.C.J. Sanders is a retired Professor from the University of Amsterdam, Holland.

the West and for the East Syrian church too, but conserving the common heritage of Saint Ephrem (died 373), of Jacob of Sarug (died 521) and others. This tradition was named in the West Syrian Church 'Paradise' when collected in a book at the end of the twelfth century, and later on BETH GAZO, see A. Baumstark, *Geschichte* S. 47 and 47 n. 5.

To have a first information about the BETH GAZO we consulted the fifteenth edition *The Encyclopedia Britannica* at the disposal as I know in nearly every library in Kerala. We corrected it where necessary on the basis of the studies of H. Husmann and A. Cody, always having one eye on A. Baumstark's *Geschichte*, and finally we compared as much as possible the three printed editions of the BETH GAZO viz. Pampakuda for India, Sharfeh for the Catholics in Libanon, Syria and Iraq, and Hengelo for Tur 'Abdin. We say especially 'as much as we could' because we discovered that 25% of the Pampakuda book was not known to the singers of Tur 'Abdin. A computerized study could bring more light in this attractive story but we decided for a more general study paved by the division of the BETH GAZO into chapters called MADROSHE, MIMRE and so on, beginning with the OKTOECHOS the oldest denomination of a later BETH GAZO. We shall try to avoid a too technical method of study which is more appropriate to musicologists of profession.

As all of us know - every new generation, in nearly every country, produces a new style of music; I mean a new style of songs, melodies and poetry. Within the atmosphere of the Greek-Syrian church we find since the eighth or ninth century a collection of poetical melodies together in a book: the Beth-Gazo, which means - house of treasure.

Beth - house - is a semitic, Gazo-treasure-is a Greek word. In the evening song on Friday in the period of Lent, we sing these words of St. Ephrem: shaddar lan min beth gazokh - send us oh Lord from your treasure-house mercy, piety and forgiveness. These words became very popular and they have been used since the 8/9th century as a kind of dictionary of the melodies of the Syrian churches, in and around Antioch and in a smaller degree in the church of Mesopotamia.

Gaza is a Greek word but from Persian origin; it occurs in the New Testament, Gospel of St. Mark 12, 41 as gazo – phylaceum – treasury, treasure-house; the vulgata did not translate the word, it is the same in hellenised Latin, gazo-phylaceum. It occurs also in post-biblical Jewish literature, with the same meaning.

What is the Beth-Gazo ?

The Beth Gazo is a book for musicians. It gives them the melodies of the church music not expressed by strict musical notation but by these words which are necessary to remind one of a melody as an unity, let us say, a tune. Such a procedure utilised for memorizing melodies was already a common practice before the Greek made the first musical notations at the end of the third century before Christian era. From the Psalms we know an indication about the melody, as we read at the beginning of psalm 22, (21) for instance: “on (the tune of) the doe of the dawn”. So it is not astonishing that the singers of the Byzantine and of the Syrian Church, both of them familiar with the Psalms, gathered some important melodies in a booklet where they were listed, divided into eight different modes; and so the fundamentals were made for a book entitled oktoechos the book of the eight modes. The Byzantine oktoechos is viewed as an exportation from Syria with its syrian type of oktoechos, where it was known by the 6th century, says the encyclopedia Britannica.¹ Here we remember the great patriarch of Antioch Severus +518, whose name is wrongly connected with the oktoechos, which was translated into Syrian by Paul of Edessa on the isle of Cyprus about 624 and revised for the Syrian church in 675 by James of Edessa² but recently Cody basing on the study of Husmann and others completely disconnects Severus and the oktoechos as we will see.

1. The New Encyclopedia Britannica Vol. 11 Micropedia 15th edition tome 11 in voce Syrian chant p. 470/1 col. a.

2. A. Baumstark says: Paul of Edessa + AD 602 translated liturgical poems of Severus of Antioch and others from greek into syriac; these poems antiphonal have been grouped later on into a system of eight tunes and so secondarily only we can say oktoechos See A. Baumstark, Geschichte der Syrischen Literatur, Bonn 1922 p. 190.

Such an echos-book contained in the beginning only a small number of formulas, which served as melodic skeletons, starting points for improvisation by singers. Such a formula is fairly elastic; it is not an unchangeable pattern but rather a theme that is subject to variations in which the basic skeleton eg. re-fa or re-mi-fa-sol is always recognizable, even when numerous melodic variations make immediate recognition difficult. Most of the singers are professional chanters, frequently inheriting their positions from their fathers.

It is thought by some that the subtle tonal and rhythmic intricacies encountered in modern performances of Syrian chant are remnants of a sophisticated musical tradition rooted in the early centuries of Christianity; others view the same traits as elements of Turkish influence³ imported into Syria in the late Middle Ages. The Syrian echoiare: (1) modes, although there is no consensus on whether they represented modes in a specifically technical sense, comparable to the Greek tonoi-tunes or: (2) melodic formulas, comparable to the Greek nomoi-formulas. This statement in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*⁴ is applicable to the Syrian melodies if we change or into and so that we say: the Syrian melodies are tonoi as well as nomoi. Within the church of Antioch of the Syrians there was no theoretical treatise on music as developed as in the Western world of Latin and Byzantine culture.

About the origins and growth of these modes and melodic formulas there is an important recent study of A. Cody O.S.B. published in 1982.⁵ It refers to and criticizes many times the well known collection of J. Jeannin - *Mémoires syriennes* 1925 - 1928⁶ and utilizes many times the studies of H. Husmann

-
3. Dom. J. Jeannin O.S.B.... autres systemes musicaux: arabe, turc, byzantin, armenien, juif, gnostico-magique, grec et egyptien antiques. *Journal Asiatique*, dixieme serie, tome XX no. 2, Septembre/Octobre 1912 p. 300.
 4. *Encycl. Brit.* 24, 517a.
 5. Nina G. Garsoian, Thomas F. Mathews and Robert W. Thomson Editors: *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the formative period*. Dumbarton Oaks, Centre, for Byzantine Studies, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, District of Columbia 1982, A. Cody the early history of the oktoechos in Syria pp. 89-113.
 6. *Mémoires Liturgiques Syriennes et Chaldeennes*, recueillies par Dom Jeannin osb 2 tom. Paris 1924.

1972–1978⁷. He, Cody himself, bases his conclusion on different manuscripts datable from the seventh century; one of those manuscripts the vat. Syr. 94 shows 'ma-' ne-ya-t – songs listed in consecutive modal order (i.e. in the order of a first, second... till the eighth mode). At the end of his thorough-going study Father Cody concludes: there is really no evidence for the existence of an oktoechos in any sense before the eighth century or perhaps the seventh. The musical system of eight modes may have existed before the hymnographic grouping of texts according to the eight modes. The eight modes as a group were able to travel by themselves, for they reached Constantinople and Western Europe (where it was known as a Greek phenomenon at first) independently of hymnographic modal grouping. Let us end this part of our lecture with the important conclusion:

The oktoechos was a creative product of the Hellenistic Syrian mind, the practical expression, probably, of Hellenistic Christian speculation on Sunday as the eighth day. Its passage across linguistic and cultural frontiers in Syria was associated with the passage of Greek canons and stichera into Syriac, first for use in Melkite Churches using that language, and then on beyond the frontiers of the Chalcedonian Church.⁸

So we have, with Cody, to abandon definitively the widespread idea that a Syrian oktoechos was used as early as the sixth century i.e. the century of Patriarch Severus +518.

Some examples of the word oktoechos used in an inappropriate sense.

The eight melodies of the song of Mary, entitled in the Latin rite Magnificat are, called by Assemani oktoechos.⁹ A collection of hymns for the feasts of the year from Severus of Antioch translated in Cyprus around the year 624 by Paul of Edessa is

7. For H. Husmann's articles see A. Cody o.c. note 1 referring to the *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* Roma 38 (1972), 41 (1975), 44 (1978), inter alia, and A. Cody's note 85.

8. Cody o.c. p. 103.

9. St E. Assemani *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae Codicum Manuscriptorum Catalogus Romae* 1759 (Paris 1926), tom. 111 p. 532 ad cod. 146.... oktoechus ad Magnificat.

misleadingly called by R. Duval the oktoechos of Severus.¹⁰ And so the Encyclopedia Britannica speaks about a Syrian oktoechos.¹¹ Introducing liturgical technical terms as kontakion, oktoechos, magnificat from one rite into another rite has caused a lot of confusion worsened by the fact that the very complicated idiom of the German language of A. Baumstark's *Geschichte der Syrischen Literatur* was real obstacle for some foreign reader, as is clarified in the case of oktoechos. See also note 2 forementioned, where Baumstark says clearly there is no direct relation between Severus and a oktoechos.

Let us now return to the Beth Gazo.

Let us begin to say some words about the quantity of melodies, the different musical traditions and their relationship.

The famous librarian of Sharfeh, Isaac Armaleh¹² found a manuscript with 2460 melodies. This number corresponds with 3000 synagoge melodies collected by Mrs. Kiwi around 1950. This number has now increased to 10,000 as Mrs. Kiwi told me. It shows how necessary it was to compose something as a systematic collection we have now in the Beth Gazo. More recent new melodies may be joined to it on appropriate place lest they would be lost.

About the different musical traditions we may say in general that every more important church has a tradition related to a metropolis church, to an important monastery e.g. Qenneshrin or to a province as Tur Abdin but always the singers are proud of their own typical melodies, having their own place within that tradition. Jeannin¹³ speaks about the tradition of Alep he collected Sharfeh together with some songs originated from Edessa, Amid (Dyarbakr) and Mossoul. He also copied some hundreds of melodies belonging to the Syrian oriental church of Ourmiah in Persia. But there is more to say about this subject. In the study about Tagrit of Jean Fiey, where we find the see

10. J.-B. Chabot *Litterature Syriaque* Paris 1934 p. 86,...oktoechus de Severe.

11. *Encycl. Brit.* 15th edition tom. 24, 517a.

12. J. Jeannin, *Le Chant Liturgique Syrien*, *Journal Asiatique*, *Dixieme Serie*, Tome XX, no. 2 Septembre-Octobre 1912, Paris, p. 300 n. 1.

13. J. Jeannin, note 12 p. 301, 302, 303.

of Mossoul in close connection with Tagrit. E.g. Moses bar Kipha (died in 903) was bishop of Ba Rimma, of Ba Kiyuna, of Tagrit and Mossoul.¹⁴ It is clear that such an eminent person applying his capacities to the west-syrian rite and liturgy has arranged the musical heritage of his church, but historical documents are lost. Tagrit had also important relations with Malatya to the North, and Mossoul, it seems, has some influence of arabic music. It is rather sure that all these traditions have never existed without influencing each other, so for instance Harran which is close to Edessa, the famous centre of Syrian Christianity, was influenced in its liturgy by a community from Tagrit¹⁵, and as we have seen, Tagrit itself was under influence of its cultural surroundings. We can only say that there have been three great traditions: Antioch, Edessa and Mesopotamia and the question remains open which has had the main influence upon the original church music in Southern India.

From seven to eight.

Seven is a holy number since the seven weeks enclosing the fifty days between the resurrection of Our Lord and the coming of the Holy Spirit are fundamental for any liturgy for Jews and Christians. One may ask from where the prevalence of the number of eight in the Beth Gazo?

For this problem Cody gives us an important answer based on his research of a codex from as late as the thirteenth century, the Br. Lib. Add. 14686, once belonging to the Deir es-Syrian in the Wadi Natroun in Egypt. It is a lectionary where the eighth Sunday of a series in which Easter is the first, is Pentecost. The arrangement for coordinating eight days of Easter week where the eighth day is the following Sunday symmetrically with eight Sundays "of after the Resurrection", where the eighth day i.e. the following Sunday may be seen as a figure of eternity. The extension of eight Sundays further to the Sundays between Pentecost and the end of the church year, may well be an expression of the idea of Sunday as both memorial of the

14. J. Fiey, *Tagrit. L'Orient Syrien*, vol. VIII fasc. 3 et 4, Vernon 1963, p. 319 et 320.

15. Cody o.c. p, 98.

Resurrection and the eikon of the future age. It seems that such speculation didn't come from Syria. It is found in early Christian Alexandria and in the influential writings of the fourth century Cappadocians, with Gregory Nazianen applying it in particular to the Sunday after Easter, but also to Pentecost... as an eighth Sunday representing the future age.¹⁶ This evolution is also strengthened by the introduction of the Greek Canons with its groups of hymnic strophes or troparia since the ninth century. These Canons were very popular in the Melkite Church still singing in Syriac and in Greek and so their metre and melody were transferred into the liturgy of the West Syrian Church especially with the so called mawr'be, the song of the Blessed Virgin Mary exalting the Lord (Lk. 1:46-55)¹⁷. These mawr'be can be found in the Beth Gazo editions of Mosul for the catholic West Syrians and in those of the Syro-Orthodoxes from India and Tur 'Abdin. As a biblical song such a mawr'bo may have been a guideline for arranging the less important non biblical songs into eight modes just as Mary's song was sung in eight modes too.

Let us now turn to the Beth Gazo itself, its division into Qole and so on. We took for our study the Sharfeh edition 1907.

What is a Qolo?

A QOLO is the smallest musical and rhythmical unity necessary for the singer to sing all the following stanza's of a poem, in the same way i.e. the same melody. The first words of a QOLO are sufficient for a singer to apply its rhythmical melody to other compositions and so such a normative QOLO obtains a special name viz. RISHQOLO corresponding in its function with the eirmos or irmos of the Byzantine church music. Eirmos is a greek word which means series, bandage, connexion. The music of the Jews has something alike, the shir etsor, the girdle song, by which a melody could be transferred to another poem. In a sample of about 80 hymns from the Cairo genizah the super-scriptions of 32 refer the reader to the tunes of other Hebrew poems¹⁸.

16. Cody o.c. p. 96-97.

17. Cody o.c. p. 96-97.

18. The Encyclopedia Judaica Jerusalem 1971 tom. 12 col. 595.

A second meaning as important as the first one is a special style of a poem. So we read in the liturgical books: this is a QOLO to be sung on the QOLO-melody so and so, and here we find a Rish QOLO as a sample known to the singer. This second meaning appears from the ninth century on. Since the thirteenth century there is manuscript evidence of an arrangement of the QOLE into eight tones. In this meaning a QOLO is something else than a SEBELTHO, a MIMRO and so on.

Though the word QOLO occurs many times even in the oldest manuscripts they cannot help us to sing the famous MADROSHE of Saint Ephrem the way they have been sung in this time. The phonetic evolution of the Syriac language and its various dialects together with all kind of changements in the liturgical use of these MADROSHE have procured the fall into oblivion of the original melodies. So the indication in the liturgical books: it is a QOLO-melody says as much as the words at the beginning of a psalm: on the doe of the down. The word QOLO functioned only as a title, no more.¹⁹

As the mode of the week and was obligatory in the liturgy every QOLO had to be sung in the mode of the week and so if a QOLO had a melody of its own, it had to be sung on the mode of the week, e.g. a hymn for a special feast can be sung on the first, second or on another of the eight modes, in dependency on the mode of one or another of the eight week series. For those who are a little acquainted with the Byzantine rite it is easy to find here a parallel because the Byzantines sing their liturgy on eight modes, returning after eight weeks to the first mode and so on. So the QOLO 'I am the light of the world' is sung on Christmas on the first mode and on Epiphany on the second since the 8/9th century. Notwithstanding this rule there was a preference to reserve the 1st and 2nd mode for the feasts of the Blessed Virgin, the 3rd and 4th for the Saints and Martyrs, the 5th and 6th for repentance and the 7th and 8th for the priests and for the deceased as we find in cod. syr. Br. Mus. add. 14721. In the printed Beth Gazo of Sharfeh and Mosul under

19. A. de Halleux Symposium Syriacum 1972 La Transmission des Hymnes de Saint Ephrem d'après le manuscrit Sinai Syr. 10 f. 165v-178r in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 197 Roma 1974, p. 21 and 61.

the title QOLO: I tested everything' we find the 1st and 2nd mode for the Mother of God; the 3rd for the righteous ones and the 4th for Martyrs the drivers of the chariot of faith; the 5th for righteous ones as Joseph and Moses and the 6th for saint Ephrem and his legacy; the 7th for the deceased fathers and brothers and the 8th also for the deceased who should have the benefit of our sacrifices.

As for the melodies themselves of the eight modes we refer to Jeannin²⁰. The first group of QOLE in the Beth Gazo edition of Sharfeh contains fifteen titles all of them composed by eight tunes or modes. They are sung in the vigils-shahre in syriac and so they are named shahroye.

There after comes the group of QOLO GENIZE. The meaning of the word genizo is not clear; the root genaz means to hide and they are said by the priest low voiced but the relation to their subject: dead and resurrection is not clear. Here too we find eight tones. The Beth Gazo continues with the QOLO SHEKHIME. They serve the ordinary shekhime days of the week, they are divided into 36 titles and the last one is a QOUQLION. This word is not clear; Husmann differs from Baumstark where Husmann chooses the meaning circle cyclum in Greek, as at the end of those songs the word always Hallelouya occurs.

A more interesting group is the group of SEBLOTHO i.e. the ladders but their relation to a ladder is not clear; are they the parallel of stair-psalms following psalm 118/9 of the divine Law? Or is there any relation with the liturgy of that famous monastery of the ladders in Gargar on the Euphrates? So most of the musical technical terms remains for us a mystery. So the more we rejoice at the fact that these songs have retained authentic material from the MADROSHE of Saint Ephrem, as has been found by Husmann. The Mardin printed tradition of the Beth Gazo has 54 SEBLOTHO, 25 of them have original Ephrem stropes and 8 of them have conserved only the metre applied to more recent poetry. 2/3 of these SEBLOTHO have conserved an Ephremic

20. See note 12 p. 309-323 and p. 362-363.

metre and this legacy of the Beth Gazo figures in the Syrian liturgy till our days²¹.

So for instance 'Honaw yarkho' corresponds with Ephrems The Nativitate 5 strophe 1. 'Abho ketab hwo egertho' corresponds with the title in The Nativitate sughitho 1 and 3 and so on. There is a chance that the old melody of Ephrems days has also survived till now, but the proof is difficult.

For those who are interested in the metre of Ephrems MADROSHE surviving in the Beth Gazo there is a practical guide in Thomas Arayathinal's Grammar p. 409 and following. In a MADROSHO, an instructive or doctrinal hymn the number of verses may vary from 4 to 10. In the SEBELTHO on the tune of 'Honaw yarkho' each strophe is formed of ten tetrasyllabic pauses or feet. The kind of MADROSHE whose title is 'Hab lan Moran denoukhomo' have strophes formed of eight tetrasyllabic feet divided into two parts and the title 'Yawmog log dome' a SEBELTHO, has strophes of two lines; each line consists of two pauses, of which the first has five syllables and the second four. For those who are accustomed to sing these SEBLOTHO it is not difficult to recognize these metres. Under the title 'De Paradiso' we have the strophe consisting of twelve feet, all of which except the eighth are penta-syllabic so e.g. in the famous song: I saw the three crucified...²². Let us hope that the progress in our study may bring us to the result that we may surely sing an authentic Ephremic MADROSHO with an authentic Ephremic melody. Therefore it is necessary to separate a SEBELTHO in common use within the Eastern and Western Syrian churches and to see whether its melody is the same in both of them. That could be done now at this very meeting of the SEERI, and let us begin e.g. with "Honaw yarkho".

Is a MADRASHO many times the work of Ephrem whose name is also connected with a SOGHITHO and a MIMRO, the MADROSHO and a SOGHITHO are closer to each other than

21. H. Husmann Madrashe und Seblatha in Repertoireuntersuchungen zu den Hymnen Ephrems des Syrers in Acta Musicologica Vol. 48, Basel 1976, S. 113-150.

22. Th. Arayathinal Aramaic Grammar Mannanam 1959 Vol. II, p. 410, 416-418.

the MIMRO, because a MADROSHO is a series of lyrical strophes of didactic content, sung by a soloist (originally) as the choir repeated a refrain between the two strophes. The SOGHITHO is also a series of lyrical strophes but in this case a past situation is conjured up and one or more persons in the scene so evoked then speak. The MIMRO differs more, it is a sermon, metrical of course but didactic or narrative with refrain. It is not to be sung and so it was easier for the declamation even when it consisted sometimes in more than thousand verses. About Ephrems authorship of some of the SEBLOTHO Lamy hesitates many times; he gives them the name of SCALAE— ladders as they are composed of a ladder of saints and holy items; he gives us a complete SEBLOTHO-SCALA in the song "Honaw yarkho" with the following division of the 36 stanza's: 1 the Mother of God, 9 The Martyrs, 15 Saint Ephrem, 17 Penitence, 23 The deceased, 31 The Priests, 32 Bar Sawma, 34 The Holy Cross, 35 The Resurrection. It is clear that where Ephrem mentions himself in this composition, that he cannot be the author²³.

In the manuscripts studied by Lamy there are from 39 to 46 SEBLOTHO beginning with AD 1210 but Husmann found a lot of them in cod syr Sinai dating from the 8/9 century AD. In the Mardin edition Enschede-Holland 1985 there are 54 titles and in the Sharfeh edition 1907 I found 77 titles. The Indian edition of Pampakuda, (without date) gives here 187 songs including 42 variations and ten of them were not recognised by Qasho Sinaan Saliba in Amsterdam. Are they new ones or did they belong to an older mesopotamian tradition? Van der Ploeg does not mention a Beth Gazo in his catalogue of the Kerala manuscripts, so we have to look elsewhere for more information. The part called in the Mardin tradition SEBLOTHO is named Order of the MADROSHE in the Indian edition, because, as we have seen, a lot of them are in close relation with Mar Ephrems MADROSHE.

The MAWREBE are songs for Mary, the Mother of God, where she magnifies the Lord (Luke 1, 46). We find them all on the same place in the different editions. They have eight melodic

23. Th. J. Lamy Sancti Ephrem Hymni et Sermones Mechliniae 1882, t. 3, p. XV-XXII.

possibilities following the eight modes; each of them has at least three variations of the mode and the third variation of seventh in the dutch edition is called a greek one. The great variation shows that they were very popular, because the Mother of God had a singular place within the Syrian orthodoxy since council of 439 AD.

Let us finish here this part of our study with a wish. A new edition of the Beth Gazo should be made for all the branches of the Syrian Churches of Antioch together, divided into a common part followed by what is special for a metropolis, bishopric, monastery or region; at the end the Beth Gazo for the East Syrian Churches: the Old Church of the East, The Chaldean Church and the Church of Malabar. Such a Book of Common Prayer must be translated into the western languages for meditation and study and above all for a better understanding of this source of popular theology, basis of a renewed brotherhood. The common part is to be divided into a practical and if possible also into a historic (Ephrem, Balai, Rabboula and so on) and into a musical arrangement (the eight modes, the seblotho, the gouqloye, the Tekshephoto, the Tebrotho, the Baouthos, the Madroshe and so on). A challenge for traditionalists and new-makers together !

Though the Beth-Gazo is only a memorial for melodies, many faithful use the words of the songs for meditation. Here we give two examples.

At a burial in Iraq I myself was impressed by a Qolo entitled: Up to Bethlehem in the seventh mode (in India the eighth) :

And God spoke to Moses the son of Amram, made him ascend to the Mount Nebo and spoke with him as follows: Come Moses, stop from your work and subdue yourself to the sentence of your father Adam. Come and die just as he.

As soon as the just man heard that he had to die, he became sad, his tears began to flow forth with and weeping he spoke as follows: How, O Lord can I die here? There is no brother, no kinsman, no human being to wrap me! The Lord comforted the prophet saying: The angels will lead you to the

grave, and I with my hands will wrap you. He commanded the angels of light and the spiritual choirs assembled, wrapped him and buried him inside the Mount Nebo. God hid the grave of the prophet from the people of Israel—Halleluja—till our day.^(a)

A TEKSHEPHTO a song of supplication (Sharpheh ed. p. 85 = Ind. ed. p. 187). The bridegroom Messias cries to the right ones: Rejoice with Me! He invites them to that banquet prepared for them. He made straight the road to the mountains of Jebus, He established his throne in Jerusalem. He adduced with him the legion of Gabriels family and the fired groups of fire and spirit of Michaels family. The sea of the ocean was destroyed and the fishes in it died. The earth was liquefied and passed. The heaven trembled and the stars fell out of their rangs. The son of the king roared in the Sheol and the Lord awaked as an addicted to sleep. As a man who shook his ass He struck and killed his enemies with the consuming fire. With the spirit of his mouth He overthrew the wicked, those unbelievers. And I, what shall I do? O my brothers because bad were my deeds. Be to me, O Lord a brother, a friend and a neighbour. May the flame not approach to me and throw me out! Lord of all, glory to You!



(a) The great moments of this story are the same in the Jewish tradition, see L. Ginsberg The Legends of the Jews, New York First Paperback Printing 1961, pp. 500/1.

IL Commento Di Giovanni IL Solitario A Mt. 5,3

Il catalogo delle opere di Giovanni il Solitario, edito nel 1972 da W. Strothmann, fa l'elenco dei cinque commenti a quattro delle beatitudini del Vangelo di Matteo¹: un commento a Mt. 5,3, due a Mt. 5,4, uno a Mt. 5,8, e uno a Mt. 5,9².

La tradizione manoscritta non è unanime per tutti e cinque i commenti. I commenti a Mt. 5,3, 5,9, e 5,8, sempre in questo stesso ordine, si trovano completi nel manoscritto BrM 573, Add 17170, datato verso il 774/5 circa³, e in modo frammentario in altri quattro manoscritti. Il primo commento a Mt. 5,4 ci viene trasmesso in due manoscritti, interamente nel BrM 767, Add 18814, datato nel sec. VII/VIII⁴, e frammentariamente nel BrM 813, Add 14611, datato nel sec. X. Il secondo commento a Mt. 5,4 viene trasmesso nel manoscritto BrM 572, Add 17169, datato nell'anno 581⁵.

In questa relazione intendiamo presentare uno di questi commenti, quello a Mt. 5,3.

*Fr. Manel Nin O.S.B., is a member of the monastery of Monserrat, Spain.

1. JOHANNES VON APAMEA, *Sechs Gespräche mit Thomasios, Der Briefwechsel zwischen Thomasios und Johannes und drei an Thomasios gerichtete Abhandlungen*. W. Strothmann ed., *Patristische Texte und Studien*, Band 11, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 1972, pp. 13-14.30.
2. E' in corso il lavoro di edizione critica e traduzione dei cinque commenti.
3. Questo manoscritto contiene soltanto opere attribuite a Giovanni il Solitario.
4. Il manoscritto è molto difettoso, con parecchie lacune che fanno difficile la lettura e ricomposizione del testo.
5. Questo manoscritto ci trasmette anche soltanto opere attribuite a Giovanni il Solitario, di cui parecchi sono state già edite.

I. Manoscritti

Il commento a Mt. 5,3, viene tramandato in cinque manoscritti, di cui il più antico risale al s. VIII:

BrM 573 Add 17170, fol. 14r-27r. A.D. 774/5.

BrM 774 Add 12170, fol. 137r-138r. S. VIII-IX.

BrM 813 Add 14611, fol. 36v-43r. S. X.

BrM 822 Add 17185, fol. 49v-51v. S. X-XI.

BrM 842 Add 14728, fol. 5v-25v. S. XIII.

II. Autore

I cinque manoscritti che ci trasmettono il commento a Mt. 5,3, lo attribuiscono a Mar Giovanni il Solitario⁶, al Santo Giovanni il Solitario⁷ o semplicemente a Giovanni il Solitario⁸. Il testo non porta nessun tipo di informazione sull'autore. Dal contenuto, si può ricavare che è una persona che ha familiarità con la Sacra Scrittura, le cui citazioni, esplicite o implicite, si intrecciano lungo il testo, e che si serve di un vocabolario chiaramente di tipo ascetico-monastico: "povertà", "separazione del mondo", "purezza di cuore", "afflizione"⁹.

III. Destinatari

Nessuno dei cinque commenti di Giovanni il Solitario alle beatitudini precisa l'identità dei destinatari del testo né il luogo dove abitano. I testi contengono, però, qualche indicazione sull'uditorio a cui l'autore si indirizza.

Nel commento a Mt. 5,3, due volte, nel paragrafo 17 e 25, l'autore si dirige al suo uditorio con la parola "fratelli":

"Dobbiamo allontanarci, fratelli, da quelle cose che ci fanno del male. Infatti, non è possibile che l'uomo porti alla

6. I manoscritti 1 e 5.

7. I manoscritto 2.

8. I manoscritti 3 e 4.

9. I termini siriaci "abyła" e "abyłwta"-"afflitto" e "afflizione"-sono usati già nella prima letteratura monastica per indicare il monaco e la vita monastica; cf. Payne-Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* 15.

perfezione queste due cose: che metta la sua mano nell'aratro e guardi indietro, e che sia utile per il regno dei cieli"(17)¹⁰.

"Rimaniamo, fratelli, in quella vocazione perfetta che ci fu predicata dal Signore Onnipotente¹¹. E'una infedeltà il fatto che l'uomo, dopo che si è unito a Cristo, cerchi di nuovo il commercio con il mondo"(25).

Nell'indirizzo chiaramente ascetico-monastico del commento, si può supporre che i destinatari sono un gruppo di monaci oppure di persone che mette in opera un tipo di vita ascetico. Benché Giovanni il Solitario non si serva in questo commento della parola "monaco" o "asceta"¹²; possiamo ricavare dal testo diverse indicazioni, che possono precisare, in qualche modo, l'identità ascetico-monastica dei destinatari del commento, e indicare gli aspetti principali che, per l'autore, delineano la figura del monaco.

In primo luogo, Giovanni il Solitario insiste nella necessaria separazione dal mondo e la configurazione con Cristo. Lungo il commento si insiste spesso sulla separazione dal mondo, e dal primo paragrafo indica la differenza tra i due cammini, tra cui l'uomo deve scegliere:

"Coloro che vogliono arrivare alla gloria insigne della perfetta condotta, questo è l'inizio della loro offerta: la separazione dal mondo, (...) se l'uomo non libera se stesso dal mondo, non può correre in quel cammino il cui allenamento si trova nelle sofferenze a causa di nostro Signore Gesù Cristo" (1).¹³

Il mondo obbliga l'uomo a possedere ricchezze e beni, per una felicità unicamente temporale, ma la separazione dal mondo porta alla perfezione:

10. Cf. Lc. 9,62.

11. IC 7,20; cf. Rm. 11,29; Ef. 4,11; Fl. 3,14; 2 Tm. 1,9; He. 3,1.

12. Si serve una sola volta, nel paragrafo 47, della forma siriana "mshuhda" con il significatu di "solitario", payne-Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 1587-1588.

13. La numerazione tra parentesi indica i paragrafi della traduzione la cui pubblicazione è in corso.

“Il cammino del mondo é un ostacolo al cammino della vita. Coloro che si comportano secondo il mondo, hanno questa ambizione: l'amore della ricchezza, l'acquisto dei beni e la tranquillità della loro felicità temporale. Ma coloro che seguono il cammino della vita, hanno questa ambizione: la vita perfetta, le promesse future, quelle che si trovano nel luogo della gloria”(2).

Colui chesi é allontanato dal mondo, riceve una gloria più grande di colui che rimane nel mondo:

“Non é stato promesso, dunque, un solo livello di onore per tutti gli uomini. Perché coloro che seguono l'esempio di questo mondo, e lo amano e vogliono rimanere in esso, non é possibile che siano innalzati insieme a coloro che se ne sono allontanati, perché sono inferiori alla loro grandezza”(5).

La separazione dal mondo porta ad una adesione, ad una vera configurazione con la persona di Cristo. Giovanni si serve dei vocaboli siriaci “qreb” e “metqarbanutha” per indicare questa unione a Cristo¹⁴:

“Sei glorioso, Cristo nostro maestro, perché arricchisci coloro che si uniscono a te. Signore, se colui che ha dato i suoi beni all'autorità del regno, riceve da essa un grande onore, quanto di più, Signore, tu innalzerai e loderai colui che ti offre tutta la sua persona, e non ha premesso niente a te”(11).

“Grande é la consolazione che il Signore dell 'universo ha dato, nella beatitudine¹⁵, a coloro che nella povertà si sono uniti soltanto a Cristo nostro Signore, senza portare con se stessi niente del mondo, come é richiesto dalla sua vocazione, e non si sono rivolti verso quello che hanno lasciato per amore di Dio”(24).

14. Il termine siriano “qreb” viene usato da Giovanni il Solitario con il significato specifico di “unirsi a qualcuno per diventare suo discepolo”, cf. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 3722, 3728-3729.

15. Cf. Mt. 5, 3.

iv. **Contenuto**

Il commento di Giovanni il Solitario a Mt 5, 3 é, fondamentalmente, una esortazione alla povertà. L'autore non presenta uno sviluppo progressivo del tema, anzi il commento avanza in forma ripetitiva, riprendendo, con poche varianti tematiche, i diversi aspetti della povertà.

Non si tratta di un commento esegetico a Mt 5, 3. Il testo biblico serve unicamente all'autore di pretesto per argomentare sulla povertà e sul posto che questa occupa nella vita del monaco. Giovanni il Solitario sviluppa il commento a partire da uno schema piuttosto semplice, 1. un'introduzione, in cui presenta la povertà alla base del cammino verso la perfezione; 2. cinque lunghe esortazioni alla povertà, dove l'autore sviluppa il suo concetto di povertà, una povertà necessaria e radicale, giustificata per una totale donazione a Dio e per il sollievo dei poveri; 3. un commento a due frammenti biblici: Lc 9, 3 – la missione degli apostoli senza avere con se niente di proprio, e Lc 22, 36 – il permesso che Cristo dà agli apostoli, alla fine della cena pasquale, di portare con se delle spade.

Giovanni il Solitario si serve di tre termini siriaci per esprimere il concetto di povertà: "meskinutha", "sniqutha" e "msarqutha". La prima forma, "mskinutha", indica in primo luogo la povertà in senso materiale, la mancanza assoluta di tutto; può essere anche tradotta come "miseria", "angoscia", "situazione di disgrazia", cioè qualsiasi situazione in cui l'uomo si trova materialmente privo di tutto¹⁶. E in questo senso che il termine viene usato nel Liber Graduum e da Afraate¹⁷. La seconda forma, "sniqutha", é quasi sinonima dell'anteriore, e può essere tradotta anche come "indigenza", "manca del necessario"¹⁸; é un termine non usato nel Liber Graduum, e Afraate lo usa soltanto

16. Cf. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus* 2632. Cf. Salmo 30, 10; 106, 13; 2C 8, 2,9.

17. Cf. KMOSKO, M. *Liber Graduum*, Serm. 7, p. 148, 25. Serm. 29, p. 841, 20; 848, 7; 853, 20. *Patrologia Syriaca* III. Paris 1926. PARISOT, J., *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes*, Dem. IV, p. 168, 21. Dem. VII, p. 356, 2; Dem. XIV, pp. 632, 25; 652, 20; Dem XX, p. 896, 22. (*Patrologia Syriaca* 1) Paris 1894. (*Patrologia Syriaca* 2) Paris 1907.

18. Cf. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2678–2680.

tre volte con il significato di povertà¹⁹. La terza forma, “msarqutha”, può essere anche tradotta per “povertà” ma il suo significato più specifico è quello di “rinuncia”, “svuotamento”, “povertà volontariamente accettata”²⁰. E una forma poco usata nella Sacra Scrittura, Afraate non l’usa e il Liber Graduum soltanto quattro volte, tre con il significato di “rinuncia”²¹ e la quarta con il significato di “pazienza”, in riferimento a Cristo²².

Nel commento a Mt 5, 3, Giovanni il Solitario usa le tre forme per indicare la povertà; usa 12 volte la forma “meskinutha”, nove volte la forma “sniqutha” e 5 volte la forma “msarqutha”. Applica le forme “meskinutha” e “sniqutha” tanto alla povertà che Cristo ha assunto nell’incarnazione quanto alla povertà in cui il monaco vive; la forma “msarqutha” la usa soltanto per indicare la povertà necessaria alla vita ascetica, una povertà necessaria a cui l’uomo deve unirsi per arrivare alla perfezione:

“E’ grande il sollievo che è stato dato per il Signore dell’universo nella beatitudine, a coloro che nella povertà si sono uniti a Cristo nostro Signore, senza prendere con se niente dal mondo, così come lo richiede la loro vocazione, e non si sono rivolti verso quello che prima lasciarono per amore di Dio” (24).

Giovanni il Solitario usa diverse immagini per giustificare la necessità della povertà:

-il rifiuto di quello che causa la malattia nel corpo, paragonato con il rifiuto delle ricchezze necessarie alla salute dello spirito:

“Come coloro che con la saggezza del loro arte sono utili all’umanità, e con la loro parola muovono all’attenzione contro quelle cose che portano alla malattia (...) in modo che l’uomo possa recuperare la sua salute primitiva (...), così anche il nostro vero maestro, con la sua dottrina ha svegliato l’attenzione verso quelle cose che nel nostro

19. Dem. XX, p. 900, 18; 901, 14; Dem. XXII, p. 1017, 14.

20. Cf. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2752.

21. Cf. KMOSKO, *Liber Graduum*, Sermon. 12, p. 285, 2; Sermon. 21, p. 609, 9; Sermon. 29, p. 841, 20.

22. Cf. KMOSKO, *Liber Graduum*, Sermon. 1, p. 16, 9.

servizio divino ci sono un' insidia, predicando ed insegnando che non è nelle grandi ricchezze che abbiamo gli uomini la vita, e che non è possibile di servire Dio e mammona" (15)²³.

-il contadino che non deve guardare indietro perché il suo aratro non vada storto, paragonato all'uomo che non deve tornare indietro alla ricerca dei beni lasciati:

"Il contadino non può mettere la sua mano nell'aratro e guardare indietro, e cercare che il suo lavoro non vada storto; così anche, colui che assume il segno della verità, se ritorna verso il mondo nella ricerca delle sue passioni, per me è difficile di dire che il suo lavoro proceda verso la perfezione" (17).

-la tavola già dipinta sulla quale non si può dipingere se prima non si cancella tutto quello che c'è, paragonata all'uomo che deve purificare la sua mente da tutto l'amore corporale se vuol dipingere in essa l'immagine di Cristo:

"Siccome non è possibile di dipingere in una tavola già dipinta, se prima l'immagine che c'è non viene cancellata, così neanche può essere dipinta l'immagine perfetta dell'amore del Signore Onnipotente nella mente in cui è dipinto l'amore corporale" (25).

-il campo già piantato in cui non si può piantare di nuovo, paragonato all'uomo che deve sradicare dalla sua mente l'amore verso il denaro:

"Allo stesso modo che non è possibile che in un luogo già piantato si possa ripiantare, se prima non è sradicata la prima pianta, così neanche è possibile che sia piantata la verità nell'uomo, se prima non è sradicata della sua mente la radice della ricerca del denaro"(38)²⁴.

-il recipiente pieno di profumi che non può essere riempito con altre cose, paragonato alla mente dell'uomo in cui l'amore

23. Lc 16, 13.

24. 1 Tm 6,10; cf. 1 Tm 3,3; He 13,5.

di Dio non può abitare se prima non è stata svuotata dall'amore del denaro:

“Allo stesso modo che il recipiente già pieno di profumi, non può riceverne altri se prima non è stato svuotato di quello che contiene, così la mente non può fare abitare in se stessa l'amore del Signore se prima non rinuncia all'amore di mammona”(38)²⁵.

Diversi testi biblici sono proposti da Giovanni il Solitario per giustificare la sua argomentazione sulla povertà: Mt. 16,24: negazione di se stesso e accettazione della croce per seguire Cristo; 2 Co. 8,9: esempio di Cristo stesso, che essendo ricco si fece povero; 1 Re. 17,1 ss: povertà del profeta Elia; Eb. 11,37: povertà dei profeti; Mt. 19,21: discorso di Gesù al giovane ricco; Mc. 12,42: esempio della vedova.

La povertà del monaco, presentata da Giovanni il Solitario, deve essere anche un motivo di aiuto verso i poveri, per il fatto che non è possibile amare Dio e rimanere nelle ricchezze:

“Come è possibile che l'uomo ami Dio e rimanga nelle sue proprietà, vedendo le afflizioni degli altri? Se potesse riuscire a capire questo, non soltanto offrirebbe le sue ricchezze ma anche prescinderebbe da quello che è necessario (...) (50). La perfezione, dunque, non si raggiunge destinando le cose che sono superflue per saziare le necessità dei poveri, ma la perfezione è questa (...) che la nostra povertà sazi la povertà dei poveri”(55).

V. Conclusione

Abbiamo cercato di tracciare, a grandi linee, le idee basilari di uno dei cinque commenti di Giovanni il Solitario a le beatitudini, il commento a Mt. 5,3, che ci appare, nel suo insieme, come un'esortazione monastica alla povertà. Il tema viene trattato a partire da uno schema molto semplice e con una finalità più parentetica che catechetica:

- povertà come primo gradino nel cammino verso la perfezione.
- povertà necessaria nel cammino del monaco.

25. Cf. Mt 6,24; Lc 16,13.

- utilità pratica della povertà come sollievo dei poveri.
- povertà come configurazione con Cristo.

Lasciamo ancora lo studio delle diverse preghiere, indirizzate in seconda persona a Cristo, che Giovanni inserisce lungo il commento e che costituiscono una fonte preziosa per approfondire la spiritualità dell'autore²⁶. Rimanendo aperti problemi come quello dell'autenticità giovannea del presente testo, o piuttosto il problema più generale della persona stessa di Giovanni il Solitario, i commenti alle beatitudini ci mettono di fronte a una persona, possibilmente un monaco, che, a partire dalla presentazione graduale che la Sacra Scrittura fa delle beatitudini, traccia i diversi gradi nell'ascensione del monaco alla perfezione:

“Guardate, piuttosto, questo esempio che ci viene proposto, di coloro che, cercando di salire verso l'altezza dell'aria, raggiungono quest'altezza pian piano, in modo che salgono i gradini uno dopo l'altro, e così arrivano all'altezza. Così, anche il Maestro delle nostre vite, ha messo la perfezione attraverso diversi gradini, perché non siamo impediti nella nostra ascensione, e coloro che vogliono salire arrivino al primo gradino, che è la povertà di Cristo, dopodiché comincino ad elevarsi dalla terra e salgano verso i gradini superiori”(6).

“Infatti, la saggezza del nostro Salvatore, ha guardato la debolezza di tutti gli uomini, come è difficile che si trovi nell'uomo la condotta perfetta, ma come è facile, se l'uomo vuol, di non essere sprovvisto di ogni condotta virtuosa. E per ognuna delle buone azioni, ha messo una beatitudine per sollievo di tutti”(7)²⁷.



26. Queste preghiere si trovano nei commenti a Mt 5,3, 5,8 e 5,9; diversi frammenti di esse sono state tradotte, e pubblicate da S. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*. Cistercian Publications inc. Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1987.

27. Commento a Mt 5,8.

HUMILITY AND PEACE

No one has understanding if he is not humble, and he who lacks humility is devoid of understanding.

No one is humble if he is not at peace, and he who is not at peace is not humble. And no one is at peace without rejoicing. In all the paths on which people journey in this world they will find no peace until they draw near to the hope which is in God.

The heart finds no peace from toil and from stumbling-blocks until it is brought close to hope—which makes it peaceful and pours joy into it.

This is what the venerable and holy lips of our Lord said: 'Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

Draw near, he says, to hope in me; desist from the many ways and you will find rest from labour and fear.

(St Isaac of Syriac)

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Dr. Harald Suermann*

The Turks in Michael the Syrian

The Near East Christians came into contact with other peoples and religions at a very early period: at first with the so-called pagan religions of the Roman and the Persian empires and the Jews in that regions, and when the Arab empire had been established with Islam and its culture. By that time, Nestorians had already reached China making acquaintance with other religions there. These contacts with different religions necessarily lead to the question regarding the meaning of these religions and the relationship between Christianity and them.

When Michael the Syrian (1126/1127+1199) wrote his famous Chronicle, the Seldjuks had already settled in Asia Minor and founded their own political states. In this way the Christians living there entered into a narrower contact with this people searching to find out a response to the question who this people was. A response could, however, not suffice which considered but the presentation of history; it had to give equally an appreciation of their religion and an answer how to integrate it into the Christian understanding of history. Michael the Syrian devoted one chapter of his Chronicle to this issue.

He is calling the Turks "Turqaye" or also "Turkaye". For him, these are two names for the same people¹. In what

*Dr. Harald Suermann, the Director of Missions wissenschaftliches Institut, Missio, Aachen, Germany, is a specialist in the works of Michael the Syrian.

1. Mich. Syr. III, 149.

follows I abstain from defining, in a more detailed form, which people or which tribe was attributed, by Michael the Syrian, the appellation "Turqaye" or "Turkaye". This is of little importance in our context.

Book 14 of his Chronicle is devoted to this people. It is entitled "Because at this epoch Turks began to rule and to seize town and countries, we are devoting them this book"². The book is divided in chapters with headlines referring to the following themes:

- Chapter One : Who this people are and where they lived
- Chapter Two : The customs of the Turks
- Chapter Three : The beginning of the emigration
- Chapter Four : The latest invasion of the Turks
- Chapter Five : Religious Union of the Turks with
the Arabs

Apart from this book which does not come into the framework of the other parts of the structure of his Chronicle, Michael is dealing with the Turks still more often.

The informations offered by Michael on the Turks, are very different. We may subdivide them in two categories : the historical and the meta-historical informations.

1. The meta-historical informations

Meta-historical informations are statements on the Turks coming not from historical reports, but from sources as, e. g., the Bible, mythological or apocalyptic traditions.

Just in the beginning, Michael presents the descendance of the Turks taking pattern from the biblical tradition. Already long before Michael, the descendents of Magog were identified with the Turks. In the first book, the Turks' descendance is described in a much more detailed form than in the 14th book. There it is said, that Japhet, Noah's third son, received the lands of the Alans and of the Turks, Media, Armenia Cappadocia, Galatia, Asia, Moesia, Thracia, Hellad, the countries of the

2. *Ibid.*

Greek, of the Romans, of the Sarmatians, the Slavs, the Kurgah, the Galls, Spain and all the western countries.³

Japhet begot Magog, and from the latter the Celts, the Galls, the Turks and the Alans have got their descendance.⁴

This genealogy gives the Turks a place in the general history of mankind and of salvation. They belong to the one and *unique* human race.

Once the Turks being identified with Magog's descendants, prophecies of different kind on this people are also found in the Bible. Michael quotes one of the Prophet Ezechiel in the beginning of this 14th book: "Thus the word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, turn toward Gog [the land of Magog], the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him: Thus says the Lord God: See! I am coming at you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. I will lead you forth with all your army, horses and riders all handsomely outfitted, a great horde with bucklers and shields, all of them carrying swords: Persia, Cush, and Put all with them, Gomer with all its troops, Beth-togarmah from the recesses of the North with all its troops, many peoples with you. Prepare yourself, be ready, you and all your horde assembled about you, and be at my disposal. After many days you will be mustered (in the last years you will come) against a nation which had survived the sword"⁵. There follows a second quotation from Ezekiel: "Thus says the Lord God: It is of you that I spoke in ancient times through my servants, the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days that I would bring you against them"⁶, and "Now, son of man, prophesy against Gog in these words: Thus says the Lord God See! I am coming at you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. I will turn you about, I will urge you on, and I will make you come up from the recesses of the north".⁷

According to Michael, the repetition of the prophesy makes the double invasion evident. The inspired interpreters of the

3. *Ibid.* I, 18

4. *Ibid.* I, 31

5. *Ez* 38: 1-8

6. *Ez* 38:17

7. *Ez* 39: 1-2: as regards the whole paragraph, cf. Mich. Syr. III, 149.

Bible, however, spoke about the first only. The first took place under Nebuchadnezzar and is described in the Book of Judith, the second invasion is that at the time of the Seldjuks.⁸

Prophecies are a sign for the fact that history is predestinated. In the same way it is predestinated, it must happen. As a prophesy is going out from God – the prophet is but its interpreter –, it is he who is also the Lord of history and its ruler. The prophesy concerning Gog and Magog who are identified with the Turks, makes evident that their history is also ordained by God. The Bible, however, speaks only of one invasion, namely that at Nebuchadnezzar's time. The invasion of the 11th century is, according to Michael not directly predicted in the Bible, but only intimated through the duplication of the prophesy. Thus Michael unmistakably points out that this invasion is willed by God, too, that the history of the Turks at Michael's time is not a product of accidentalnesses and social and economic coercions, but a history of God with this people, to which this invasion belongs, too.

Also some indications of the chapter on the customs of the Turks belong to the meta-historical informations. Michael reports their barbarism and their savageness, but he adds restrictively, that the Iberians living in their neighbourhood provide this information. These reports refer only to the region of the origin of the Turks.⁹ On the other hand, Michael relates in another context the reaction of some Edessians crying; "Behold, a new and barbarian people gets excited and comes upon you who are of the eastern regions? they have faces of men and hearts of dogs! O Christians, be attentivel!" The leaders, however, wanted to make the people keep silence.¹⁰

This episode shows that the idea of the Turks' savageness and barbarism was also spread in Anatolia, and this is why the invasion caused anxiousness and fright.

A part of this savageness and barbarism are their habits of eating: they do not know any rule for meals, but kill and

8. Mich. Syr. III, 150

9. *Ibid.* III, 151

10. *Ibid.* III, 154

eat everything that creels on the ground: animals, beasts, reptiles, insects, and birds. It was even reported that they were eating carrion, the placenta after birth as well as the flesh of dead people. For strangers, a sojourn among the Turks is particularly dangerous, because, if one has not a Turkish guide, one is hunted like a wild animal and then eaten.¹¹

These topics are naturally taken from the apocalyptic materials and the traditional judgements of the Romans and Byzantines, which became common in the Christians' historiography on the "barbarians".¹² Michael the Syrian says that he got these informations from the Iberians. So, while referring to the informations from another people, he is taking distance, at the same time, to these informations. The "It is said" or "reported" by the Iberians" makes evident the reserve Michael is taking vis-a-vis these informations.

A third information has got its origin in Turkish mythology. Michael reports what follows: Almost one hundred years before the Arab invasion, i.e., the first half of the Sixth century, the Turks invaded in Margiane. They were guided by an animal similar to a dog. The Turks did not know who this animal was nor where it came from; they also were unable to approach it. Whenever it seemed fit, it appeared in front of them and exhorted them to get up. The Turks followed the animal, and as soon as it could not be perceived, they stopped. This wolf lead the Turks as well at their first as at their second invasion.¹³

The background of this report is the Turkish mythology speaking of the white wolf.

11. *Ibid.* III, 152

12. Cf. E. Lechner, *Byzanz und die Barbaren*, in: *Saeculum* 6 (1925) 292-306; Idem, *Hellenen und Barbaren im Weltbild der Byzantiner: Die alten Beziehungen als Ausdruck eines neuen Kulturbewusstseins*, Munich 1954; W. Speyer / I. Opelt, *Barbar*, in: *Nachtrag zum Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, in: *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 10 (1967) 251-290; J. Gunther, *Hellenen und Barbaren: Aus der Geschichte des griechischen Nationalbewusstseins* (= *Das Erbe der Alten*, N. F. 8), Leipzig 1923; G. Podskalsky, *Die Sicht der Barbaren-völker in der spätantiken Patristik (4.-8. Jahrh.): Zum 1100 jährigen Todestag des hl. Methodius*, in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1985, 330-351.

13. *Mich. Syr.* III, 154

Michael the Syrian does not reject this mythology, but gives it, within the frame of his theology of history, an interpretation of his own: The wolf is a hint to God guiding each nation by means familiar to it, and towards that what seems him good. Michael compares the guidance of the Turks with that of the Hebrews and the Magi the first were lead through sacrifices of sheep and cows, the latter through the star.

So this mythology is not a witness and expression of a pagan belief which has to be defeated nor the blindness of a people. This myth expresses the Turks' experience with God leading the People in that way in which he already has lead other peoples. He speaks to them in a way corresponding to their culture. Through the leadership of a white wolf, the Turks experience the guidance of the one God, not that of another god or godhead. The same God is leading the different peoples in a different way.

2. The historical informations

Next to meta-historical informations, there are also historical informations in Michael's chronicle. We are going to present these and will then consider the relationship between these historical and meta-historical informations.

2.1. The events

The most ancient mention of the "Turks" outside the Bible quoted by Michael is from John of Asia.¹⁴ He quotes; In the seventh year of Justinus, emperor of the Romans¹⁵, or under emperor Tiberius¹⁶, the emperor sent messengers to the people of the Turks; in the tenth book, it is said more exactly, to the Turkish king Zemarkus in order to engage them for a war against the Persians.¹⁷

This mission lasted three years: the messengers reported that they saw the Turks as a countless people, like the grass-

14. *Ibid.* II, 314; III, 150; cf. *Iohannis Ephesini Historiae Ecclesiasticae pars Tertia* VI, XIII (= CSCO 54 & 55 ed. and tr. by E. W. Brook), Leuven 1952, 321-324, 244-246.

15. *Mich. Syr.* II, 314; III, 153.

16. *Ibid.* III, 151

17. *Ibid.* II, 314

hoppers. They had nine kings. One of the kings wept when he saw the messengers of the Romans arrive, and when he was asked the reason of his sadness, he said: "We have learnt from our ancestors, that, when messengers from the King of the Occident will come, the moment has arrived for us to pour forth over the whole earth and to devastate it." In the 14th book, the Turkish king is supposed to say that there would be a great devastation of the earth at the Romans' arrival. With this, the 14th book ends.

In the 10th book, the conversation between the delegation and the king is still continued. The king asks the delegation whether it is true, that the Romans are slaves of the Persians and have to pay tribute to them. The delegation asserts that they have subjected the Persians, and that there is a statue in the country of the Persians since the time of Traianus which one cannot pass riding on horse.

Thereupon, at the instance of the Turkish king, a discussion with the Persians took place, during which the Persians were subjected and eventually driven away. The whole had this consequence; the Persian ruler sent 2000 Christian virgins to the Turkish king as a present in order to be reconciled with him, but these plunged themselves into a large river on the way.¹⁸

Michael also mentions briefly the menace to the Romans by the Turks at the time of emperor Mauricius. This menace could be turned off by a centevaria of gold.¹⁹

Michael reports that the Turks were mentioned at the end of the last empire of the Persians who were called Sassanids. When Yezdegerd, the last emperor of the Persians, fled before the arrival of the victorious Tayaye to Merw, a Turkish town, he was killed by a Turk in a mill.²⁰

One more mention of the Turks goes back to Dionysios of Tell-Mehre: the Arabic ruler Abū Ishaq battled with four thousand Turks at Merw.²¹

18. *Ibid.* III, 151

19. *Ibid.* II, 315

20. *Ibid.* II, 363

21. *Ibid.* II, 424. 430; III, 150

Michael still mentions the campaign of the Maslama against the Turks²² (1039) as well as that of the Djarraj (1040)²³.

According to Michael the invasion of the Turks into Arabic territories begins in 1042, after the great battle against the army of the Maslama in 1032, in which the Turks were victorious.²⁴ In 1042, the Turks entered into the province of Adhorbigan.²⁵

The last event reported, in the 14th book, by Michael is the election of the first Turkish khaliph. The Turks had accepted Islam and united with the Arabs. As soon as the Turks possessed the civil power, too, they also wished to put forward the "King of the Muslims". According to Michael, the Arabs accepted any Muslim as khaliph who made himself king. So the Turks assembled in order to make a king. For this purpose, the 70 most important persons of the 70 most important tribes took their place in a circle drawing a small circle in the centre. Each of them had a stick which was to be thrown into the air. He whose stick was to fall into the centre of the interior circle, should become the khaliph. So it happened that one man's stick fell into the centre, and he was recognised as khaliph!²⁶

2.2. The reasons mentioned for the migration

The Turks were always called when the inhabitants on this side of the "bosom of the earth" needed them for an expedition, so this was the case with the Persians, the Medans and the Assyrians. When the Turks returned thereafter, they reported about the wonderful regions bringing precious vestments and different fruits along with them. When the people saw all these, they prepared themselves to migrate to a region where there were the same things. They deliberated on it. When the Persians needed them again once, they fought against them and on their way back, they killed their companions, besieged

22. *Ibid.* II, 483

23. cf. EI² II, 482; *Literature*: al-Dhahabi, *Ta'rikh al-Islam*, Cairo A. H. 1367-1369, IV, 237f.; al-Tabari, II, 1352-1356; D. M. Dunlop, *History of the Jewish Khazars*, Princeton 1954, Index; F. Gabriele, *II Califfato di Hiasham*, Alexandria 1935, 74ff.

24. Mich. Syr. II, 501

25. cf. EI² I, 188-191

26. Mich. Syr. III, 157

the castles and forts and sent a message to their fellowmen on the other side of the gates in order to conquer thus the gates of the forts. In it is this way that they became the lords of the "bosom of the earth". From there they conquered the Margiane which they made their land. Having become the watchers of the gate, they took the same attitude towards those who had remained there as their predecessors. This invasion took place at the end of the last Persian empire, one hundred years before the Arabs' invasion.²⁷

Michael quotes for both the invasions material reasons; it is the richness of the region and the desire of the Turks to possess this richness. Called as auxiliaries, they take over the powers thereupon.

Besides the natural reasons, Michael also mentions the supernatural ones. The first invasion was prophesied and was hence willed by God.²⁸ Michael does not mention any reason why God wanted it.

As regards the second invasion, Michael presents a long and detailed explanation. He follows here completely the scheme of the traditional theology of history: the people of God falls into sin, God sends another people for their punishment: this, however, falls into sin, too, which causes anew a sending of a people.²⁹ Michael describes the historical events in this way: the Arabs destroyed Persian paganism and brought along the rule of the Greek who persecuted the Christians, i. e. the "Monophysites." Their rule was just, and the faithful lived in peace. After having ruled for a certain time, the Lord deprived them of his assistance and the Greek obtained again supremacy. These started immediately the persecution of the monophysitic orthodox in the regions which had come anew under their rule. This is why God sent the Turks against the Greek.³⁰

In which way God lead the Turks by the wolf known to us from Turkish mythology, has been described above. At the

27. *Ibid.* III, 152f

28. *Ibid.* III, 154

29. Speros Vyronis Jr., *Byzantine Attitudes towards Islam during the Late Middle Ages*, in *Greek and Byzantine Studies* 12 (1971) 263-268

30. Mich. Syr. III, 154

end of the chapter, Michael praises God's Providence which certainly refers to the Turkish invasion.³¹

2.3. The Turkish way of life

Already above did I give some hints are the Turks' way of life according to some apocalyptic motives. These, however, do not give us any hints regarding the real way of life of the Turks or what was the impression about them with the Syrians; they are derived as such from the ideology regarding the "barbarians". It is quite different with those informations regarding the Turks which do not fit into the idea of the barbarians. Ultimately they are based on informations, even if those informations are more or less distorted in Michael's report.

The Turks are faithful, serious and do not cheat. They are prudent and clever in organizing their lives. They do not commit adultery, and widowhood is rare with them, since they do not have any laws prohibiting a second or third marriage or polygamy. They do not have any intellectual knowledge. They do not know how to produce cloths from linen: their dress and their tents are made of sheep wool and the hair of goats. They have excellent abilities in training animals. Although they have a multitude of gates, cattle and sheep in their camps they go forward without riot and settle down in the same way. They do not like long speeches and are taciturn.³²

2.4. The Religion of the Turks

At first Michael states that the Turks do not have any idea on Moyses or on any of the prophets nor on the redemption by Christ or on his disciples. But they believe in one only god of heaven without knowing him, for, according to Michael, they consider the visible firmament as god.³³ This one god was called "Qan Tangri". Michael gives the following explanation of the word: "Qan" means the blue of the sky and "tangri" means god.³⁴ This is the original religion of the Turks.

31. *Ibid.* III, 156

32. *Ibid.* III, 152

33. *Ibid.* III, 152

34. *Ibid.* III, 156

As they could not find enough place for all during the second invasion, they divided themselves into three groups. They drew lots and so every group was given a region. One of them drew the lot making them go to the North of India, the second had to go North of Greece, while the third could remain in Anatolia. Before that it was agreed that each group would accept the religion of the neighbouring peoples. The group which settled down in the neighbourhood of Greece, became christian. Michael adds, however, that their faith was corrupted. The third group mingled with the Arabs and accepted Islam.³⁵

To the last group and their conversion to Islam the fifth chapter of the 14th book is devoted. Michael is first searching for the reasons of this turn to Islam by the Turks. The first he mentions is the common profession of the one god with both of them.

The second is given, according to Michael, by the following event: After the Turks had settled down in the region of Margane at the end of the Persian empire, soon Muslim Arabs conquered that region. As they were ruling over this territory, the Turks assimilated themselves in religious matters, as did the Persians and the Kurds, too. During the second invasion, the Turks met their "cousins" speaking the same language as they did, but were Muslims. This fact facilitated acceptance of Islam. Michael finds a third reason in the promises of Islam.

Those Turks who fought with the Arabs against the Greek, made the acquaintance with a rich country. Here they came to know of Muhammad's promise that he who adheres to Islam giving up pagan cult, will receive the fertile land. Believing in this promise, they accepted Islam.³⁶

With the Turks' acceptance of Islam, a union of the Arabic and Turkish peoples took place.

3. Conclusion

The statements having an impact in theology of history have, in comparison with the indications regarding the "Sociological" reasons of the invasion, a minor role. In face of

35. *Ibid.* III, 155

36. *Ibid.* III, 156f

prior historical works, in which the idea of God's governing history is more elaborated and which mostly contain a context between sin, punishment and remuneration, the analysis of the secular reasons is coming to the forefront with Michael. Apocalyptic visions of the events connected with the peoples who are associated with Gog and Magog are missing, with the exception of a few further reminiscences in the first part which contains apocalyptic motives in the description of the Turks, peculiarities.

So we can make the statement that Michael the Syrian gives the secular reasons of history an appropriate place. They are not accidentals of a history destined outside the world, but events which determine casually history.

In spite of all secular and sociological reasons, nevertheless the course of history is determined by God. God is the ruler of history who knows its course in advance. Michael does not present any details, how he imagines the relationship between the secular reasons of history and God's ruling. He is keeping distance from ideas going back to apocalyptic literature. The way of apocalyptic interpretation of history is hardly compatible with Michael's efforts, to put the secular reasons of history into the right light.

Quite similarly Michael deals in presenting the Turks, religion. He does not present it simply as pagan nor does he use the clichés which are at the disposal in christian tradition with regards to pagans, but renders the Turkish tradition with a sensible affection for certain details. This concrete presentation is then also the point of departure for his judgement on their religion. Michael does not explain it as a product of human imagination or satanic insinuation. He consequently follows his point of departure according to which God is the ruler of history which embraces also the Turkish history. He guides the people through the white wolf. This animal in Turkish mythology becomes God's instrument in order to guide this people. According to Michael, God takes into consideration the cultural and religious elements of a people. While describing the idea of God, Michael again departs from the details of the Turkish religion. The Turkish name of God is explained. After having

stated that the Turks adore but one God, he explains that the Turks adore *the one* God. He is, however, hidden to them, because they consider the firmament to be God.

In his interpretation of the further religious history of the Turks, at the time of the second invasion, Michael mentions only secular reasons for the change in religion of the individual Turkish groups. For him, religion is not only determined by God or Satan and the peoples only instruments of God, but religion is also human work. The groups took a decision to accept the religion of the inhabitants in whose regions they immigrated. Further Michael describes in detail sociological reasons why one group accepted Islam. Here, too, Michael sees clearly, that faith and religion are not isolated from secular events.

In the fourteenth book of his chronicle, Michael presents rather different approaches for a theology of history and religion. Some aspects appear astonishingly modern. It is, however, not a theological treatise on history and religion, but the application of a theology in historiography. In this article, it was attempted to elucidate this theology contained implicitly in the chronicle.

(Translated from German by SEERI)

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CLEFT IN THE ROCK

The cell of a solitary is the cave in the rock where God spoke with Moses, according to what the Fathers say.

(*St Isaac of Syria*)

THE HUMILITY OF GREATNESS

Now humility of heart comes about in a person for two causes: either from precise knowledge of his sins, or from recollection of the greatness of God.

I mean, how exceedingly the greatness of the Lord of all lowered itself, so that in such ways as these he might converse with and admonish men.

He humbled himself so far as to assume a human body, he endured men and associated with them, and showed himself so despised in the world, he who possesses ineffable glory above with God the Father, and at whose sight the angels are struck with awe, and the glory of whose countenance shines throughout their orders.

FINIS

These things have I written down for my own benefit and for the benefit of anyone who happens to come across this book.

I have written in accordance with what I have understood, both from contemplation on the Scriptures, and also from those who speak the truth, and a little from experience itself.

I have written, furthermore, in order that I should benefit from the prayers of those who have benefited from these words, seeing that I have toiled over them.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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Joseph Naduvilezhham*

Paschal Lamb in Ephrem of Nisibis

Introduction

St. Ephrem, the unparalleled Syriac theologian-poet builds up his profound redemptive theology around the paschal lamb, the type par excellence of the Redeemer. He develops a whole soteriology in terms of the Exodus-event, making use of typology. The Saint sees the Paschal Mystery of Christ in the Old Testament Passover context. Christ is considered right from the beginning as the Paschal Victim to be immolated for the salvation of the new Israel.

In Ephrem's vision the realization of the paschal lamb in Christ has been fulfilled in three stages namely at the Last Supper, at Calvary and in the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Church. In this paper I intend to treat briefly the realization of the paschal lamb in Christ at Calvary, basing mainly on the Ephremian Paschal Hymns: On the Unleavened Bread, On Crucifixion and On Resurrection.

On the Cross at Calvary Ephrem sees the culmination of the realization of Christ the True Paschal Lamb. Christ is the Lord of mysteries and the treasury of all symbols. At Calvary all these mysteries and symbols were fulfilled in Him. He is the True Lamb already symbolized in the Old Testament. From the

* Joseph Naduvilezhham, Rector of St. Thomas Seminary Thuruthy, is a specialist on St. Ephrem. He is a visiting Professor at the Paurasthya Vidyapeedam, Kottayam.

start He was prepared to be the Victim of the new Pascha. He is the Lamb and also the Priest of this Paschal Sacrifice. He is the Lamb and the Shepherd who gives up his life for his sheep, shedding His blood to save the nations from death.

1. The symbolic lamb and the True Lamb

For Ephrem as well as for the other Syriac Fathers the continuity of the Old and New Testaments was quite evident and significant. The NT is the fulfilment of the OT. The type of the OT and its fulfilment in NT is an oft occurring theme in Ephremian redemptive theology.

St. Ephrem contemplates the two lambs, namely the passover lamb - ܐܝܪ ܡܫܗܐ - ēar pešhā and the true lamb - ܐܡܪ ܩܫܬܐ - ܐܡܪ ܩܫܬܐ - emar qustā - and compares them with each other evaluating the achievements of both. For him the symbol - ܪܫܐ - rāšā - is as shade - ܬܠܐܠܐ - ṭelālā - and the truth¹ - ܩܫܬܐ - qustā - is as fulfilment - ܫܡܠܐܢܐ - sumlānā.

Az III. 1-5:

In Egypt the passover lamb was slain
in Sion the True Lamb slaughtered.

My brothers, let us consider the two lambs,
let us see where they bear resemblance

and where they differ

Let us weigh and compare their achievements

of the lamb that was the symbol, and of the lamb

that is the Truth.

-
1. Ephrem's idea of truth could have been inspired by the Johannine conception of truth. 'Truth'-aletheia as the word used in this gospel, where it occurs twenty-five times, means 'reality', the knowledge of which is external life. When Ephrem speaks of the 'true lamb' ܐܡܪ ܩܫܬܐ - emar qustā - we should understand it in contrast to the symbolic lamb - ܐܡܪ ܪܐܝܐ - emar rāzā - ܐܡܪ ܩܫܬܐ . Cf. R. H. Lightfoot, *St. John's Gospel. A Commentary*, London, 1956, pp. 86-87.

let us look upon the symbol as a shadow,
 let us look upon the Truth as the fulfilment.
 Listen to the simple symbols that concern that passover,
 and to the double achievements of this our Pascha.²

2. Christ the Treasury of all Symbols

Ephrem finds in the details of the passover in Egypt and the subsequent Exodus the symbols of the First-born - **ܕܥܕܐܝܢ** - bukrā. We have to recognize them in faith, as the Israelites took them as true without incredulity, says he:

HF ide IX, 12:

And also the blood that was sprinkled³
 on the lintel and door-posts
 Also the manna and the quail⁴
 Also the stone and rock⁵
 And the pillar of cloud⁶ and the rod⁷
 These are the symbols of the First-born.

Although that was an unfaithful people
 They did not test the praise worthy symbols.
 You will not test, O Peoples,
 The First-born, the treasury of symbols-

gazā drāzē **ܕܥܕܐܝܢ**

Lest the blind should be happy (about it).⁸

Christ is the only one who completes and fulfils everything. Both the types and Scriptures are fulfilled in Him on the Cross. Ephrem finds the consummation of everything on the cross:

2. Az. III, 1-5. Translation from *Harp of the Spirit*, S. Brock London, 1975 p. 37.

3. Ex. 12, 22f.

4. Ex. 16, 13-21.

5. Ex. 17,6.

6. Ex. 13, 21.

7. Ex. 14, 16.

8. HFide IX, 12. CSCO 154/Syr. 73 pp. 46-47. Cf Az III: Refrain: "Praise be to the Son, the Lord of symbols/Who has fulfilled all symbols through his crucifixion": Beck, E. (ed. & tr.), *Des Heiligen Ephrams des Syrsers Paschahymen: De Azymis, De Crucifixione, De Resurrectione*. CSCO 248/ Syr180, Louvain, 1964, p. 6. ACR will be the abbreviation of this work hereafter.

Virg. IX, 15:

For only Christ has completed
The Scriptures in His cross,
Their types—~~1-2901~~—types— in His body,
Their adornment in His beauty
And all these in Himself.⁹

The symbols and types waited, as it were, for the true Lamb who fulfilled all of them on the cross. This fulfilment is attested by Jesus Himself by his words: "It is finished" (Jn 19, 30), says Ephrem:

Az VI, 11-14:

All types had dwelt in the all Holy One
And waited for the all fulfilling One
The True Lamb saw the symbols
He tore the veil and came out toward them
The symbols and types were fulfilled in Him,
As He Himself has attested: Everything is consummated.¹⁰

3. The Symbols of the lamb in the OT

In the light of the fulfilment on the cross Ephrem looks back and finds the types of the Lamb in the OT. The lamb that is dead speaks and its symbolism is great.¹¹

Right at the beginning, Abel wished to see the Lamb of God in the place of the lamb he offered:

Nat I, 42:

Abel yearned for Him
that He came during his time
so that he might see the Lamb of God
instead of the lamb that he offered.¹²

9. Virg IX, 15. CSCO 223/Syr 94, p. 33. Cfr. Virg VIII, 8.

10. Az. Vi, 11-14. ACR p. 14. Cf. Jn. 19,30.

11. The symbol of the lamb is great;
It is silent as long as it lives,
And it speaks when it is dead.: Virg XI, 18. CSCO 223/ Syr 94 p. 37.

12. Nat I, 42. CSCO 186/Syr 82 p. 6. Cf. Gen 4, 4.

The sacrifice of Abel is a favourite theme of Ephrem. Abel offered a lamb in sacrifice to Yahweh (Gen 4, 4). Ephrem sees in this scene of Gen 4, 4 a lamb offering another lamb.¹³ This lamb of Abel is the forerunner of the lamb of Abraham (Gen 22, 13), of the passover lamb of the exodus night in Egypt and of the Lamb of God (Jn 1, 29). Later Abel himself became a victim (Gen 4, 8). Thus in Abel the Saint could see both an offerer and an offering. One can see in him the image of the Shepherd and lamb in its archaic form¹⁴.

Ephrem compares Jesus, the true Lamb with the passover lamb of Egypt: The paschal lamb which was kept apart from the 10th day of the first month on (Ex 12, 3-6), was killed and the children of Israel freed with their flock. Moses also was shut in as a child for three months by his mother (Ex 2, 2). Later the Israelites were delivered through him. Both the passover Lamb and Moses were cooped in, but both gave deliverance. They are the symbols of Jesus, the True Paschal Lamb and the new Liberator.

Jesus, too, was imprisoned and shut in and He, too, granted deliverance and freedom to the Peoples. This symbolism is beautifully brought out in the following verses of Ephrem:

Az IX, 18-23:

Through that passover lamb came out the children,
And as lambs, shut in, they leaped in freedom.
That passover lamb, kept in by Moses¹⁵
Freed the caught lambs, which were shut in.
For also Moses, a child shut in¹⁶
Became the liberator of the enslaved children
Through the lambs and Moses – both shut in.
The flock with its young ones were brought to their goal¹⁷

13. Az. Vi, 8. ACR p. 13. Cf. Gen 4, 10.; Cruc. II, 9. ACR p. 48.

14. In *A Syriac Life of Abel* (ca. 5th/6th c) attributed to a Symmachus, the author puts Abel's death on Friday in Nisan making his death resemble the Lord's death. Cf. S. BROCK, "A Syriac Life of Abel", *Le Museon* 87 (1974) p. 479.

15. Ex. 12,3-6.

16. Ex. 2,2.

17. Ex. 12, 32. 38.

They both, cooped in, formed the symbol
 Of that imprisoned Lamb, which saved the people¹⁸.
 They drew out the passover lamb from the fold
 And the true Lamb from imprisonment¹⁹.

The holy Doctor distinguished the two lambs very clearly. The symbolic lamb was without blemish—ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ emrā dlā mūmā (Ex 12, 5), while the true Lamb is immaculate—ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ emrā dlā kutmā. The sprinkling—ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ—rsāsā²⁰ of the former's blood cleansed the Israelites and the sprinkling of the latter's blood made the peoples pure:

Az IX, 24-25:

The lamb of the type was without blemish—

dlā mūmā ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ

And the True Lamb was immaculate—ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ—dlā
 kutmā²¹

The sprinkling—ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ—rsāsā— (with the blood) of that spotless—ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ—dakyā—lamb expiated for the people
 The sprinkling (with the blood) of that pure lamb—

ܐܡܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܡܐ sapyā washed (the peoples) clean²²

Ephrem notes that on the feast of the New Pascha the True Lamb removed its type, namely the passover lamb which finished its role²³. It is the marvels of the True Lamb that we celebrate in Nisan²⁴.

4. Lamb from the Beginning

Ephrem contemplates the scene of the visit of the shepherds to the new born Saviour in Bethlehem, who is Himself the True

18. Mt. 26,57; Mk 14,53; Lk 22,54; Jn. 18,12.

19. Az. IX, 18-23. ACR pp. 17-18.

20. Sprinkling of blood with hyssop is a symbol of purgation from sin in the OT. Cf. Ps 51,9; HFide XII,20.

21. I Pet. 1,19.

22. Az. IX, 24-25. ACR p. 18. Cf. Nat V, 14; I Jn. 1,7.

23. Az. XII, 4 ACR p. 19.

24. Az. XIII, 1. ACR p. 19.

Paschal Lamb. It is in his vision a rapturous moment when the suckling lamb brought by the shepherds as a sign of their homage, was offered to the true Paschal Lamb, an offering to the Victim:

Nat VII, 3:

They carried and brought Him a sucking lamb,²⁵

To Him, the Paschal Lamb,

A first-born to the First-born,

An offering to the Victim,

A transitory lamb- ܐܠܡܢܐ ܕܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ -ēmar dzabna—to the true

lamb- ܐܠܡܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ēmar qustā.

What a beautiful scene indeed.

A lamb was offered to the Lamb²⁶.

Bethlehem is blessed because it is there that the Lamb of God bleated for the first time, says Ephrem:

Nat 25, 13:

Blessed are you Bethlehem, for in you began²⁷

The Son who is eternal in the Father.

Impossible to understand: He who is over all sides

Has thrown himself to your side.

Blessed are your ears, for in you bleated first

The Lamb of God- ܐܠܡܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ -emrēh dalāhā—that
leaped in you;

It was small in your manger and it extended itself over
all creatures

And was adored in all directions.²⁸

Again the Saint sees Jesus as an offering-qurbana- ܩܘܪܒܢܐ -
in the hands of Simeon the priest, at the Presentation in the
Temple. Even at that point the Cross is visible to the author:

25. Lk 2, 18-19.

26. Nat VII, 3. CSCO 186/ Syr 82, p. 56.

27. Mt. 2,1; Lk 2,4-7; Mic 5,2.

28. Nat 25,13. CSCO 186/Syr 82, p. 131.

Res I, 9:

Mary carried Him as child²⁹

The priest took him as offering - ܩܪܒܢܐ - qurbānā³⁰

The Cross carried Him as the killed one,³¹

Heaven took Him as God³²

Glory be to the Father.³³

John the Baptist recognized in Jesus the Lamb of God. This Lamb grew and became a sacrifice, says Ephrem:

Nat 24, i-ii:

John looked at him and called out: It is the Lamb of
God

The Lamb thrived and grew and came to become a
sacrifice³⁴.

Jesus was being prepared from the very start for the Feast of Nisan, namely for the Feast of Pascha, on which we celebrate the marvels of Lamb:

He has been prepared that we may celebrate in the month
of flowers

A feast to the marvels of the True Lamb³⁵.

Thus the Saint sees from the beginning of Jesus' life the mystery of His Paschal Sacrifice. He came to be the Victim of the unique Sacrifice which brings life and freedom to mankind. In Ephrem's thought Jesus was born a Lamb and He would die a Lamb.

5. Priest and Lamb

The priests and the Levites of the OT were not holy enough to offer the True Lamb. Jesus Himself, therefore, became Priest and High Priest for his sacrifice which put an end to all other sacrifices:

29. Lk 2, 22. 27.

30. Lk 2, 28.

31. Mt. 27, 35-50 and the parallels.

32. Mk. 16, 19

33. Res. I, 9. ACR pp. 79-80. Cf. Nat 25, 16.

34. Nat 24, 24. CSCO 186/Syr 82 p. 126. Cf. Jn. 1, 29.

35. J. GRIBOMONT, "La tradition liturgique des Hymnes pascales de S. Ephrem", *PdO* IV (1975) p. 205. Hereafter we shall refer to this article as 'Tradition'; cf. Az. XIII, 1.

Az II, 2-3:

The true Lamb knew that the priests were impure,
And the Levites unworthy and they were not sufficient for Him
He Himself became for His Body Priest and High Priest:

𐎧𐏁𐎡𐏂𐎠𐎢𐏁𐎫𐎲𐎠𐎥𐎺𐎠𐎪𐎠𐎤𐎹 -kahnā urabkumrā³⁶

The priests of that people killed the High Priest
 For, our Priest became a sacrifice —  debhā
 through His offering He put an end to the sacrifices.
 To all sides He extended His help³⁷.

In the OT the priests were more valuable than their animal victims. They were, however, purified by the animals without holiness. Whereas in the NT the Victim is the Lamb descended from heaven, the Victim par excellence, whom the priests of this world could not sacrifice. Jesus, therefore, became both Victim and Offerer of His Sacrifice:

Az II, 4-5:

The priests who were more valuable than the animals,
Slaughtered and brought sacrifices of animals³⁸.
The priest was sanctified by means of a lamb without holiness

אִמְרָא דְּלָא קַדִּישׁ – āmra dlā qadīs³⁹

There is no lamb sublimer than the Lamb from the highest
 Since the priests were from the earth and the Lamb from
 heaven

It became for itself victim – dābḥā – debhā and offerer – dābūhā ⁴⁰.

In this new Paschal Sacrifice there is identity between the priest and the victim which is possible only in the most perfect sacrifice. Ephrem is convinced of the uniqueness and perfection of the Sacrifice of Jesus, the True Lamb on the cross. He has probably

36. Heb. 3,1; 4, 15;8,1.

37. Az. II, 2-3. ACR. p. 4.

38. Lev 16; Heb 9,9;10,11.

39. Heb. 9.22.

40. Az. II, 4-5. ACR p. 4.

experienced this profound religious truth from the scene of the sacrifice of the paschal lamb (KJewish) and from the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Church⁴¹.

The prophecies of the OT have been fulfilled in this Lamb who became also Priest and Pontiff for us, says Ephrem:

The Lamb came from the house of David⁴²

Priest and Pontiff, the son of Abraham.

For us he became Lamb, he became Pontiff

His body for sacrifice, his blood for sprinkling⁴³

Blessed be his fulfilment⁴⁴.

Jesus' sacrifice, the most pleasing and most sanctifying, made the animal sacrifice pass away. In it the Lamb was its known offering priest:

Virg 31, 5:

(Christ) all pleasing offering - ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ - qurbānā

rgiga—which was offered for us⁴⁵

Sanctifying sacrifice - ܕܒܗܐ ܡܩܘܕܨܐ - debhā maqudsā-

which offered itself,

drink-offering which made the blood of calves and sheep
pass away,

Lamp which was for itself the offering priest

Blessed is he, to whom his prayer became incense

And who brought it through you to your Father⁴⁶.

6. Lamb and Shepherd

In Ephrem's thought the image of the lamb is closely connected with that of the shepherd. Christ is not only the Lamb, but also the Shepherd who became lamb for our atonement.

41. J. GRIBOMONT, 'Le triomphe de Paque d' apre saint Ephrem' *PdO* 4 (1973), p. 168.

42. Lk 1,32.

43. Heb. 9,26;10,10.

44. Cf. J. GRIBOMONT, 'Tradition' p. 211. cf. Nat II,2 v-vii.

45. Heb 9,26; 10,12.

46. Virg 31,5. CSCO 223/Syr 94, p. 133.

Nat III, 15. i-ii:

Blessed is the Shepherd, who became
The Lamb for our atonement.⁴⁷

This double Messianic function of Christ as Lamb and Shepherd is a familiar theme found in the NT and in the early Patristic literature and Christian art.⁴⁸ Ephrem was probably inspired in this by the Good Shepherd who gives up his life for his sheep, as found in John 10, 1-18. Through this double image of lamb and shepherd he wants to express the voluntary and vicarious death of Jesus for mankind. The Lamb is immolated, whereas the shepherd gives up his life of his own accord.

7. The Lamb of the Pascha

Jesus was destined from the very start to be the Lamb for the Paschal. The Baptist testified to this truth (Jn 1,29) the Jews did not, however, wish that He became the paschal lamb:

Virg XX, 3. i-iv:

The wolves had always heard it from John
As he called Christ the Lamb
And since then they wished to kill Him before the feast
So that He might not become the Paschal Lamb⁴⁹

Ephrem recognizes in the crucifixion of Jesus the details of the slaughter of the passover lamb and establishes the fulfilment of the type in Him. The Jews read the text of Exodus (Ex 12) on their pesah, but without noticing its realization in the killing of Jesus, the true Paschal Lamb:

47. Nat III, 15. i-ii. CSCO 186/Syr 82 p. 23.

48. The image of the lamb and shepherd is seen in Is 40, 11. Jesus uses this figure in Jn 10 and Jn 21, 15. The divine shepherd will open the waters (Js 40,18) to his flock (49,10). In Rev 7,17 the paschal lamb, the Servant and divine Shepherd of Israel are all fused together. The Lamb-Shepherd paradox comes into focus here. Jesus is both the Lamb slain and by his Resurrection the Shepherd who leads his flock to living waters. Cf. N. HILLYER, "The Lamb in the Apocalypse" *EQ* 39 (1967) p. 235.

49. Virg XX, 3. i-iv: CSCO 223/Syr 94 p. 68.

Jeunio V,7:

They read on the passover, how they killed the lamb
in Egypt.

Blind people. It read not recognizing, explained not noticing;

They read in the books, they hung(Him) on the wood,
They crucified and lifted the true Lamb

They inserted it on the spit and roasted it,

The silent lamb that was pierced

Was witness to the crucified Lamb, that it was the fulfilment.⁵⁰

The piercing of Jesus' hands and legs, lifting Him on the Cross, all these details are seen by Ephrem in the light of the paschal prescription of Ex 12 which was followed by the Jews in their pesah sacrifice of later years as well. Thus the type was fulfilled in the Reality.⁵¹

8. The Lamb's saving blood

As the Israelites were saved through the blood of the Exodus paschal lamb' the Blood of Christ saved the new Israel from death. Certainly the Blood of Christ is far superior to that of the paschal lamb. It has the hidden perfume of life, says Ephrem.⁵²

The Blood of this spotless Lamb reconciles heaven and earth:

Az 11.6:

For the priests with their blemish were not worthy

To offer the spotless lamb- *ḥ-m-rā d-lā*
mūmā

50. Ieiunio V, 7. CSCO 247/Syr 164 p. 15. Cf. Jn 19,18; 19,33. 34-37.

51. Elsewhere Ephrem sings:

The Word of the Pasch they killed on the Passover

The Lord of feasts they slew on the Feast

The mouth that had cried: crucify him

Lifted itself to read the Holy Books of the passover?

Ieiunio V, 6. CSCO 247/Syr 164 p. 14.

52. *Carmina Nisibena*: 39,19. CSCO 240/Syr 102 p. 28.

He became a peace-offering and pacified
The height and depth with his appeasing blood—

ܐܝܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܒܕܡܗ ܡܣܝܢ⁵³

The sacrifice of the true paschal Lamb and the consequent shedding of its Blood, inaugurates the new Economy of salvation. Ephrem brings out the difference between the salvific work of the blood of the symbolic lamb and of the True Lamb. The former saved only the Israelites whereas the latter brought salvation to all nations:

Az XXI: Refrain:

Praise be to him who has saved the peoples with His blood
In the place of the symbol which saved only the people⁵⁴

The immolation of Jesus is the summit of all other sacrifices. His body and precious Blood took the place of all other previous offerings:

In the place of sacrifices, I sacrifice myself⁵⁵
In the place of offerings, I offer my body⁵⁶
In the place of libations, my precious blood
And for the washing of all impurity
I open my side in purification⁵⁷.

Christ is the Priest and Victim whose Body became our sacrifice and whose Blood our sprinkling, sings Ephrem in the First hymn on Resurrection⁵⁸.

Conclusion

Ephrem contemplates the mystery of the cross and finds there, in the sacrifice of the true Lamb, the fulfilment of all symbols and the Reality of all types. This culminating point was in view right from the beginning at Jesus' birth when He was already

53. Az II,6. ACR p.4. Cf. Az XI, 24-25. Col 1,20.

54. Az XXI: Refrain. ACR p. 39.

55. Heb. 7, 27.

56. Heb. 10,5-6; Ps 46,6-8.

57. J. GRIBOMONT, "Tradition" p. 218. Cf. Jn 19,34.

58. Res I, 1. iii-v. ACR p. 78. Cf. Res II,2,

being prepared to be the Victim of this Sacrifice. According to St. Ephrem, Calvary was already present in Bethlehem and even after back in Egypt at the exodus paschal sacrifice.

The immolation of the True Lamb is the most perfect Sacrifice. In it both the Priest and the Victim are identified. Both are heavenly. It annulled all other previous sacrifices. Through the metaphor of the Shepherd Ephrem brings out the voluntary nature of Jesus' sacrifice. It is the most pleasing sacrifice. Its Blood reconciled both heaven and earth and brought salvation to all the nations purifying and transforming mankind. These are the salvific effects of the Paschal Sacrificial Event of the Cross, which Ephrem never tries to affirm.

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THE IMAGE RESTORED

This shall be for you a luminous sign of the serenity of your soul: when, on examining yourself, you find yourself full of compassion for all humanity, and your heart is afflicted with pity for them, burning as though with fire, without making distinction between one person and another.

When the image of the Father becomes visible in you by means of the continual presence of these things, then you can recognize the the measure of your way of life – not from your various labours, but from the transformation which your understanding receives.

The body is then likely to be bathed in tears, as the intellect gazes on things spiritual.

(*St Isaac of Syria*)

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Ignace Philips*

The Importance of the Peshittha in Syriac Tradition: The example of the Peshittha to 1 Chronicles 29

Introduction

Since a certain number of years there has been a renewed interest in the ancient Bible versions such as Septuagint (LXX), Targum (Tg) and Old Latin not taken as mere tools for establishing the Massoretic text (MT) from which they were ultimately translated but as texts in their own right with their own history. These translations often changed or interpreted the Hebrew for theological or ideological reasons which formed the background of thought in which the translators lived.

Far from decrying these interpretations as being unfaithful to the MT, modern scholarship tends to value them more and more as keys to a better understanding of the way in which the Bible was read and understood in the communities which translated it. Bible translation can be said to be the first cultural act of the local ecclesial community.

The Peshittha (Psh) to the Old Testament is no exception to this. The Syriac Churches have the singular honour of possessing a translation of the OT which even if its Jewish origin is not absolutely demonstrable has ancient links with Jewish tradition and in this is at least comparable to the LXX, the only other Jewish translation of the Bible which was adopted by the Christian

* Dr. David Philips formerly in Chevetogne, is a specialist in Syriac monasticism

Churches. LXX scholars are at pains to point out that the Greek OT was the Bible of the Greek Fathers (and via the Old Latin that of the Latin Fathers) – this was *their* Bible, even if the Hebrew text was known to them to a greater or lesser degree and held in veneration by them. It was the LXX with its idiosyncrasies and errors of translation which formed the backbone and the matter of their theological thinking, it was by it that they knew and meditated the Word of God.

The Syriac Fathers had their Bible as well and that Bible, even if in the earliest writers there are sometimes notable divergences with the text known to us by the Bible mss, was essentially the Psh – I am speaking of the OT, for the NT it is another matter. The Psh is the text on which their thought was based, this is the text which passed into the Syriac liturgies either via the Lectionaries or by the Scriptural verses used or by the allusions that Syriac hymnography makes to the Bible text.

Addressing myself to the various members of the Syriac Churches here present; this is your Bible, the Bible of your liturgy, the Bible of your Fathers in the faith. It is the backbone of your Syriac heritage as a living entity. You must not let the Psh become a simple object of scholarly pursuits, it is also the Bible of all the believing faithful in your Churches. It is a pity to see that in a lot of translations of the Syriac liturgies into present day vernaculars, either in India or elsewhere, the Scriptural pericopes are often taken from existing vernacular Bible translations which are more or less faithful renderings of the MT. In other words the Psh is supplanted by a text which although esteemed by the Syriac Fathers was not the received text of the Churches to which they belonged. Since in many passages the Psh has a distinctive physiognomy and it was this distinctive physiognomy which provided material for the composition of liturgical hymnography, not to mention patristic homiletic writings, if the text of the Psh is replaced by the MT, understanding of the liturgy which is based on the Syriac version of the Bible will be obscured. This need for coherence between the Bible and the Liturgy is present in all Christian traditions but is particularly the case in Syriac since allusions to Scripture and Bible quotations in patristic and liturgical writings play an absolutely essential and preponderant role.

The object of the SEERI conferences is to promote the understanding and upkeep of the Syriac heritage in the Indian Churches which stem from it. The Psh is an integral part of that heritage and must not be neglected in your endeavours to maintain its riches. In addition to your admirable work in teaching Syriac patristics and liturgy you should also maintain the teaching of the Bible in Syriac not just as a source for the grammar of the language but as a text in itself whose literary and exegetical qualities and whose history and development make it one of the gems of Syriac tradition.

There is also another aspect which ought to be born in mind. Despite minor variations between the East Syriac and West Syriac recensions of the Psh, your different Churches have a common Bible which is proper to your own traditions above and beyond liturgical and ecclesial divergences. Thus the Psh is a real basis for ecumenical dialogue between your Churches – not only the Bible as the Word of God, but the Bible which all of your Fathers in the faith have passed on to you. This common bond between your different traditions should be seen as an already acquired element in the search for unity among yourselves.

The Psh to Chronicles (Psh Chr)

Like all ancient Bible versions the Psh is not just a translation but also an interpretation of the text. The degree of interpretation varies from one book to another of the Bible according to the different translators. Although in the majority of cases Psh is pretty literal there are a lot of texts where interpretative material has been introduced or has guided the translator's pen.

This phenomenon has been widely studied at least for the Psh to the Pentateuch where clear links can be established between the interpretations of the Syriac text and those to be found in the Jewish Targums.

There is however one book of the Syriac Bible which has received relatively little attention from scholars and yet contains an enormous quantity of interpretative material: the book of Chronicles, one passage of which I shall take as a concrete example of the way in which the MT has been remodelled by Psh and which has no parallel in the other ancient versions.

Chronicles has a somewhat chequered history as a book in the canon of the Syriac Churches and was counted by part of the tradition as Apocryphal, but is nowadays to be found in all printed editions of the Psh.

What we usually call the two books of Chr is considered in the ancient ms tradition to be one single book. Indeed the MT was only divided into two books in the Middle ages whereas already at an early stage LXX divided the book in two. The Psh text of the Codex Ambrosianus (A) has an incipit in 1 Chr 1, 1 and an explicit at the end of 2 Chr where the book is spoken of in the singular: *cpr dbrymyn*. The very title of the book which is a mere transliteration into Syriac of the Hebrew *dbry h-ymym* leads us to expect that the book is translated from the Hebrew and not the Greek and indeed a detailed analysis of the translation bears this out. There is however the possibility that the hebrew exemplar used was a defective copy given the unexplainable omission of certain passages such as 1 Chr 12, 18-17, 25. Influence of LXX seems inexistant and the few instances where Psh and LXX go together against the MT are too slight to be significant; we shall look at some examples of this later on.

The first in-depth study of Psh Chr was made by Sigmund Fränkel in 1879 and little has been published on the subject since then. Fränkel was convinced that Psh Chr was a kind of Jewish Targum and he tried to find parallels in rabbinic literature for the numerous glosses and changes operated by the Syriac version. The problem is that in fact Psh Chr rarely agrees with the extant Jewish Tg to Chr, which is probably a late work anyway, and the parallels in rabbinic literature are rarely convincing when looked at closely.

I can offer no solution to the general question as to whether Psh Chr is Jewish or Christian in origin because the evidence is often contradictory: some passages do seem to be tied up with Jewish exegesis as such others seem to be in contradiction with it.

Rather than trying to go through all the available evidence I shall take one passage of Chr to try and show the kinds of phenomena which appear in our translation.

Psh 1 Chr 29

This passage deals with the offerings and David's thanksgiving prayer for the completion of the Temple. Psh diverges greatly from the MT and in a way which cannot be explained on the basis of textual mistakes but by the translator's desire to up-date his text. Since we shall see that David's prayer has been influenced by the Jewish liturgy, this conference may in fact have some bearing on the general theme of this Congress.

I shall, so to speak, start from the centre and work outwards; that is to say I will first deal with the major additions and changes made by Psh which can in no way be explained as mere textual corruptions but are deliberate insertions made by the translator and then examine some other changes to see if it is possible to ascertain whether or not they are motivated by the same intention as the others. Since a critical edition of the text is not yet available I shall use the Ambrosianus Codex as my basis, using Barnes' critical apparatus and certain printed editions where necessary.

Translation of Chr 29. 10-19: David's Prayer

No attempt at elegance is made in this double translation of Psh and MT. The purpose is to bring out the divergences between the two texts. Words or phrases *in italics* are modified or added by Psh; italics in MT indicate words omitted by Psh.

MT

PSH

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>9. ...and <i>King</i> David also rejoiced with great joy.</p> | <p>9. ...and David also rejoiced with great joy <i>and praised great praises to the Lord.</i>
<i>Praise of David</i></p> |
| <p>10. And David blessed the Lord in the eyes of all the congregation and David said:
Blessed are you oh Lord God of Israel</p> | <p>10. And David blessed the Lord <i>before</i> all the <i>congregations</i> of Israel and David said:
Blessed are you oh Lord God of Israel</p> |

our father
from forever to forever

11. To you oh Lord (is) great-
ness
and strength and splendour
and victory and majesty

for *all* in heaven and earth
to you oh Lord is the
kingdom
and who is exalted as head
of all

12. And riches and honour (are)
from before you
and you have dominion
over all
and in your hand are
strength and might
and *it is in your hand*
to make great and stren-
gthen
all

13. And now oh our God
we thank you and we
praise
the name of your splendour

14. For who am I and who is
my people
*that we have been able to offer
willingly like this? For all is
from you and from your hand
we have given to you*

our father
from forever (pl.) to fore-
ever (pl.)

11. *For* yours is, oh Lord,
strength
and greatness and splendour
and praise and majesty
and honour

for *you have power over* heaven
and earth
yours oh Lord is the kingdom
*and you have power over all
things*

12. *And wisdom and strength and
knowledge*
and riches and honour are
from before you
and you have power over
all things
and *yours is strength and
might*
and
you make great and stren-
gthen
all creatures which you created

13. Now *also* oh Lord our God
we thank you and we praise
the name of your *greatness*

14. For *what* am I and *what* is
my people

*for from all my teachers I
have learnt
for your way of life has
helped us
and you are our hope oh
Lord our God*

15. For

We are strangers before
you

and sojourners as all our
fathers

as a shadow our days
on the earth.
and there is no hope

16. Oh Lord our God

all this abundance which we
have
prepared in order to build
you a house
for the name of your holiness
is of your
hand and all is yours

17. And I know, my God, that
you
examine the heart and that
you desire
uprightness. I, in the up-
rightness
of my heart I have willingly
offered
all this and now I have
seen your

15. For we are likened to the vapour
of a pot
we are strangers before you

small (or: few) in the world
and you had power over our
fathers
at the first

and you commanded them in
which
way they should go in order
to live.

16. And we praise you Oh lord
our God

for you will save us from all
who harm us
and the nations insult us and
say to us:
Where is your God whom you
serve?

17. And I know, my God, that
you
examine the heart and you
desire
faithfulness and I in the faith-
fulness
of my heart I have praised
all this and now also I have
seen your

people who is present her
offer
willingly to you in joy

18. Oh Lord, God of Abraham
Isaac and Israel our fathers

keep this
forever
in the imagination of the
thoughts
of your people

and prepare their heart
to you

19.

To Solomon my son give
a perfect
heart in order to keep your
commandments, your testi-
monies
and to do (them) all

and to build the palace
which I have
prepared

people who is present here
who give praise
to you in great joy, saying

18. Oh Lord, God of Abraham
and Isaac and Israel our
fathers

keep all these things
which you promised us forever
and turn away our heart from
evil
that we might not sin before
you

and prepare our heart
to the fear of you.

19. I, David, replied and said thus:
Oh lord, my God,

to Solomon my son give also
a perfect
heart in order to keep your
Commandments and your
precept
and to do all that you
commanded

and to build the house which
I have

prepared
so that your great name might
be
hallowed and praised in the
world
which you created before those
who fear you.

The Kaddish

By far the most remarkable and original addition made by PshChr in ch. 29 is in v. 19. At the end of the verse Syriac adds:

"So that your great name might be hallowed and praised in the world which you created before those who fear you"

Now this phrase is almost textually the opening clause of a very ancient Jewish prayer in Aramaic going back to Tannaitic times called the Kaddish which crops up at various places in the Jewish liturgy but whose original place was probably in the morning office after the reading of the Law. The prayer in its oldest form in Amram Gaon is as follows:

“May his great name be magnified and glorified in the world which he created according to his will and may his kingdom rule in your life-time and in your days and in the life-time of all the house of Israel speedily and at a near time” (cfr. POOL. xii).

It would seem that the oldest parts of the prayer which exists in varying forms some more developed others less so, were the sanctification of the Name and the request for the coming of the Kingdom. Since the oldest forms of the prayer do not ask for the rebuilding of the Temple it should probably be dated before 70 AD and is probably very ancient. Its original *Sitz im Leben* was probably the *beth ha-midrash* and concluded the rabbinical exposition of Scripture. Its first attestation in the liturgy is in the Palestinian source *Soferim* (21,7) the final redaction of which is quite late (c. 800 AD) but there is no reason to suppose that the prayer was not in use in the offices before that time. Indeed its presence PshChr 29 which as we shall see is given a general liturgical twist might even be an indication for an early use in the Jewish liturgy.

Although the origin of the phrase in PshChr must certainly be the Kaddish the text has been reworked: the two verbs are not placed together at the beginning of the clause, *ythgdl* has been replaced by an almost synonymous verb in Syriac and most important of all, the prayer Psh is in the second person and not in the third as in the Kaddish; the second part of the Kaddish prayer with the request for the coming of the kingdom has not been used by Psh.

The change of *ythgdl* to *nthqdsh* is explainable by the fact that in reality *gdl* is a Hebrew and not an Aramaic root and does not exist in Syriac with the meaning “be great” (in Aramaic and Syriac the root *gdl* means to “twine”). Its presence in the Kaddish is an example of the way in which Jewish Aramaic was

influenced by Hebrew terms. The Psh was therefore obliged to use another verb while for the *qdsh* root there was no problem since the root exists with the same meaning in Aramaic and Syriac.

The use of the 3rd person to address God directly in the Kaddish is characteristic of *beth ha-midrash* prayers and is unknown in prayers of a purely liturgical origin. Indeed the use of "his great name" without saying to whom this refers is to be explained by the fact that the prayer came after a public sermon which talked about God rather than the God. Presumably this highly characteristic feature was changed by Psh because the translator inserted the prayer into a text which was already addressing God in the second person and was therefore obliged to modify the syntax accordingly.

Presumably the "before those who fear you" is meant to qualify "hallowed and glorified" rather than "created". Although this is quite different from the Kaddish text, it could at least be a summing up of the house of Israel as those who fear God. Note that although the expression "the God-fearing," in Hebrew *yr'y yhw'h* and its Syriac equivalent, *dxlwhy mry'* is not exclusively reserved to the Psalms it is at least highly characteristic of them: *dxlyk* (the suffix referring to God) occurs 3 times in Ps 119 and again in Ps 31, 19 (20) and Ps 60, 4 (6). Since the prayer of David has, as we shall see later, been heavily glossed with Psalm verses elsewhere it seems likely that it was the Psalter which was the origin of the addition "those who fear you" in v. 19.

There is no trace in extant Jewish Targum's having added the Kaddish to the text in v. 19, however in v. 11 Tg adds *d-bryth' 'lm 'b-gbwrth'* "for you created the world with strength" which is at least similar terminology.

I think the Psh translator prepared the way for adding the Kaddish by a similar sounding addition in v. 12 where he glosses the MT "to make great and strengthen all things" by "to make great and strengthen all *creatures which you created*" and this latter phrase recalls very closely the "in the world which you created" of the added Kaddish in v. 19.

I mention in passing that as a sign of antiquity *kwl* and *mtwl* are written in *scriptio plena* which is very rare in classical Syriac and only found in very old texts.

It is striking to note that just as the Kaddish was used as a concluding prayer at the end of the public sermon or, in the liturgy, after the reading of the Law or after a prayer of praise, so it is used in Psh to conclude David's prayer. This would seem to indicate that the function of the Kaddish as a closing prayer was still being kept in mind by the translator of Chr when he inserted it in v. 19. Although it is impossible to be sure, I suspect that the liturgical function of closing thanksgiving, rather than the school-house use of closing the sermon, would give a better explanation of its presence here at the end of a hymn of praise. In which case the origin of the Kaddish in Psh would be the Jewish liturgy rather than the *beth ha-midrash*.

The Title

The next phenomenon I would like to examine is the addition of a title by some mss (not A) at the beginning of v. 10. The 9th cent. Buchanan Bible (and also the much less reliable second hand of the Florentinus ms) has a title to 1Chr29, 10-13 "Praise of David": *thshbwaxh' d-dwyd*. The Lee and Walton Polyglot editions have this title as well.

The first thing to note is that the addition of the title may have been prepared or suggested by a gloss which is added immediately beforehand at the end of v.9 "and (David) praised great praises to the Lord" which expands the "rejoiced with great joy" of the MT.

Yet it seems necessary to infer that the presence of a title means that this section was considered to be a literary unit and had some independent use. The most likely one of course would be the liturgy, especially as the term *thshbwaxh'* is used to designate the Scriptural Canticles found in the Syriac offices.

Now 1Chr29, 10-13 is not used in the Syriac liturgy and does not figure among the 9 traditional Canticles as they appear in the mss grouping them together. The only Christian liturgies

where this pericope appears as a Canticle are the Roman and the Mozarabic rites. In the latter it is present in a 9th cent. codex, but there are 38 to choose from—ie. a comprehensive list of almost all Biblical texts which could be used as an “ode”. In the Roman rite 1Chr29 does not appear in the ancient sources although it is present in printed editions of the Gallican rite before the reform of Pius X in 1911 which introduced a number of new canticles for festive days. But these liturgies are too far removed from Syriac tradition to be of much use in explaining the title in Syriac Bible mss.

1 Chr29 is also absent from the apparently traditional *lists* of Scriptural songs or odes given by Origen in his Homily and his Commentary on the Song of Song where he gives an ascending series of ten canticles. Origen got the idea of these lists from Jewish tradition where lists of canticles in chronological sequence are to be found in the Targum to the Song of Songs and in the two versions of the *Mekhilla*. These ancient lists do not contain 1Chr29 either. But then they obey the laws of a particular literary genre which was not trying to pick out all the possible Biblical odes but just ten, a symbolic number.

Nonetheless there is something which points in the direction of an influence of the Jewish rather than the Christian liturgy as a reason for the addition of a title to 1Chr29,10. The passage 1Chr29,10-13 appears as an independent liturgical unit after the *zemiroth* (series of psalms) in the Synagogue morning office, the structure of the immediate vicinity being:

Pass 145-150

1Chr29,10-13 (said standing)

Neh 9,6-11

(“Song of the Levites”, not in Tg Song 1,1)

Ex 14,30-15,18

(“Song of Moses”, present in Tg Song 1,1)

The prayer “Praised be thy name...”

The KADDISH

So that 1Chr29,10-13 is inserted as a self-contained unit between a series of psalms and two other Biblical odes (whether they are present in the Tg Song list or not), after which comes the Kaddish which as we have already seen is appended to the Psh text of 1Chr29,10-19 as a conclusion, just as it is here in the

morning office. The presence of 1Chr29,10ff as a liturgical unit is already attested in the oldest surviving order of service, the Prayer Book of Amram Gaon (9th cent.). In the Bible text David's prayer goes on to v. 19 but the liturgy has cut the text at v. 13 probably because the text is used in a context of hymns of praise whereas the following verse contains deprecatory formulae.

It might well be that the well-attested use of our passage in the Jewish liturgy as opposed to its relative absence from ancient Christian tradition tells in favour of an influence of the former, all the more so since the Kaddish which closely follows in the service has been shown to have influenced Psh Chr29. Against the idea that the title is of Jewish origin is the fact that the oldest complete Bible (A) omits it and the fact that Syriac Bible mss tend to give title (*thshbwxt*h or *clwtha*) to the traditional Syriac liturgical odes which are distinctively Christian (with the exception of Ex 15 and Dt 32 which also appear in the Jewish lists of odes) — that is to say that the reflex of adding titles to the Bible mss to liturgically consecrated texts is well attested in Christian tradition while it is something quite unknown in the Targums for example. I might add that in Syriac Bibles as a whole *thshbwxt*h is used as a general title to the book of Psalms in the mss and the word also appears in the title to the Song of Songs.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the oldest mss of Psh Sm (6h4 and 7a1 in the Peshitta Institute's numbering) give a title to another "hymn of David" 2Sm22,1 *thshbwxt*h' *d-dwyd*. This passage is attested as an "odd" both in the rabbinic lists and in Origen's, but is unknown as such in any Christian liturgy, nor in the Jewish liturgy as far as I know; this is perhaps not surprising since the text is more or less identical to Ps 18. The Eastern and Western Syriac Psalm titles, which are Christian, both have *qwblybwt*h' and not *thshbwxt*h' so that the title in Psh2Sm is independent of the Psalter titles and probably older since it appears in the earliest mss. The fact that 2Sm22 is called *thshbwxt*h' would therefore seem to stem more from exegetical traditions supplied by Canticle lists rather than from liturgical use.

I shall therefore have to leave open the question of the

origin of the title in Psh1Chr29 but at any rate whatever its origin it adds to the "liturgical" style of the translation.

The Scriptural glosses

The next aspect I wish to study is the way in which the text of PshChr has been glossed with phrases taken from Scripture and in particular from the Psalter. Apart from the inherent interest of such a translation technique, it also gives us a point of comparison between the text of PshChr and the rest of the Psh text. We shall see that PshChr sometimes diverges from the Psh of the text it is quoting and using as a gloss and sometimes it follows the Psh very closely.

One of the best and also the most puzzling examples is to be found in v. 14. Apart from the first clause the rest of the MT of Chr is omitted and replaced by three phrases all of which have their origin in the Psalter.

The first is "for from all my teachers I have learnt" which is a quotation in a rather peculiar form of Ps 119,99 *mkl mlmdy hsklty* which in fact means "I have been wiser than all my teachers" and this is how the verse is translated by LXX and Tg. The Syriac curiously has an imperative *cklyny* "make me wiser than all my teachers". So it is quite clear that here PshChr is not dependent on PshPs, nor on LXX or TgPs but has translated Ps 119,99 from the Hebrew in an original way taking *hsklty* to mean "I learnt" (*ylpth*) and understood the *mn* as partative rather than comparative.

Since none of the ancient versions of Ps understood the text in this way, can we find an echo of this interpretation elsewhere? The interpretation of *hsklty mn* as "get understanding from" is to be found in Mishnah *Aboth* 4,1 where we read:

'y zh xkm h-lmd m-kl 'dm sh-n'mr m-kl mlmdy hsklty

"Who is wise? He who learns from all men as it is said: from all my teachers have I gotten understanding (Ps 119,99)"

The use of Ps 119,99 as a proof-text for learning from all men shows that the verse was understood in *Aboth* in the same way as PshChr understood it. The same explanation is quoted in another rabbinic text *Aboth de Rabbi Nathan* (ARN) 23,1 (the A

version) where it is immediately followed by the statement that Moses was the most humble of the humble; we shall see later that this might be significant for the way in which the following verse is translated by PshChr.

The same idea of ps 119, 99's referring to learning from other is to be found in *Midrash Tehillim* 1, 19 where we read "R. Samuel son of Rab Isaac moved (lit. "planted") from one college (of sages) to another in order to establish what is said: from all my teachers have I gotten understanding (Ps 119,99)".

So we can conclude that PshChr's understanding of Ps 119,99 agrees with certain kinds of rabbinic exegetical tradition.

The next phrase of v. 14 is "for your way of life has helped us". First of all a small matter of textual criticism: the printed editions Lee, Mossul and Urmia all have "*drtny* (so Fränkel, 535 "mir geholfen hat") while A quite clearly has "*drtn*. The 1st p.sing. may well be the *lectio facillior* and have been provoked by the first person *ylpth* in the first quotation and by the first phrase of the verse in the MT; the following quotation suggests the plural as does the rest of David's prayer, but since there is no real coherence between the three quotations it is hard to choose between the two readings (Barnes, 28 does not mention the variant). I have adopted the reading of A.

The expression "your way of life" is only to be found in PshPs 16,11 which is the only version to add the possessive pronoun; all the other occurrences of *wrx' d-xy'* (translating '*wrx xyym* or *drk xyym*), for example in Proverbs where the Hebrew expression comes a number of times, never have the possessive suffix in any of the versions or in the MT. Here therefore there can be no doubt that PshChr depends on the specifically Psh version of Psalms. "Has helped us" is not in Ps 16, 11, where the verb is "show me", and has been supplied by PshChr, that is to say the quotation itself has been reworked.

Lee, Walton and Urmia's form "*drtny* is to be found in PshPs 86, 17, but there it is a 2nd. p. and not a 3rd p. fem. form.

The resulting expression in PshChr is somewhat unexpected; normally, at least in Scripture, the idea is that of walking in or learning the way of life as an object, while in PshChr it is the

subject of the verb; it is almost as though the "way of life" is being personified.

The third clause of the gloss reads "and you are our hope oh Lord our God". There is a close agreement of this with the text of Ps 71,5 where the Psh gives a literal translation of the MT as *w-'th hw cbry mry*. PshChr has changed the suffix to a 1st p. pl. to go with the general context of David's prayer and added *'Ihn*. The addition of such titles to God is a frequent habit of PshChr translator, but here it might have been inspired by the fact that the text of the psalm continues with *'Ih* although grammatically it goes with what follows in MT Ps 71,5.

I mention in passing that a phrase of v. 15 in the MT "there is no hope" which is simply omitted by Psh is perhaps the origin of the addition "you are our hope" in v.14. In which case it would be a nice example of "converse translation", a technique to be found in the Targums where an offensive text is rendered by its exact opposite.

We see therefore that this triple gloss which replaces the text of the MT is basically made up of reminiscences of the Psalms. The double use of *mtl d* to introduce the first two quotations gives the impression of a series of texts being run together rather than a coherent unit in itself, as there seems to be no obvious link in meaning between the three parts. The general stylistic effect however is to give a psalnic colouring to David's hymn of praise. Why PshChr left out all but the first clause of the TM is not clear to me.

At any rate the idea of David's having learnt from his teachers and being therefore in the category of the sages seems to betray the same exegesis as is to be found in another gloss concerning his son Solomon in Psh 1 Chr 29, 1 where Psh1 adds that the reason for God's choice of Solomon is that "the boy is wise and intelligent." Like father like son: it could be that the intention of PshChr is to show that the king and his offspring are both sages, the kind of thing that rabbinic literature does with many of the important personalities of the Bible.

Another example of a reworked psalm being used to gloss the text of Chr is in v. 16. Here again Psh only keeps the first clause of the MT and replaces the rest by:

"For you will save us from all who harm us
and the *nations* insult us and *say* to us:
Where is your God whom you serve."

The words that are underlined are to be compared with Ps 115,2 "lest the nations say where is their God" to which PshChr has added "whom you serve" and qualifies "nations" by "all who harm us and insult us". The resulting text is grammatically difficult and "*mm*" interrupts the three participles in such a way as to make me think that "people" is a supplementary gloss clumsily inserted through a secondary influence of Ps 115 on a primary gloss which only had the indefinite participles. AUML all have the same text. Note also that at the beginning of the verse PshChr adds "and we praise you" to "Lord our God", a slight change which again gives a more pronounced hymnic flavour to the text.

Before leaving v. 14, I shall mention a minor similarity between the Psh text and Tg Chr *sub loc*. Both translate *my...* *my* by "what...what"; Psh *mn*; Tg *mh*. Rather than a direct dependence I wonder if it is not rather a question of a more archaic and Aramaising use of *mn* with the meaning "who."

Another linguistic particularity of the gloss in the use of the verb *hr* "to harm" used here in the participle form. It would seem to be characteristic of the translator's vocabulary since he uses it in 1Chr 16,21 whereas the parallel text Ps 105,4 in the Psh has the verb *tlm*; he also uses it again in 2Chr 28,21 in a gloss, ie. in a text where he is not hampered by the constraints of the Biblical text he is translating. This is also true of the gloss here.

Let us now look at the preceding verse in Chr. v. 15. where things are a little harder to unravel. Here we find a quite remarkable addition "we are likened to the vapour of a pot (*Ihg'd-qdr*)" which would seem to be a gloss on "as a shadow out days" but not quite at the same place as the MT.

The metaphor that man's ephemeral nature is like a vapour is indeed to be found quite often in Scripture (especially in the Psalms cfr Ps 144,4) where the MT uses the word *hbl*. Now this word is never translated by the Syriac *Ihg'* except in the Psalter where it occurs six times (29,6.7.12 ; 62,10 ; 94,11 ;

144,4) which would seem to indicate a proximity of vocabulary for the idea between PshChr and PshPs.

However the distinctive expression *Igh d-qdr'* is totally unknown elsewhere in the Syriac Bible. Indeed the only other place where it appears, as far as I can tell, is in the Syriac version of 1 Clement 17,6 where it appears as *Ihg' mn qdr'* (Bensley's ed. *yh*, 24); the Greek text has *atmis apo kuthra s*. In 1 Clem the expression is used as an image for the humility of Moses and is presented as a Scriptural quotation in his mouth. Attempts by scholars to trace the source of the quotation in 1 Clem have so far drawn a blank. The text of 1 Clem is quoted as such by Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata*, iv ch. 17 § 106,4) without adding anything of interest for us, the context being the same as 1 Clem that of a series of examples of lowliness drawn from major OT figures.

It seems unlikely that Psh Chr and 1 Clem are directly dependent one on the other: the people evoked are different, David/Moses, and the context is different as well: in 1Clem it is one of humility, in Psh Chr it is that of man's ephemeral nature. The most probable explanation is that both texts are dependent on a common source, unknown to us, but which would have had the status of "Scripture" since 1 Clem presents the phrase like a Bible quotation and Psh Chr has a tendency to gloss the prayer of David with Biblical expressions and so may also have considered the source of the expressions "vapour of a pot" as Biblical.

Although I stated that there is a difference in context between 1 Clem and Psh Chr, there is a curious coincidence to be found in ARN 23 (f°26b) which I mentioned previously. In this rabbinic text which takes the form of a commentary on the Mishnah tractate *Aboth* we read:

"Ben Zoma said: who is wise? He that learns from all
men,
as it is said: from all my teachers have I got understanding".
Who is the humblest among the humble? He who is
humble like

Moses as it is said: the man Moses was very meek. (Nb 12,3)
The first part is simply a quotation of the Mishnah, ARN's

commentary on it links the meaning of Ps 119,99 with the humility of Moses, that is to say the same context as the use of *Ihg' d-qdr'* in 1 Clem. Schematically we have:

ARN	1 Clem	Psh Chr
a) Ps 119,99		a) Ps 119,99
b) Humility of Moses	b) Humility of Moses	
	=c) <i>Ihg' d-qdr,</i>	c) <i>Ihg' d-qdr'</i>

It is almost as though Psh Chr were combining ARN and 1Clem's source; but this may just be a coincidence.

Another gloss based on a Biblical text, this time the Pentateuch, is to be found in the same v. 15:

*"and you commanded them in which way
they should go in order to live"*

If we compare this with Dt 5, 33 (30), Psh.:

*"in all the way which the Lord your God commanded you,
go (zlw) that you might live"*

we basically have the same elements. Psh Chr however seems closer to TM and TgDt (all versions) which both have an imperfect *thlkw* (*thhlkwnn*) whereas Psh Dt has an imperative; this detail would tell in favour of Psh Chr's having used MT or Tg rather than Psh Dt, but then the text has been reworked anyway so it is hard to be conclusive. The use of the copula *waw* with *nxwn* to mean "in order to" is unknown in classical Syriac and seems to be a sign of a more ancient form of the language and almost a Hebraism (cfr Nöldeke, §339).

We therefore have in the space of three verses no less than five glosses which are of a Scriptural or of an Apocryphal origin (if my guess about v.15 is right). This constitutes a highly original way, as far as I know, of glossing a Biblical text: Scripture used to explain Scripture in the text of its translation, it is certainly something that is utterly uncharacteristic of the Jewish Targums: there Scripture is glossed by phrases or texts taken from the midrashim and not by other passages taken from the Bible. I have often had the impression

that this way of explaining the text of Chr by what seem to be testimonia-like Biblical fragments is one of the general principles of our translator. The nearest example I can think of are certain texts of the Pseudepigraphia of the OT.

Psh Chr and Tg

Another good example in this chapter of a thoroughly un-Jewish way of translating the text is in v.2 where the MT has a long list of precious and semi-precious stones which were offered by David for the construction of the Temple. Psh simply omits the list and replaces it by the general expression "good stones". This is quite unlike the way that Tg or LXX would translate—even if they didn't know what the obscure terms for the stones meant they would find willy nilly a way of translating them, if necessary by simply transliterating the Hebrew, but they would never simply leave them out and replace them by a generic term.

Interestingly Psh adds a term which is absent from the TM: *mrgnyth'* (from the Greek *marganitēs*) which usually means "pearl". Now Tg here, which of course translates all the terms of the list, also uses the same term as Psh to translate *kl 'bn yqrh: kl mrglyth' yqyrth'*. In Aramaic, *mrglyth'* can have both the meaning of "precious stone" as well as "pearl". Although this is also true of the Syriac *mrgnyth'*, the meaning "precious stone" is rare whereas in Aramaic it is very common (cfr Tg 1 Chr 29, 8 where it translates *bnym*). Since it seems unlikely that Psh having omitted all the specific names of the jewels, would then have introduced a particular term, it is probable that in Psh *mrgnyth'* has the general meaning "jewels" as in the Tg. In which case not only would this tend to show an influence of Tg on Psh, despite the different ways of handling the verse, but also another case of Aramaising language.

Although other cases of direct dependence of Psh on TgChr are rare, there are a number of examples of Targumic language in Psh. I shall give one example which occurs in v. 18. Here the MT's "the imagination of the thoughts of the heart" is glossed by Psh as "turn away our heart from evil that we might not sin before you".

First of all, the origin of the gloss: there are two possible explanations. Either Psh understood *ycr* as a verb from the root *cwr* which has a cognate root in Arabic meaning "cause to incline", but this meaning is not attested in Hebrew or Aramaic for the group *cwr/crr/crh*. Or, more likely, Psh was influenced by the fact that in Jewish texts *yeçér* is almost always used with the meaning *ycr h-r* "the evil inclination" to which we may compare the addition by Psh of *bysht*. The word taken in a bad sense would then explain the gloss "turn away" to give a suitable meaning in David's prayer.

In 1 Chr 28,9, where the expression *ycr mæshbwth* appears again, the Psh paraphrases with "all that men think in their mind" which could be taken in a neutral or in a bad sense, but it seems to have preoccupied the translator. Tg1Chr 29,18 translates literally which might tell against the word's being systematically taken in a bad sense, but TgChr is probably a late translation tending to literalism unlike the older Targums. The Psh to the Pentateuch in Gn 6,5 and 8,21 did not seem worried by the term *ycr* and translates it literally. Whereas the Tg glosses since it was precisely these texts which provided the basis for the crystallization of the idea of the *ycr h-r*. In Is 26,3 where MT gives a good sense to *ycr*, the Psh omits the expression which contains it, while Tg replaces *ycr* by *Jbb* "heart".

The expression in the gloss proper to Ps1Chr29,18 which I consider to be a Targumism is *xl' qdm* "to sin before" God instead of a direct accusative. In the Pentateuch Targums (O. TJI, N) the Hebrew *xl' I* is systematically paraphrased by *xly* (or *xwb*) *qdm* when God is the object of the verb in order to avoid the direct association of man's actions with God, something that is characteristic of the Tg and occurs in other expressions like "to pray before" (also to be found in PshChr). A study of PshSm and Kg shows that in general Psh tends to translate *xl' I* literally, but curiously enough in 1 Kg 8 the Syriac has *xl' qdm* for the four occurrences of the verb just like the Tg to the same passage. Now it happens that 1 Kg8 has a parallel in 2C6 where the Psh and the Tg also avoid the use of the direct accusative, paraphrasing with *qdm*.

The use of the reverential circumlocution with *qdm* is more characteristic of the Tg in general than the Psh taken as a whole,

while PshChr uses it systematically to translate *at'I* when God is the object. It is important to note that in our text 1 Chr 29,18 Psh is not translating the MT but is introducing a gloss so that in the translator's own vocabulary he uses the very Targumic expression "to sin before".

The same kind of Targumism is to be found in v.21 where the MT "they sacrificed sacrifices to the Lord" is translated by Psh as "they sacrificed sacrifices *before* the Lord" and "they made holocausts to the lord by "they offered holocausts before the Lord". The Tg has the same paraphrase: not that I think that Psh depends on Tg directly but both have the same kind of mentality in their translation.

Since we are taking a look at v.18, I shall mention that Psh has changed the 3rd person ("your people") to the 1st. p. pl. "us" which could be explained by the desire to give a more liturgical turn to the style of the passage, a tendency we have already noted on the translator's part. I don't think it is really significant here, but there is a long-standing debate in rabbinic literature about a member of the congregation avoiding addressing his fellow congregants as "you" in prayer, personal benedictions excepted, because by doing so he separates himself from the community (cfr Heinemann. 104-111). Some such consideration may have influenced the translator by making David include himself in the request made for all the people.

There is a point of contact between TgChr to this verse and Psh. The latter changes "prepare their heart to you" to "prepare our heart to the fear of you" and Tg has *I-mdxl Iwwthk* "to fear towards you". Both avoid in the same way the direct connection with God.

The Hebrew Vorlage and LXX

Before leaving Psh 1Chr29 I shall make some general remarks. First of all that the Hebrew *Vorlage* used by the translator represents a state of the text prior to that preserved by the MT can be deduced from two omissions.

In v. 22 *shnyth* "second time" is left out by Psh as it is by LXX B text. The word is generally considered to be a gloss in the MT in order to harmonize the passage with the mention

of Solomon's already having been made king in 1 Chr 29,3. The other omission of a gloss proper to MT is to be found at the end of the chapter in v. 30 where Psh has inserted the text of 1 Kg 15,5 to sum up David's reign (this way of inserting passages from Sm and Kg is, by the way, a consistent feature of PshChr). The MT of 1 Kg 15,5 has:

“For David did what was upright in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn from anything which he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.”

Now the last phrase “except in the mater...” is omitted by the LXX prior to Origen's revision and can be considered to be a gloss in the MT. It is to be found in Psh 1Kg 15,5 but it is omitted by Psh 1 Chr 29,30, so that the Hebrew text of 1 Kg used by the translator of Chr was probably a pre-Massoretic type text while PshKg would have used a latter stage of the text. This also shows that Psh Chr is not using PshKg for the insertion.

Further proof that PshChr is not using PshKg is born out by the fact that PshChr does not have the word ‘*Ihh*’ which is added by PshKg to *mry*’ and is characteristic of the text of PshKg. Also the fact PshKg translates the Hebrew *cr* by *cl*’ (which is close to the Tg which has the same verb in Aramic), while PshChr uses “*br*” “to transgress”, a less literal rendering. On the other hand PshChr, PshKg and TgKg all have the characteristic Targumic paraphrase of *b*—“*yng yhw h by qdm mry*’ to avoid the anthropomorphism of the MT. So that here PshChr and PshKg agree with one another in using Targumic language even if there is no direct dependence of one text on another.

The omission of Massoretic glosses both by PshChr and LXX leads us to enquire if there are any other points of contact between PshChr LXX in the passage we are studying: in general in Chr there are very few.

In v. 11 the Psh paraphrases “for all in heaven and earth.” by “and you have power (*shlyt*) over heaven and earth.” Now LXX has *su pantōn en tō ouranō kai epi tēs gēs despozels*. But I think that both versions are trying independently to deal with the anacoluthon in the MT which lacks a verb supplied by both

versions; also Psh does not have an equivalent to *panton* as it omits the *kl* of the MT.

In v. 4. the singular *byth*' agrees with LXX *tou ierou* whereas the MT has the plural *bthym* but this can be explained either as a confusion between *byth* and *bthym* or more probably by the fact that both versions failed to understand *bthym* as "chambers" and though that the word, as elsewhere in this passage, referred to the Temple.

There are no other real agreements between LXX and Psh in ch.29, so this tends to confirm the hypothesis that LXX did not influence the Syriac version of Chr.

The expression *qm b-mlkwh*'

I shall conclude with some remarks about an expression which appears four times in ch. 29. (W, 22,23,26,27). It is *qm b-mlkwh*' (or with the verb in the Aph'el form) which I have translated as "established in the kingdom". In Psh Chr it often translates the simple *w-ymlk* of the MT which elsewhere in the Psh outside Chr is always translated by '*mlk* or '*mlk*. Indeed the expression does not appear at all in the Psh except in Chr. A similar expression is to be found in 1 Sm 24,20 but there it is a mere literal rendering of the Hebrew *w-qmh b-ydk mmlkth* and in the Syriac *mlkth*' is the subject not the indirect object of the verb. We also find '*qymywhy mlk*' in Psh Ez 17, 16 but it is with *mlk* 'not with *mlkwh*'. In books translated from LXX it only appears as a literal translation of *katēstese basileuein* in 1Macc 6, 17 and the use of '*qym* has simply been derived from the greek verb *kathistēmi*.

That *qm b-malkwh*' is characteristic of the translator's own vocabulary and not just when he is translating is shown by the fact that in 2Chr 13,8 it appears in an additional gloss without a Hebrew *Vorlage*. Not only is the expression as a synonym for *mlk* practically absent from the rest of the Psh and from Syriac literature as a whole (Brockelmann, 652b quotes *qm* "*I mlkwh*" in a text I have not yet been able to consult), it is also apparently unknown in Jewish Aramaic or in Hebrew.

If we were able to trace the origin of this seemingly innocuous expression I think we would already be a long way in detecting the provenance of the Syriac translation of Chr.

Conclusion

Lack of time does not allow me to examine with you the many other changes that PshChr 29 introduces into its text. Although some of them may be explained away as mere textual errors, such as a bad exemplar, there can be no doubt that the translator of Chr into Syriac had a highly independent mind and was prepared to rework the text according to his needs: one of his wishes seems to have been to give a more hymnic or liturgical style to his text.

The Problem of the milieu and time of the translation must remain open; some elements are Jewish others not so. Certain linguistic features point to a very ancient translation.

PshChr is an extreme example of an ancient Bible version being a reflexion, albeit mysterious, of the life and times of the community for which the translation was made. Few of the books of the Syriac Bible are slavish translations of the Hebrew text and all are worthy of respect and upkeep as part of the living tradition in the Churches whose Bible it was and is.

Transliteration of Hebrew and Syriac

‘b g d h w z x t y k l m n c’ p c q r sh s th

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NEW BIRTH

Once you have reached the place of tears then you should understand that the mind has left the prison of this world and set its feet on the road towards the New World.

It has begun to breathe the wonderful air which is there. It begins to shed tears.

For now the birth-pangs of the spiritual infant grow strong, since grace, the common mother of us all, makes haste to give birth mystically to the soul, the image of God, into the light of the world to come.

TRUE KNOWLEDGE

Do not rejoice when you grow rich in the knowledge of many things; rather, once what you know is put into practice, then rejoice that it is there with you.

The former kind of knowledge without the latter will gradually leave you, and it can even lead to pride through not being put to use.

When, however, you are diligent in the second kind of knowledge, you will certainly become illumined in the first, without needing any instruction.

The eye of knowledge is experience, and its growth comes from constant labour.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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I. H. Dalmais*

Aramaic Tradition and Inculturation

Evidences of the "Nestorian" Chinese Documents

Je voudrais que cette brève communication soit un hommage au regretté P.D.S. AMALOEPAVADASS qui, depuis la Fondation du NBCLC puis dans le cadre de l'Anjali Ashram de Mysore et par ses innombrables sessions et conférences a oeuvré avec persévérance et courage pour que l'Eglise du Christ manifeste son visage dans les expressions des diverses cultures de l'Inde. Comme il me le disait encore lors de notre dernière rencontre en février 1989: "Totalelement chrétien, totalelement indien" selon la devise qu'il avait reçu du P. Monchanin. Quelle forme devrait prendre ce témoignage chez les "Chrétiens de saint Thomas" héritiers de la culture araméenne qu'ils considèrent à juste titre comme une expression privilégiée de la tradition fidèlement conservée au cours des siècles, est une question qui revêt des exigences nouvelles depuis qu'ils ont été appelés à oeuvrer, selon leur tradition propre à l'annonce de l'Evangile tout au travers du souscontinent indien.

Il n'est peut-être pas sans intérêt, en cette situation nouvelle de se mettre à l'écoute de ceux qui, voici plus de treize siècles, issus de la même tradition araméenne, s'employèrent à un semblable travail d'inculturation dans le cadre des divers courants spirituels qui fleurissaient en Chine au temps de la dynastie des T'ang (7-10) et suscitèrent des Eglises qui, parmi de multiples

* D. I. H. Dalmais o. p. Professor emeritus from the Catholic University of Paris, is a renowned specialist in oriental liturgies.

traverses firent connaître la "Religion de la pure lumière céleste". Oeuvre gigantesque dont seuls quelques témoignages écrits sont parvenus jusqu' à nous. Ils suffisent cependant à nous en révéler la richesse; trop insuffisamment connus malgré les études dont ils ont été l'objet depuis les premières décennies de notre siècle, en particulier les importantes publications du Dr SAEKI de Tokio (1916 et 1937) et la récente publication avec commentaires de P. Peillot de la célèbre stèle de Si-Ngan-Fu (aujourd'hui Sian) gravée en 781 et retrouvée en 1625 (Ed. Fondation Singer-Polignac, Paris 1984). Edition enrichie des notes de J. Dauvillies et A. Guillaumont pour ce qui est des inscriptions syriaques. Je ne m'attacherais pas ici à ce texte fondamental suffisamment connu grâce à ces travaux. Je choisirais plutôt l'un des deux textes retrouvés en 1908 par Paul Peillot dans une grotte de Touen Houang, vaste cache de près de 20.000 manuscrits en une douzaine de langues! Une grande partie d'entre eux se trouvent conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris et, parmi eux deux textes chrétiens: L'un d'entre eux nous fait connaître, sous la dénomination -de "Sutra d'honneur (*Tsuh-ching*) les "Dyptiques" ou "Livre de vie" proclamé au cours de la liturgie (*Qurban*). L'autre, qui, mérite de retenir notre attention, porte un titre dont l'interprétation demeure difficile: c'est incontestablement une *motwa* trinitaire" de la Religion lumineuse d'Occident" (*Ta-ch'in*). Assez arbitrairement Saeki avait proposé en 1915 de voir dans l'expression chinoise "*Wei-meng-to*" une transcription phonétique "*I-mung-dua*" du Syriaque "*muda*" ou *I-mu-da* (umro) c'est à dire du baptême et de considérer ce texte comme une hymne baptismale l'Opinio à laquelle il enonça par la suite'. Il paraît plus sûr d'y voir une transposition chinoise de l'hymne chrétienne traditionnelle du matin "*doxa en hypsistis Theo, Gloria in excelsis Deo*" Il ne semble pas qu'on ait tenté de reconnaître le texte de la *motwa* syriaque qui serait à l'origine de cette transposition. Mais c'est le style même de cette transposition en un vocabulaire et un développement nourris de réminiscences bouddhiques qui fait l'intérêt particulier de ce texte.

II fait partie de tout un ensemble de traductions - ou plutôt de transpositions dues au chorévêque Adam, en chinois Chingching, qui vécut dans la seconde moitié du VIII^e siècle et auquel nous devons en particulier la rédaction de la stèle de Si-Ngan-Fu où son nom figure avec le titre de "Prêtre du monastère Ta-ch'in (occidental) et, dans la partie syriaque" Adam, prêtre et chorév-

èque, Papash du Cinestan." Or nous savons par ailleurs que ce personnage, venu de Perse – c'est à dire d'Asie Centrale –, était un remarquable lettré, au point que, par ordre de l'empereur, il fut associé quelque temps à la commission chargée de traduire des textes bouddhiques. Par la suite, en raison des désaccords qui se manifestaient au sein de la commission l'empereur lui enjoignit de consacrer sa science à la traduction de livres chrétiens. Le peu qui nous est parvenu de cette oeuvre – nous permet d'en saisir l'importance – Elle comportait entre autre une traduction du Psautier, de saint Paul et d'autres textes bibliques. Il aura it été du plus grand intérêt que nous puissions connaître si, pour ce qui est des Ecritures – Saintes, il s'était permis des transpositions comparables à celles dont témoignent notre *matwa* et la stèle de Si-Gnan-Fu. Nous pouvons d'ailleurs constater que, dans les quelques documents conservés et attribués à ce même rédacteur, la transcription des termes les plus spécifiquement chrétiens et engageant à un titre exceptionnel cette spécificité et le caractère irréductible de la foi chrétienne ont fait parfois l'objet de quelques tâtonnements. C'est ainsi que des mots tels que *Aloho* ou *Messiah* ont été transcrits aussi fidèlement que le permet la phonétique des caractères chinois; la désignation du Saint Esprit s'est faite soit à partir du "souffle" ou du "vent" sous la forme de "souffle frais" puis de "souffle pur," il semble qu'on en soit venu à tenter une transposition phonétique de "*Ruha*" de *Kudsha* – par des caractères qui pourraient être prononcés: *Ru-ha nei-gu-sha*. De l'étude de ces variations le Professeur Saeki, auquel nous sommes redevables de ces précisions philologiques, pense pouvoir dégager les conclusions suivantes: L'hymne *motwa* Nestorienne d'adoration de la sainte Trinité "do it avoir été composée par le prêtre Ching-ching quelque temps avant qu'il eut rédigé l'inscription de la stèle aux alentours de 780 et avant qu'il n'eut été influencé par le taoïsme comme il le sera plus tard, à l'époque où furent composés (sans doute vers 786-788) les deux textes retrouvés par les Japonais: "*Le sâtra qui procure le repos mystérieux et la joie*" et "*Le sâtra Nestorien de l'Origine des origines*", de même style que les textes taoïstes contemporains; conséquence peut-être de sa rupture d'avec les milieux de traducteurs bouddhistes qui dut avoir eu lieu en ces années. Par contre une expression comme "Radeau de salut" que nous rencontrons dans l'hymne trinitaire et qui trouve un équivalent sur la stèle de 781

est typiquement bouddhique comme en témoigne les représentations chinoises de Kan-yin, c'est à dire d'Avalôkitês' vara.

II en va de même pour la finale de l'hymne: "Toi, le très saint, le Messie universellement honoré; nous t'adorons, Père miséricordieux, car ta miséricorde est sans borne comme l'océan. Toi qui es le Très-saint, ta douceur est entrée dans la nature du Souffle pur (l'Esprit-Saint), dont la purté est l'enveloppe parfaite de la Loi, au delà de toute pensée" (ou, plus littéralement "au-delà de tout ce qu'il est possible d'imaginer". Mais en fait, c'est tout l'ensemble du texte qui témoigne du souci de paraphraser le texte original pour lui donner une expression plus conforme aux habitudes de la culture chinoise-et en particulier de ses expressions bouddhiques qui avaient, depuis des siècles déjà, opéré de telles transpositions à partir des textes apportés de l'Inde. Ainsi des gloses introduites dans les strophes qui se rapportent à chacune des Personnes trinitaires. Soit, pour le Père: "Toi seul est la perfection de la vertu pure et purifiée au-delà de ce qu'on peut décrire". Ou, pour le Fils: "Nous faisons maintenant appel à ta miséricorde et à ta Grâce, nous soupignons que vienne aussi une Joie mystérieuse illuminer cette partie de notre monde. Messie, tu es le plus grand, le plus saint de tous les êtres universellement honorés tu délivres avec libéralité et tu sauves des âmes innombrables des chagrins de la vie" (formule qui fait inévitablement penser à Amitaba ou à Kwan-yin) est le que confirment les développements qui suivent après l'appel au "miséricordieux Agneau de Dieu": "Grandement, universellement tu prends pitié de ceux qui souffrent; tu ne refuses pas de peiner pour eux" jusqu'aux expressions dont on a déjà signalé le caractère typiquement bouddhique: "Grand maître, nous te prions de vouloir écouter la supplication de tous les peuples, de faire descendre sur eux le radeau du salut afin qu'ils puissent éviter d'être brûlés par le fleuve de feu".

Ce ne sont là que quelques exemples; peut-être pourtant peuvent ils donner une idée de l'importance et de la valeur de l'oeuvre entreprise par le chorévêque Adam et ses collaborateurs au sein de la culture chinoise, comme de sa signification toujours actuelle pour ce qui doit être partout mis en chantier afin que la parole du salut puisse être vraiment proclamée dans toutes les langues et que chacun puisse l'entendre dans les expressions

spécifiques de sa propre culture. N'est-ce pas d'ailleurs ce qui avait été déjà réalisé par les traducteurs, ou plutôt les "targumistes" auxquels nous devons cette oeuvre prodigieuse qu'est la transposition dans le cadre de la culture grecque – et selon son génie propre de la Bible hébraïque. C'est sous cette forme que le message de la première Alliance devait être transmis aux chrétiens et diffusé par eux durant de longs siècles. On a longtemps, aux temps modernes, méconnu en Occident l'importance de la Septante et sa signification. Le grand travail, entrepris à la suggestion du P. Barthelemy (de l'Université de Fribourg) et mis en chantier par Mme Harl et son équipe de la Sorbonne, nous fait découvrir ce que représente de véritablement nouveau – en même temps que fidèle au message originel hébraïque cette Bible Alexandrine. Un travail de même ordre devrait être entrepris pour la "Pschita", ce Targum araméen sans doute en partie réalisé, lui aussi, par des Juifs et adopté d'abord – puis sans doute completé – par les chrétiens de langue araméenne, avant que la version syro-philo-xénienne ne vienne apporter la transcription des éléments spécifiques de la Septante.

Le sens qu'avaient ces chrétiens de Mésopotamie de leur enracinement privilégié dans une tradition sémitique issue, en ligne directe, de la culture hébraïque, n'est sans doute pas étranger à la fidélité avec laquelle cette tradition fut gardée par les "Chrêtiens de Saint Thomas". Sans doute considérèrent-ils que, dans leur propre environnement culturel, si multiforme, une inculturation au plan de l'expression linguistique n'était ni nécessaire ni sans doute possible. C'est en effet l'une des différences du monde chinois, foncièrement monoculturel et du monde multiculturel que fut au long des temps celui de l'Inde. Mais en va-t-il encore de même aujourd'hui? Gardiens et témoins privilégiés de la tradition reçue de l'Apôtre saint Thomas et transmise au cours des siècles en ses expressions araméennes, le, "Chrêtiens de Saint Thomas" sont maintenant appelés à travailler à l'évangélisation dans des cultures étrangères à ces modes d'expression. Ne sont-ils pas requis, au même titre que les évangélisateurs formés au sein d'autres cultures – c'est à dire, en fait, de cultures occidentales modelées par les modes d'expression des chrétientés latines – à chercher quelles formes d'inculturation sont requises, en fidélité à leur tradition propre, sont souhaitables dans l'Inde d'aujourd'hui par cette mission évangélisatrice? Question

redoutable, et je ne puis que la laisser ouverte, souhaitant qu'ils recessissent á mener cette oeuvre bien avec la largeur d'esprit et l'ouverture qui furent celles des évangélisateurs de la Chine des T'ang!



THE CLOTHING OF THE GODHEAD

When I wish to open my mouth and to speak on the exalted theme of humility, I am filled with dread, like someone who is aware that he is about to discourse with his own imperfect words concerning God.

For humility is the robe of the Godhead. The Word who became human clothed himself with humility, and thus spoke with us in our human body.

Everyone who has truly been clothed in humility becomes like him who came down from his exalted place and hid the splendour of his majesty, concealing his glory in lowliness, so that the created world should not be utterly consumed at the sight of him.

Creation could not behold him unless he took part of it to himself and thus conversed with it: only thus was creation able to hear the words of his mouth face to face.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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Morten Moberg*

“The Patriarchal See of Antioch and Seleucia / Ktesiphon: Pattern of a Development that Frightens and Inspires Today”

We have a song in Denmark – about the country and our relationship to our motherland – which says:

“you are our home – and our gateway to the world.”

I think we should use the same headline when describing “Great Antiochia” and the role it has played in the history of the Christian Church throughout the centuries.

After the martyrdom of St. Stephen many Christians came as refugees to Antioch and a big congregation was the result – consisting of both Jewish Christians and converts from paganism. And in Antioch the disciples for the first time were called “Christians” (Acts 11.26). In that city the newly converted Paul was ordained by laying on of hands to the apostolate of the West and sent to Asia Minor, Greece and Rome Italy (Acts 13, 1-3).

The background for the Apostles Council in Jerusalem is a quarrel at Antioch about the acceptance of pagans in the Christian community without circumcision. Peter plays a role as a defender of the gentiles, but the account is somewhat corrected

* Rev. Dr. Morten Moberg, Randers, Denmark, is a scholar in the history of the Churches of Syriac tradition.

in the Epistle to the Galatians – telling about his behaviour at Antioch. (Gal. 2). Here Peter's stay in Antioch is mentioned for the first and only time in NT. The tradition of his connection with Rome – early and unrivalled in tradition – is not mentioned in NT at all.

These facts I only mention to underline the peculiarity, that Antioch and Rome, East and West, make the same claim that the apostle Peter is their founder and first bishop. In addition Antioch calls herself "the Elder cathedra Petri."

If we turn to the East from Antioch it is obvious that the five churches using Syriac in their respective liturgies have their root in their early association with the once undivided patriarchate of Antioch (The Syrian / Orthodox Church, Church of the East, Maronite Church, Syrian Catholics and Chaldean Catholics). Addai going to Edessa went through Antioch and the same St. Thomas must have done on his way to Parthians and further to south of India.

In the West we always speak about the "Great Schism" and are thinking of the iron curtain that went down between Rome and Constantinople in 1054 perhaps another century and another place are more deserving of the sad designation of great and fateful schism: The fifth century, when the Antiochene Unity collapsed.

Let us for a short moment listen to Jacob of Sarug. He was educated at Edessa and became bishop of Batnae in the year 519. He wrote hymns and metrical homilies and his contemporaries gave him the name of honour: "The flute of the Holy Ghost".

In one of his poems: "The fall of the Idols", he tells about the Devil having filled the whole world up with idols and the cities with temples for "Delusion". But then the cross on Golgotha was raised. And the world trembled and the idols began falling to the earth. Satan hurried to see the Crucified and only saw a poor, weak, exhausted man in profound suffering.

Satan tries to encourage himself and his army: Don't be afraid of such a poor creature, crucified and only dressed in

disgrace and shame. Nobody will help him. But Satan grows wiser. The Cross chases him wherever he goes. His gods in Rome are overthrown. He flees to Ephesus. There his goddess has fallen in ruins. Here Simon is building a church, there the disciples of St. John are gathering. From Asia Minor Paul drives him away, on the run he meets Peter, who has destroyed his image in Phrygia. To India he goes, but look, the Masterbuilder of Truth, St Thomas, is building with the measure in his hand of glorious palace. He escapes to Ethiopia, but is forced to go to Egypt. Here he sees St. Luke breaking down the temples and patiently building churches in the land of Pharaoh. In Antioch he must lament, seeing the foundation laid by Simon and at last St. Ignatius drives him away.

Then he turns to Eddessa, but what a sight. A king is building a church. The apostle Addai is guiding the work. King Abgar has laid his crown and works together with him. Then Satan runs away and comes to Babylon, but the tidings of the crucifixion had gone in advance to Chaldea. The people are poking fun at the horoscope and is mocking the lot to be cast. Everywhere Satan has been driven out by the truth: the cross has taken his crown.

But Satan concentrates on his lost power and calls for help from "Brother Delusion" – the father of all idleness, and he sneaks into the heart of men love of gold, Mammon worship, followed by worry and suspiciousness towards all fellowmen. And that idol is honoured among all men over the world.

Thus Jacob of Sarug. The almost overflowing description of the spreading of the Gospel reminds us of St. Justin Martyr and his words from the first half of the second century: There is no place on earth where the crucified is not worshipped.

And really astonishing it was: the apostles in fact went to the uttermost parts of the earth, as we sing in the troparion for Pentecost: From fishermen you made men of wisdom, by sending your Holy Ghost, and through them you got all the earth into your net.

But if the first part of the poem tells the truth, the second part does so no less. Satan has not given up: he is still

working and getting his results. But in addition to the bad things, the idols, which the poem mentions, I see some others which deserve to be referred to: Powerseeking, display of force, empty honour, violence, quarrel-someness, suppression and contempt for fellow beings.

I think of the history of the Antiochean churches, broadly, and in particular of the motive for a good many incidents brought about in the name of God in connection with the disputes and conflicts following the Councils of 431 and 451, which defined the church's teaching upon the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, the Trinity and the Incarnation.

The definitions formulated at the Councils did not pretend to explain the mystery. They excluded certain false ways of speaking and thinking about the mysteries of faith which in any case lie beyond human understanding and language. "The Councils drew a fence around the mystery."

Nestorius from the Antiochene school distinguished so strongly between the humanity and the Godhead in Christ that he seemed in danger of ending not with one person, but with two existing in the same body. The opposite tradition, coming from Alexandria and represented by Cyril, starts from the unity in Christ's person and doesn't speak nearly as much about the humanity of Christ as the Antiochenes.

"Either approach, if pressed too far, could lead to heresy, but the church had need of both in order to form a balanced picture of the whole Christ. *It was a tragedy for Christendom that the two schools, instead of balancing one another, entered into conflict.*"¹

However this may be, Nestorius was excommunicated and deposed from the patriarchal see of Constantinople.

The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church discusses whether Nestorius is orthodox or heterodox. It is obvious that

1. Timothy Ware: The Orthodox Church (Pelican Books A592). Chapter 2: The Church of the seven Councils. (8th edition 1976).

(Now: The Rt Revd Dr. Kallistos Ware, Bishop of Diokleia)

the case is not yet closed. The discussion goes on, but the writer concludes cautiously that Nestorius zeal for upholding the integrity of the two natures... caused him to use "unguarded language" and "the fact that his own friends finally abandoned him supports the view that by trying to defend he actually compromised the Antiochene Christology."

The opposite position can be found in R. Seeberg: *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (quoted from Karl-Heinz Kuhlman: "Some aspects..." in *The Harp* Vol I no. 2/3): "None of the great "Heretics" in the history of doctrine carries this name as unjustly as Nestorius."

It is a fact that Nestorius again and again affirmed the oneness of Christ, but he used to speak of "Sunapheia" rather than of "Euosis" – but is it not one of the many cases just covered by the words of bishop Kallistos: if pressed too far, it can lead to heresy?

The vital issue at Ephesus was the "Theotokos" Nestorius preferred to say "Christotokos" as an epithet more covering his way of thinking.

The Anglican "Committee on the separated Churches of the East" negotiates with Mar Shimun, the Catholicos of the Church of the East, murdered by the Kurdish leader Agha Simco in 1917, about the Creed of the Church and asked very frankly:

"In what sense the church used the term "Mother of Christ", as its technical description of the Blessed Virgin Mary".

The catholicos answered: "The blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of our Lord and God Jesus Christ, in that from the commencement of the conception of The Humanity of our Lord, God the Word, the second person of the holy Trinity was united therewith and became one Christ, one Son, in one person to all eternity".

The Committee on the separated Churches of the East declared:

"This appears to us to satisfy the conditions of orthodoxy and not to fall short of what we ourselves mean when we use the term "Theotokos" in accordance with the doctrines

of the Councils to which we adhere: Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon.”²

The Metropolitan of the Church of the East, Dr. Mar Aprem, Trichur, has defended the orthodoxy of his church in “Nestorian Theology” 1980.³

Nestorius was exiled first to Arabia and later to Egypt, where he died before the Council of Chalcedon. Let him have the last word with a quotation from his book “Liber Heraclidis”, a work that reveals a humble and devoted man: “The goal of my earnest wish is that God may be blessed on earth as in heaven. But as for Nestorius, let him be anathema.”⁴

After the withdrawal of the East Syrians to Edessa and later to Nisibis not many years passed away before the conflict about the two natures of Christ broke out again.

Cyril died in 444 and was succeeded by his archdeacon, Dioscorus. He was still more eager to increase the prestige of his see, than his predecessor. His declared goal was to achieve authority (primacy) over the East, especially over Constantinople, – and he displayed all aspects of the abuse of power including brutality.

His faithful supporter in Constantinople, Eutyches, archimandrite of a monastery in the capital, happened too openly to deny the two natures in Christ saying that before the Incarnation there were two natures, but when the divine and the human blended, only one nature resulted. He used the Greek words.

He had the dubious honour to have formulated unmistakably the formula of Monophysitism. – A textbook example of “unbalanced and exaggerated use of the language”.

The Council of Chalcedon endorsed “the Tome of Leo”. From now on the final definition of orthodoxy in East and West:

“Christ is one person, namely the Word of God, in whom

2. Henry Hill: Light from the East. (Anglican Bookcentre, Toronto, Canada 1988): pp 146 – 147.

3. Metropolitan Dr. Mar Aprem: Nestorian Theology (1980) and The Council of Ephesus of 431 (1978). Mar Narsai Press, Trichur.

4. Aubrey Vine. The Nestorian Churches. (London 1937). p. 34.

are two natures, the Divine and the human, permanently united, though unconfused and unmixed.”⁵

We may note that this formula was accepted by the exiled Nestorius: It was – exactly – what he himself had always believed.

It became more and more difficult for Nestorianism to exist in an empire where Nestorianism was condemned. In the year of 489 the theological school was closed by emperor Zeno and the remnants fled into Persia, where Nisibis was the new centre with a reborn theological school under the leadership of Barsaumas, bishop of Nisibis⁶.

In Persia Christians had been persecuted and many had been martyrs. The migration of the 72 families to Kodungalloor in the first half of the 4th century was due to Persian persecution. “They inhabit our country and share the sentiments of our enemy Caesar” – said king Shapur the Second⁷. The condemnation of Nestorianism in the Roman empire, the closing up of the school at Edessa, the many refugees coming across the border and the dominant personality of Barsaumas modified this situation decisively. Soon Nestorianism and the Christian Church in Persia became synonymous.

It was natural that the bishop of the most important city was given the leadership. It was Ktesiphon, where the Persian king resided. Seleucia/Ktesiphon or in Arabic al-Madain. At a council in Seleucia in 410, convened by the Sasanid emperor, it was decided that the bishop of Seleucia-Ktesiphon should be the primas of the Persian Church and that his title should be Catholicos. He was to be placed between the Patriarch at and the Metropolitans or archbishops. The Church of Persia should give its allegiance to the Patriarch of Antioch not directly, but

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5. The Tome of Leo: Epistula Dogmatica sent by Pope Leo I to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, at the time of the “Robber Council” in 449. Flavian was deposed and killed Eutyches neglected the letter.
 6. Barsaumas (420/90) was a strong defender of Nestorianism. Supported by the Persian King. Metropolitan of Nisibis, trying to make his see independent of Seleucia/Ktesiphon. Founder of the influential theological school of Nisibis.
 7. Shapur II (310/379). First Persian king to persecute Christians. Began a fierce persecution in 379, which continued throughout his reign.

through the bishop of Seleucia-Ktesiphon. The new order was acknowledged by the King. Yazdegerd I, and the Institution of the "millet" was introduced, which means that the Catholicos is the head of his people not only in church matters but in civil matters as well, and responsible for their conduct as a minority in the Persian empire.

In 424 the next step was taken at the synod at Markabta, where it was decided that no ecclesiastical authority should be recognized above the Catholicos: "Easterns shall not complain of their patriarch to the western patriarchs. Every case that can not be settled by him shall await the tribunal of Christ"⁸.

About the same time West syria as a part of the monophysitic movement began to break away from the Church of Constantinople. Many Egyptians and Syrians called Chalcedon the work of the Devil and unrest was the normal state of affairs all over the region. Many attempts were made at reconciling the monophysites to the mainstream of the church. But in vain. The break became final when in the 6th century the monophysites consolidated themselves in three great churches, the Coptic, the Armenian and the West Syrian Churches.

It was the *christological disputes* that brought about the schism in Antioch. Followed by a number of incidents which I feel to some extent are sad comments on the story told by Jacob of Sarug in the poem: The fall of the Idols.

Canon J. A. Douglas, active in the Anglican/Orthodox rapprochement writes about the story, of which we have tried to recall some main features. "As the story is told in our text-books Christian disunion is presented as the evil fruit simply of theological perversity. That story needs to be rewritten...Heresies have rarely done more than provide *battle-flags for national and social quarrels*.

All the historic schisms which have endured have been far more the work of the politician and the statesman than of the theologian. *No one can understand the Orthodox Church today without grasping that fact.*"

8. Aubrey Vine: The Nestorian Churches. (London 1937), p. 48.

Donald Attwater states without hesitation in "The Christian Churches of the East" that "Constantinople is the critical point." It was "the imperial city in which the sacred emperor had in practice a controlling function *the phenomenon of Caesaro-papism which meant the subjection of the church to the state....* The rest of the byzantine world became *conform with Constantinople*, the imperial city.... The *division-line between East and West* should be drawn North to South through Antioch."⁹

It is a fact that the eastern churches never became national or "established" churches as in Byzantium and parts of West, especially the Lutheran churches in Northern Europe. They went through suppression and holocaust, going from catastrophe to catastrophe. The eastern churches have always been minority churches surrounded by alien religions in a "pluralistic" society, if it is possible to use that modern word so often heard in Western-european contexts of today, when the established churches face a new situation where their association with the state rapidly is breaking up and new forms have to be found.

I don't think that the Eastern churches could be the worst advisers and partners for dialogue in that situation.

The great missionary work of the Church of the East and its unbelievable results all over Centralasia, China and India, that made this church larger than the churches of Byzantium and Rome, was carried through without any colonialism or imperialism—on the contrary.

Perhaps modern missiology has something to learn from that old church in the contemporary efforts to formulate a new missionary concept.

We can't refrain from asking why these churches were totally overcome by the surroundings? The superiority was very great, but perhaps the centralisation in Seleucia-Ktesiphon and the exclusion of the vernacular were contributing to the decline?

In the historical outline we have only been concerned with faith in Christ as an intellectual problem and with attempts

9. Donald Attwater: The Christian Churches of the East (Vol. 1). Milwaukee 1946, pp. 13 and 6.

to formulate what is beyond language, in an abstract and conceptual form – without any consideration for the Holy Liturgy. But the universe created by the Holy Liturgy is the one and only place where we can speak truthfully about God and his reality in worship, prayer and thanksgiving.

The Persian bishop Aitalah was present at the Council of Nicaea and accepted the Nicene Creed, but it was a local creed, the Creed of Aphraates, that acquired prominence. Quoting bishop Henry Hill:

“It is unlike the Greek and Roman Creeds. It is first and foremost the revelation of a divine spirit dwelling in human beings and fighting against moral evil – and it is not preeminently philosophical speculation about the nature of divinity.”¹⁰

I think much contemporary ecumenical work turns things upside – down, working solely with the abstract doctrine of the church dogmatically and on a high level – without any interest in the body of Christ.

A renewed occupation with the liturgy, its forms and statements and a new spiritual practice in the church and in the life of the single Christian is of decisive significance. That feeling of tension between Orthodoxy and Orthopraxis I have met very alive in the churches of the Antiochene tradition.

Perhaps a new conception – not in philosophical terms – but based on the evidence of Holy Scripture in worship and prayer – letting mystery be mystery – is what we need. And God knows we have not got a lot of time to spare. The muslims declare that before the millenium, the Middle East will be clean of Christians. We have not got another 1500 years to spend arguing.

The dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox churches is one of the signs that misunderstandings and misinterpretations have been cleared away and the statement from the last meeting in Anba Bishoi Monastery in Egypt is very promising.¹¹

10. Henry Hill: Light from the East (note 2), p. 104; the Creed of Aphraate p. 126.

11. Communique of the Joint Commission. St. Vladimirs Theological Quarterly Vol 43, 1990, no. 1, p. 78 ff.

If the Orthodox Churches are united and a part of the undivided church of Antioch is established, there will be a better hope for the coming approaches between Constantinople, Rome, the churches of the Reformation and to the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. In connection with the Church of the East the Thomas Christians of South India must have a special obligation owing to its peculiar historical development.

We have not spoken about the Uniates at all. They are to be found in India and in the Middle East as well. The position of the Uniates is not an easy one, but their special task in this context must be to form a bridge between two different traditions and contribute to the necessary interpretation of the primacy of Rome and the infallibility of the pope, - never losing the hope that at last all might become one in Christ.



THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

A swimmer dives into the sea naked, in order to find a pearl.

A wise monk journeys through life, stripped of all that he has, to find within himself the pearl, Jesus Christ, and finding him, he no longer seeks to acquire anything else beside him.

(St Isaac of Syria)

THE SCRIPTURES

Do not approach the words of the mysteries contained in the Scriptures without prayer and without asking for God's help. Say, 'Lord, grant that I may receive an awareness of the power that is within them.'

Consider prayer to be the key to the understanding of truth in Scripture.

THE MERCY OF GOD

As a handful of sand thrown into the ocean, so are the sins of all flesh as compared with the mind of God.

Just as a strongly flowing fountain is not blocked up by a handful of earth, so the compassion of the Creator is not overcome by the wickedness of his creatures.

Someone who bears a grudge while he prays is like a person who sows in the sea and expects to reap a harvest.

As the flame of a fire cannot be prevented from ascending upwards, so the prayers of the compassionate cannot be held back from ascending to heaven.

(St Isaac of Syria)

The Mystology of John the Solitary from Apamea

Besides Gregorios of Nyssa, Evagrius Pontikos and Makarios/Symeon of Mesopotamia John the Solitary/Jōhannān ihīdājā, also called John of Apamea, is the most important spiritual father for the development of mysticism in Syrian Christianity. Although he belongs to the West-Syrian tradition his influence is not restricted to this region and transcends all ecclesiastical boundaries. The importance of the writings of this hermit for Syrian spirituality is demonstrated by some collections of manuscripts.¹ Elements of his mystology were even acknowledged in Nestorian circles. In his introduction to the Kephalaia Gnostika of Evagrius, Babai the Great states as his authorities, after Theodoros of Mopsuestia and Evagrius, "John the Solitary from Apamea".² Also such writers on spiritual life as Dadīsō' Qatrājā, Simon/Sem 'ōn of Taibutch, Isaac/Ishaq of Niniveh, Martyrios Sahdōnā, Joseph/Jāusep Hazzājā, John/Jōhannān of Daljātā and Joseph/James Busnājā are more or less dependent on some of his mystical ideas.³ Later monophysitic theologians such as Moses bar Kepha/

* Dr. G. G. Blum, University of Marburg, Germany, is a renowned specialist in Syriac Mysticism.

1. Cf. Arthur Voobus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, A contribution to the History of Culture in the Near East*, III, Louvain 1988 (CSCO 500/Sub 81), 95-97. - All abbreviations are taken from: *Theologische Realencyclopädie. Abkürzungsverzeichnis*, Berlin / New York 1976.
2. Cf. Wilhelm Frankenberg, *Euagrius Ponticus*, Berlin 1912. (AGWG. PH, NS 13,2), ² Nendeln-Liechtenstein / Göttingen 1970, 17.
3. Cf. Robert Beulay, *La lumière sans forme. Introduction à l'étude de la mystique chrétienne syro-orientale*, Chevetogne 1987, 102-116.

Môsē bar Kēpā,, Dionysios bar Salibī and Gregory bar Hebrew Grīgōrios bar 'Ebrājā acknowledge him as first-rank authority.⁴

The crucial question of whether John the Solitary can be identified with the heretic attacked by Philoxenos of Mabbūg and the heresiarch combatted by Theodoros bar Kōnī and finally condemned together with Joseph Ḥazzājā and John of Daljātā by a synod held under the Katholikos Timothy I., (786/787) or whether there are three different persons bearing this name, is of little importance in view of the literary legacy handed down with the sign of the authorship of John of Apamea. There is a collection of writings which must be reckoned as homogenous because it is characterized by the coherency of its thought world and its theological orientation. To these texts belong some letters, a dialogue about the soul and the affections of man, a tract on prayer, three treatises on spiritual topics and conversations with Thomasios and other disciples delivered in letters and treatises.⁵

4. Cf. Voobus, *History III*, 99.

5. There are the following editions and translations of the works of John the Solitary.

Sven Dederig, *Johannes von Lykopolis. Ein Dialog über die Seele und die Affekte des Menschen*, Leiden 1936, – Irene Hausherr, *Jean le Solitaire (Pseudo-Jean de Lycopolis) Dialogue sur l'âme et les passions des hommes traduit du Syriaque sur l'édition de Sven Dederig*, Roma 1939 (OrChrA 120), –

Lors Gosta Rignell, *Briefe von Johannes dem Einsiedler mit kritischen Apparat, Einleitung und Übersetzung*, Lund 1941, the third letter is not translated but only rendered as summary, –

Lors Gosta Rignell, *Drei Traktate von Johannes dem Einsiedler (Johannes von Apamea)*, 1960 (Lunds Universitets Årsskrift NF 54,4), –

Werner Strothmann, *Johannes von Apamea*, Göttingen 1972 (PTS 11) – Rene Lavenant, *Jean d'Apamee: Dialogues et traites. Introduction, traduction et notes*, Paris 1984 (SC 311). These dialogues and treatises translated by Lavenant are edited by Strothmann, *Johannes von Apamea*, –

Sebastian Brock, *John the Solitary. On Prayer: JThS 30* (1979), 84–101.

Mar John the Solitary, *The Epistle on Stillness* (Rignell, *Drei Traktate 3–12*), in: *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian*, translated by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, Massachusetts, 1984, 461–466.

Apart from the introductions to the various editions and translations there are the following investigations on the spirituality of John of Apamea.

Irene Hausherr, *Un grand autour spirituel retrouve: Jean d'Apamee: OrChrP 14* (1948), 3–42 = in: *Id., Etudes de spiritualité orientale*, Roma 1969 (OrChrA 183), 181–216, – Paul Harb, *Doctrine spirituelle de Jean de Solitaire (Jean d'Apamee): ParOr 2* (1971), 225–260, –

There is no doubt that Syriac is the original language of these texts. The age of the earliest manuscripts and their inner evidence point to the fifth century as the time of their origin. Probably John the Solitary wrote his letters and treatises in the years between 430 and 450. His christological terminology can be classified as premonophysitic and congenial to the Alexandrian theology of this period represented by Cyrill. It presupposes the Nestorian crisis of 428 leading to the Council of Ephesos but is not yet touched by the controversies aroused by the Chalcedonian definition of 451.⁶

As for a possible relationship to the preceding types of Christian mysticism no connections can be found to ideas of Gregory of Nyssa as expounded in the treatise "The Life of Moses" and in his interpretation of the Song of Songs and the sixth beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5, 8). Also the hellenistic pattern of Evagrius Pontikos is completely missing in the writings of John the Solitary. There are neither the typical Evagrian three aspects of *praktike*, *physike* and *theologike* nor the distinction between the practical and gnostic life. There are no hints of such fundamental concepts as impassibility/*apatheia* and contemplation/*theoria*. The platonic tripartition of the soul in an intellectual, irascible and concupiscent part is rejected and there are no traces of the evil "thoughts" aroused by demons and their division into eight types. *Although* John conceives the perfection of the spiritual life as knowledge/cognition the basic notion of *ida'tā* is not in the same way attached to the intellect

Bruce Bradley, *Jean le Solitaire (d'Apamee)*: DSp 8 (1974), 764-772. -

A report about the questions of authorship and the suggestions of Hausherr, Un grand auteur and Strothmann, Johannes von Apamea and at last of Rene Lavenant, *Le probleme de Jean d'Apamee*: OrChrP 46 (1980), 367-390 gives Beulay, *La lumiere* 95-97, cf. also Voobus, *History* III, 97-99. - The supposition of Strothmann, Johannes 81-115 seems the most probable: There is only one John of Apamea who must be identified with the heretic attacked by Philoxenos and Theodoros bar Koni and condemned by the synod of 786/87.

6. Cf. Andre de Halleux, *La christologie de Jean le Solitaire*: Museon 94 (1981), 5-36 and id., *Le milieu historique de Jean le Solitaire une hypothese*, in: III. Symposium Syriacum 1980. Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures, Roma 1983 (OrChrA 221), 299-305. - Cf. also the paper of Jouko Martikainen, *Johannes von Apamea und die Entwicklung der syrischen Theologie*, in: IV. Symposium Syriacum 1984. Literary genres in Syriac literature, Roma 1987 (OrChrA 223), 257-263.

as by Evagrius. The thought-world of John the Solitary is absolutely free from any Origenistic framework; – Even an affinity to the Spiritual Homilies of Makarios symeon cannot be clearly discerned.

This is indicated by the complete absence of the central idea of the intellect/haunā. Usually he uses for this term mind/se‘jānā, mad‘ā or spirit/rūaḥ or sense/tar‘itā.

There is no response to the challenge of Messalianism. John does not speak of special experiences of grace and the Holy Ghost particularly in terms of light and the transfiguration of the Lord on the Mount of Tabor. In comparison to the affective mysticism of his Syrian predecessor John of Apamea seems rather sober minded and reserved in view of various kinds of mystical experience.

The thought, world of the solitary of Apamea is mainly drawn from the biblical tradition. He seldom uses sources other than the Scriptures. His special predilection for medical imagery is not unique among Syrian authors. Certainly John is acquainted with Greek philosophy. But notwithstanding his knowledge of Greek authors he dispenses with any philosophical speculations and scientific arguments. Although he sometimes uses terminology of Greek origin as for example “movements of the soul” and the distinction between “word” and “voice”, his style and thought-pattern is thoroughly Semitic. Evidently he is rooted deeply in the old Syrian spirituality and is not at all influenced by the hellenistic intellectual approach to mysticism. At his time the ascetic and mystical terminology and conception of Evagrius has not yet gained its dominant influence in Syriac Christianity.

The far reaching effect of John’s mystological ideas is all the more astonishing as this hermit is primarily not an ascetic writer but a charismatic teacher and counsellor who prompted people to visit and write him in order to get advice and inspiration for their own spiritual path. In his conversations he addressed various questions as for example the economy of salvation, the creation of the body for a final transformation and the everlasting life. But apart from the variety of such topics it is always his ultimate concern to reveal to his disciples the future hope and the knowledge of the world to come which already now transforms man to a new life.

John the Solitary represents a spirituality of mystical experience and Christian hope. The source of this hope and experience is the sacrament of baptism; it moves us, he says,

“to advance in the cognition of the other world until the time comes to enter it”.

By this sacrament the door is opened for a spiritual progress.

“After baptism we are in the new life but we are not yet perfected in the cognition and in the future spirituality”.⁷

Already now this knowledge of the world to come begins in a mystical way.

“As a child leaves the womb of the mother and perceives the earthly light without reflection/sukālā, so man rising with all powers of his soul above the sphere of visibility perceives the hidden light of the new world with a sensation of verity although he cannot comprehend with his brain the future mystery”.⁸

There is a threefold access to this mystical cognition. John distinguishes between the corporal stage/meśūhtā de pagrānūtā and the psychical stage/me sūhtā de napsanūtā and the spiritual stage/meśūhtā de rūhānūtā. These stages do not refer to objective ontological categories in the way of the Platonic tripartition of the soul, the spirit and the body. They are used, however in a modal sense as functions of a principle which determines the inner orientation of the whole life, the way to think, to feel and to act which is governed by the flesh or the Holy Spirit. John follows here the fundamental distinction of St. Paul which overlaps the scheme of the three stages. The flesh, the corporal stage, is the human nature under the impact of sin while the spiritual stage is the sphere of the divine Spirit affecting the human soul and uniting man with God. By the operation of this Spirit man becomes his temple and is totally transformed until his resurrection. Just as for the apostle the psychical is not completely different from the corporal because both are total aspects of the human nature, the corporal as well as the psychical is influenced by the

7. Rignell, Briefe 9 and 42 and 27 ida'ta is always rendered with cognition or knowledge sometimes also with cognisance.

8. Rignell, Briefe 7

flesh. Therefore the purity from all passions belongs only to the spiritual stage, when the soul turns to God and becomes limpid to receive the divine light. In the "Dialogue on the Soul" John describes these three stages in the following way.

"The difference between the psychical and pneumatical stage is the same as between the psychical and coaporal. Corporeity is no other nature apart from the body nor is the pneumatical another nature apart from the soul. Only when man inclines to the desires of the body and realizes in his deeds the passions of his instincts he is on the stage of corporeity. On the contrary when he turns away from the body and realizes by virtuous actions the inward activity of the soul, then he is called psychic because he turns by his actions to the soul as he is called corporal when by his works he turns to the body. The nature of the soul, however is spiritual, and the order of her nature does not exist in the performance of deeds but in the cognition of the Spirit. By her cognition man rises above the performance of virtuous deeds. Then he is no more on the psychical but on the pneumatic stage because he has turned to the cognition of the nature of his soul which is spiritual. She is called animal because she is clad by a body and moved by the feelings of the same body"⁹.

Only by her connection with the body which is by nature exposed to disturbances the soul being originally limpid is drawn to the inclinations of sinful thoughts. Therefore man indulges in the passions of his corporal nature and renounces any ascetic endeavours. In consequence man becomes incapable of true cognition.

"To the extent that man is carnal he does not feel the fear of judgement and not care of the wisdom of doctrine. When he entreats God in his prayer this is only possible by means of his concentrated mind re'jānā. By the thoughts and habits he is accustomed to disturb his sense tar'itā. As for God he imagines him in the image of man"¹⁰.

On the next stage the rude affections of the body are subdued, but the passions of the soul are not yet overcome. Therefore the

9. Dederer, Dialog 66,3-18

10. Dederer, ibd 14,6-10

spirit of penitence is dominant for this state being a continuous process of purification. In comparison with the spiritual stage it is still characterized in a negative way.

“The virtuous behaviour of the exterior man consists of not indulging in debauches, drunkenness, maledictions, eruptions of anger and concupiscence of the flesh but in praising God with the voice of his mouth and in a similar manner. If he is only engaged in these things he is on the stage of the visible man serving the universal ruler in the order of servitude and in the manner of mercenary working for pay. This is the order of conduct which calls the apostle the psychical man who cannot receive spiritual things, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are judged of spiritually (I Cor 2, 14)”.¹¹

There are some indications of the progress of inner change which are not only referring to the negative side of development.

“The tears of the psychic during prayer are caused by the fear of God’s judgement, by the consciousness of sins, by the remembrance of the benefits of God, by the meditation of death and the promises of the things to come...”¹²

But prayer is not yet pure nor continuous. His soul being still in a state of movements of distractions and the reflections of knowledge the psychic is unable to concentrate himself on God.

“According to his state the psychic loves true doctrine. But only by way of violent struggle does he succeed in concenting his spirit on prayer. Sometimes the devotion of his spirit does not last long, not even a moment. Why? Hear! These things happen in him during prayer because his soul is in the movement of distractions or in the reflections of knowledge. He does not know how to look with concentration on God because his spirit hurries from one phantom to another having not yet reached a higher stage than the psychical which contemplates God in a manner superior to the spirit of man”¹³.

11. Dederling, ibd. 8,11-20

12. Dederling, ibd. 16,11-15

13. Dederling, ibd. 14,12-20

As for this contemplation the psychic is still lacking the essential experience.

“Because his whole wisdom comes from instruction and from doctrine and all his knowledge depends on words he does not advance by spiritual revelations which are ineffable”¹⁴.

The psychic is on the way of transition from purity, the increasing conquest of the entanglements of the body, to the limpidity of the soul, described in the following way.

“When the soul is on the height of feeling God *renjā d’ālahā* she is clean from all disturbances of ugly thoughts. By the sublimity of feeling God the body is subdued by her force. Because all feeling of the sense/*tar’itā* is of corporal manner the soul is subjected to the body. But when man begins to feel spiritually the spiritual thoughts force the body to submit to the soul”¹⁵.

Questioned for the beginning of the life of the inward new man John expounds the relationship between purity and limpidity.

“After the renunciation of the love of money it is necessary that he gets rid of the passion of vainglory. Then he is apt to be in the virtue of the spirit: in humility, in patience, in stillness and in the clearness of the spirit, in the joy of his hope, in the vigilance of his noble care, in the perfect love of God and men, virtues by which he will attain the purity/*dakjūtā* of the soul which is the beginning of the conduct destined by God for men in this life. For all commandments lead men to the limpidity/*sapjūtā* of the soul”¹⁶.

John states clearly: Purity is only the beginning of the conduct of the new man: its perfection is the limpidity of the soul which enables him to perceive the mysteries of the new world¹⁷ and unifies the spirit with God in knowledge of his mysteries¹⁸. Thi-

14. Dederling, *ibd.* 67

15. Rignell, *Briefe* 66-67

16. Rignell, *ibd.* 56,7 sq

17. Dederling, *Dialog* 55,7 sq

18. Dederling, *ibd.* 64,8-9

aim is attained not by mere human efforts but finally by grace effecting a supernatural kind of cognition.

“By revelation the soul is delivered from thought which are engaged in corporal images and forms. This is the new cognition of man granted in the new life. With the change of all human appearances their cognition, too, is changed”¹⁹.

All earlier forms of knowledge are superseded and left behind.

“Because the pneumatic is above all corporal thoughts there is no moment in which his spirit does not move in the wisdom being in God”²⁰.

With the limpidity of the soul the stage of perfection is reached.

“When he has accomplished all struggle and subdued all bad passions and confirmed himself in the purity of spirit he leaves behind the whole conduct imposed on him by God in this life. Now he ascends from the limpidity of the soul to the conduct of new man. Now he is no more a slave being obligated to the law but the beloved son who is delivered from all in this world (Gal 4,7). And having communion with God by knowledge he begins to be introduced to God’s mystery. Then God communicates with him by the revelation of mysteries and he grows in pneumatic matters”²¹.

The probation and verification of every concept of different mystical stages is the experience of prayer. John instructs his disciples in a special tract on this subject. Firstly he deals with vocal prayer which he wants to intensify. Therefore he warns of the mere recitation of words:

“Let your very self become these words! For there is no advantage in the reciting unless the word actually becomes embodied in you and becomes a deed...”²²

which means that everybody who prays should be a witness to the world as a man of God. John distinguishes the vocal prayer of the just and the silent prayer by which the just can become

19. Rignell, Briefe 62, 4-12

20. Dederling, Dialog 14,21-22

21. Dederling, ibd. 6, 25-7,5

22. On prayer 7/Brock 91

spiritual. In contrast to the prayer of words he also speaks of spiritual prayer because He to whom the movements of the soul are directed is Spirit. Neither learning nor the repetition of mere words nor a well composed speech is adequate for Him. The scriptural reference of this distinction is the saying of Jesus about the "worship in spirit and truth" (Joh 4,21.23) and the Pauline remark: "I will pray in spirit and pray in my mind" (I Cor 14,15). When prayer becomes more interior than the tongue and deeper than all speech the person praying enters the region of the angels and spiritual beings and joins their Trishagion without words. But thereby the exterior manner of worship is not at all superseded; it remains an indispensable requisite for its interiorized way. This comprises fasting, psalmody, vigils, abstinence, the constant remembrance of God and the attitude of humility. If somebody does not succeed in reaching the second stage John admonishes:

Remain where you are and sing to God using the voice and the tongue in love and awe.²³

But the tongue of the "hidden man" and the "interior tongue of the mind/mad'ā" longs for absolute stillness. John indicates five different kinds of such stillness. There is the silence of the tongue, the silence of the whole body, the silence of the soul and the silence of the mind. But the fulfilment of true prayer is:

"the silence šetqā of the spirit when the mind ceases even from stirrings caused by created beings and all its movements are stirred solely by Being which is nothing other than the amazement/tehrā of silence surrounding it".²⁴

When John identifies in this context God with silence²⁵ neither the Valentinian Gnosis nor the philosophy of Neoplatonism is the source of this idea. It stems, however, from the conception of incarnation in terms of the Word going forth from silence and putting on the body as the word puts on the voice. In his letter addressed to Eutropios and Eusebios John deals with this topic at some length. Quoting Ignatios:

23. ibd. 6/Brock 91

24. ibd. 5/Brock 91

25. ibd. 4/Brock 90: "For God is silence, and in silence is he sung by means of that psalmody which is worthy of Him."

“If you will be silent of me I shall be a word of God, but if you love my flesh I shall be a voice”

(Ign Rom 2, 1)²⁶ he expounds the distinction between the “world of the word/ *meltā*” as the spiritual realm and the “world of the voice/ *qalā*” as the physical region. Like Ignatios he expresses his deep yearning:

“How long shall I be in the world of voice and not in the world of word! In this world all that is visible is voice and perhaps expressed by voice. On the contrary the invisible world is no voice, for the voice is incapable of expressing its mystery. How long shall I be voice and not word! When shall I leave the world of voice to move no more in the things proclaimed by voice? When shall I be word which is the perfection of all hidden things? And when shall I rise to the stage of stillness, which neither voice nor word can reach? Indeed, when the soul attains stillness she is diverted of all earthly matters and moves in the invisible things and becomes dignified of revelation which her natural senses are not able to express with the voice of the word”.²⁷

Undoubtedly we can infer from these sentences that John has experienced this stillness beyond voice and word which is nothing other than the pure prayer of Evagrius and the non-prayer of Isaac of Niniveh. He rather seldom speaks as in his tract On Prayer (cf. *supra*) of a mystical rapture using the Syriac terms for this experience.

“As for the tears of the pneumatic man they are caused by the amazement/*tehrā* before God’s majesty and the astonishment/*temhā* about the depth of his wisdom and the glory of the coming world”.²⁸

In some other utterances about the stage of spirituality there is a remarkable christological and eschatological reservation. The real birth of the new man only happens above limpidity. Then the spiritual conduct begins.

26. Rignell, Briefe 90

27. Rignell, Briefe, 118, 14-23. – Strothmann, Johannes von Apamea 68-71 deals with the christological sense of these metaphors of word and voice.

28. Dederig, Dialog- 16, 21-24

"But there is no conduct of anybody in such a state of spirit which develops in the wisdom of God. Because there is nobody who is elevated to the authenticity of the pneumatic knowledge there is nobody who is in the state of perfection, until he is in this world a perfect man. Only our Lord Jesus Christ is this mystery in person because he alone is the authentic truth."²⁹

With a similar reserve he tries to define the spiritual mode of the life of the new man.

"This conduct is called pneumatic, not because it is here below perfect in the Spirit, for this is granted to nobody outside of the new world. But it is called pneumatic because it is inspired by a knowledge superior to the psychical order constituted in the body. For since the creation of the world nobody except our Lord Jesus Christ has, strictly, speaking lived in the Spirit."³⁰

The last perfection completely depends on Christ and the final consummation in his eternal fulness. Therefore all spirituality remains in the mode of hope expecting its fulfilment.

"Jesus Christ has been elevated from this being to the Father of life and all things of which we shall partake the Father has revealed in him beforehand. He is the symbol / nīšā of the new world that we may see and perceive in his person the greatness of our hope."³¹

But there is also an aspect of realized eschatology. The life of the new world now already begins with its joy and freedom

"when man beholds in his soul the beauty of the mysteries of God."³²

Now already resurrection happens. This is the experience of the mystic beyond the state of limpidity:

"Arrived at the peace of love his soul exults at the end of the secret war, now it is as the conduct after resurrection."³³

29. Dederling, *ibd.* 64,15-22

30. Dederling, *ibd.* 60,23-61,2

31. Rignell, *Briefe* 29

32. Rignell, *Briefe* 61

33. Rignell, *Briefe* 81

"And by stillness the mind is set free from the vexation of the turmoil that continually assails it. A man becomes collected within himself and turns away from the distraction that lies outside of him. He returns from the captivity whereby he was forcibly carried off. Then little by little he begins to be enlightened and to perceive the good that lies in his own nature. Thus he is formed in the image of his Maker and he is made to resemble His beauty. The light of life dawns upon him; he sees his God; he discerns his God; he discerns his Creator and rejoices over his Father. He is resurrected from the dead; he arises from the tomb; he returns from captivity he is at rest from griefs; he is liberated from darkness and saved from the passions."³⁴

Such ultimate illumination is characterized as a higher form of knowledge which is identical with vision.

"The perfection of the truth that is fulfilled in the knowledge of the Divinity is distinguished by knowledge through the perception of perfect wisdom. This is the 'full stature' and the 'light of knowledge': knowledge which is the vision of Him Who promised through prophecy that He would appear to those who love Him and keep His commandments."³⁵

In one of his letters John tries to circumscribe the perfection of true knowledge as life in which there are no thoughts without sensual perception and the quality of real being. The true oneness appears in the new man who is no more split up in the two fold thought of the soul and the body because he lives in a perfect unity. He no longer lives in the dualism of a material and spiritual world. Living in unity he has only one cognition.³⁶ In view of the relationship between body and soul and the cognitive partition of the soul from the mere corporeal way of perception he argues in his discourses with Thomasios in the following way.

34. Rignell, Traktate 7; An Epistle on Stillness 463.

35. Rignell, Traktate 3; An Epistle on Stillness 467.

36. Rignell, Briefe 30

"Being within the body you can be outside the body. Although the body still moves in the world man can be in his mind re'jānā outside of the world. As our Lord said to his disciples: You are not of the world (Joh 15,19) in order to teach them that their corporiety but not their sense is of this world. The soul being enclosed by her conduct in the body is not free from the old man. If somebody perceives corporally, he is still enclosed in the body of the old man... (here follows a detailed comparison of this situation with a child in the womb of the mother)... Thus the inner man, namely the nature of the soul, still being enclosed in the body and separated from it by his cognition, although he possesses all perceptive faculties as understanding, cognition etc. he cannot use his organs in the body until he has come out of the womb of the mother, the body into his spiritual world. As long the soul is still in the body the organs of her perception are inactive although they move by divine revelations in the spiritual world. As long as she is enclosed in the body she moves as the body for she takes all that she perceives of spiritual images as corporal images. But when she has come entirely out of the body in the spiritual world her perception is no more tied up with the body. Then the spiritual organs of perception begin to be active in the realm of spirituality. There she is no more limited by the prison of the body. For the body, too, is transformed by his resurrection, to be like the soul in one spiritual oneness / iḥ!dajūtā. Then there is no more a corporal and spiritual man."³⁷

If these mystological insights are applied to the history of salvation two fundamentally different kinds of revelations and ways of knowledge can be distinguished in the old and new dispensation. This is expounded by John of Apamea in a further dialogue.

"As in this world our sight can only see the visible in the world to come the hidden is known without form and mediation in a hidden mind/re'jānā. All that is visible to the corporal eyes is visible as the body. What however is

37. Strothmann, Johannes von Apamea, 1. Discourse 8, 206-10, 245

known spiritually by revelations before our spirit/ruah is known spiritually as the Spirit. This economy is effective in this world all the time that God may be known by men. It consists of visions in corporal form that men can understand his secret operation by all that they see with their eyes. Because this economy in the corporal world consists of corporal promises the visions, too, are corporal... (some Old Testament revelations and visions are now enumerated)... But when the other spiritual economy appeared by the only begotten Son the revelations became spiritual and the visions were no longer compound. The ineffable vision of Paul was not of the economy which informs men about the one God, but it was of that hidden economy in the hidden world in which God speaks without any sound and shows his visions without shape and colour... In the new world the mysteries of God are not known by the saints by means of what is between him and them, as I have said, because there is no image by which he could reveal himself and no shapes and colours by which he could become visible to them. But according to their faculties it is revealed to them to know him really without mediation. This, my beloved, is known by experience... The soul which deserves to be exalted about the corporal cannot approach God by musing or strenuous inquiring but only by her limpidity without any malice. The eye does not see the revelation of God for men. But the organs of perception of the soul strengthened by divine power can know the mysteries of the world to come".³⁸

The distinction between the way of cognition in the creation and the new world can also be described in this way.

"Because God revealed himself to the saints in the image of earthly elements and therefore they could see him with their eyes all cognitions speak of wisdom in forms of the world. They do not proclaim the mystery of his wisdom, but only show that He is. Neither the hints nor the compound appearances of the world can manifest the mystery of the cognition of God... When God is recognized in a new vision, here unknown to us, in the new world,

38. Strothmann, *ibid.*, 6. Discourse 73, 104-76, 170

all tongues will be silent and all outspoken hints will cease and in a new cognition the splendid mystery of his knowledge will be revealed in infinity in the world to come".³⁹

This new vision and eschatological cognition is not confined to the new world, it can be experienced by the faithful in his earthly life.

"Of what avail is all trouble and pain of doctrine? What do I profit of the mysteries of many wisdoms, if I am in them without hope? But when I turned to Christ by faith and my mind became ardent in love to him and the light of hope arose in me, I recognized myself and I saw that there is in me something apart from flesh and blood living by the knowledge of itself... who is in Christ is not subdued to the end, death does not rule over him. By his great mercy he has gathered my senses which roamed about outside myself. He unified my soul being outside of myself dispersed and separated from him, and thus he made us one body of knowledge...".⁴⁰

Faith, love and the light of hope lead man to self-recognition, the discovery of inner knowledge and the unification of his soul. But what is the role of Christ in this spiritual experience? In a letter Thomasios writes a hymn of John referring to the origin of mystical knowledge:

"Christ is the place of rest for everybody, and without him you cannot find rest, for the sense of the seeking is resting in him".⁴¹

In the perspective of the history of salvation John reproduces an important idea of Athanasios' treatise about the incarnation where the essence of sin is seen in the loss of inner knowledge.⁴² Only living and moving in corporal perceptions the soul died and man became ignorant of the divine operation hidden in him as the soul in all his members. Therefore the Word of God must become visible. He took himself a body and lived as man

39. Strothmann, *ibid.*, 2. Discourse 14,25-47 - *ida'ta* is either translated with Cognition or knowledge

40. Strothmann *ibid.*, 2. Letter 92, 50-93,3

41. Strothmann, *ibid.*, 2. Letter 91, 21-23

42. Athanasius, *Contra Gentes* and *De Incarnatione*, edited and translated by Robert W. Thomson, Oxford 1971, cap. 11 and 14; Thomson 159 and 169.

among men to detect the error of their soul and to lead them to the knowledge of the Father. In this respect also the crucifixion has a redemptive power. John expresses this like in the following way:

“By the sight of the cross he teaches us about our inward man. Because we did not comprehend how much our inner organs of perception were tied and bound by ugly passions and pernicious desires and are no more capable to show their faculty in cognition and good conduct he revealed and showed us in his person what is hidden in us. When we see Christ tied on the cross we shall learn that the nature of the soul created excellently and magnificently is secretly bound on the cross as our Lord visibly that knowing this we regret for the ties of the soul and endeavour to get rid of all carnal thought... Just as he crucified his soul after the healing of all corporal weaknesses man can crucify his re’jānā in Christ after the healing of all passions so that he dies to all and only lives in Christ”.⁴³

The goal of the incarnation of the Word of God is the liberation from all ignorance.

“The (now) liberated had lost the light of their cognition by which they could see and understand their Lord and creator. They only lived by corporal impulses because they did not perceive anything other than flesh and blood. Therefore He who is God and Lord, descended into their region that they could comprehend and understand their Lord and God and redeemer. He humbled himself, bowed below to us, humiliated himself, descended, took off cloth, revealed himself...”.⁴⁴

Thus it is evident that John of Apamea integrated an important aspect of the Athanasian concept of salvation in his own eschatological mystology.

In spite of this orthodox teaching about the mission of Christ and the central role of baptism in his mystology there

43. Strothmann, Johannes von Apamea, 2. Treatise 119, 164–120, 184

44. Strothmann, ibd., 2. Treatise 124, 294–306

are some elements in the thought world of John the Solitary which do not conform to institutional Christianity and the traditional way of asceticism. Evidently it is along the line of the old Syrian tendency of spiritualization that he puts the question in one of his letters:

“What shall we say about the many who think that they reach perfection through the privation from possessions?”⁴⁵ Or in his Dialogue on the Soul he critically states: “The love of God will be attained not through bodily, ascetic exercises, but through the understanding of his secrets”.⁴⁶

He even openly denies that mystical knowledge can be reached on the usual monastic way.

“Stupid people believe to attain knowledge through monk’s scheme and scriptural reading”.⁴⁷ Later on he even doubts the necessity of the visible church. “The true church does not consist of those who assemble in rooms or meetings. It is rather the true knowledge in which the believers delight”.⁴⁸

The same reserve is expressed in one of his letters.

“Instead of assembling in a church we are dignified by being the house-mates of God having received his Spirit. Instead of the light of the lamps we are dignified by the light of knowledge. Instead of the bread of the body and the chalice of his blood we are dignified by his communion in his eternal kingdom”.⁴⁹

The gist of these critical thoughts is not so much a scepticism towards the role of the services and sacraments of the church but the anticipation of the eschatological fulfilment which leads the faithful to perfect freedom.

45. Rignell, Briefe 64

46. Dederling-, Dialog 19

47. Dederling Dialog 77

48. Dederling Dialog 88, 20-22

49. Rignell, Briefe 38, 22-29

"He is not obliged to observe commandments. Thus he resembles God above whom no law nor commandment exists because his kingdom is without end".⁵⁰

In this eschatological perspective also the question of orthodoxy and heresy becomes relative.

"It is the strength of the soul that does not resent heretical opinions and does not hate the heresies; moreover if the soul hates them, then he is weak".⁵¹

It was just this attitude of eschatological relativity which was misunderstood by ecclesiastical theologians and induced Philoxenos of Mabbūg and Theodoros bar Kōnī and later Timothy I to charge John the Solitary with heresy. But no mistrust and condemnation could seriously impede his deep influence on the mysticism of Syrian Christianity.



50. Rignell, Briefe 17

51. Dederling, Dialog 91

LOVE FROM GOD

Love which stems from created things is like a small lamp whose light is sustained by being fed with olive-oil.

Again, it is like a river fed by rainfall; once the supply that feeds it fails, the surge of its flow abates.

But love whose cause is God is like a spring welling up from the depths: its flow never abates, for God alone is that spring of love whose supply never fails.

PERFECT LOVE

Abba Agathon, who was more experienced than all the solitaries of his time, was a man who loved and honoured stillness and silence more than anyone else.

He once went to a festival in order to sell his handiwork; there he found a stranger lying sick in the street, so he rented a house and stayed with him, working with his own hands, spending what he earned on the man and on paying the rent of the house. He served the sick man thus for six months, until he recovered.

It is said that Abba Agathon used to say, 'I should like to find a leper, give him my body and take his in exchange.' Here we have perfect love.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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David Tripp*

John and Charles Wesley's "Hymns on the Lord's Supper" (1745) : A Western Counterpart to the Kussape of the Syro - Malabar "Raza"

The eucharistic hymns of the Wesley brothers, first published in 1745,¹ have repeatedly proved a rich mine of evidence for history of theology and also a potent source, in themselves, of doctrinal, spiritual and liturgical renewal.² As this paper is addressed to liturgical scholars assembled in India, and will attempt to place the hymns side by side with a liturgical tradition represented for centuries past in India, it is perhaps apt to note at once that at least one of the abridged editions of these hymns appeared in India, published in Madras in 1941: *The Lord's Table*, edited by an anonymous Anglican, W. H. W.

* Rev. Dr. David Tripp, from U. S. A. is a scholar in comparative liturgy.

1. Charles Wesley (1709-1788) was the principal poet, while John Wesley (1703-1791) was the expositor and editor rather than the poet. In this and other publications, where the two brothers' names appear together, whoever the immediate author was, both of them accepted joint responsibility for the whole published text.
2. See especially Gosser (1988), Rattenbury (1948) and Whaling (1981); also R. Denny Umlin, *John Wesley's Place in Church History* (London, Rivington's 1870) 201-15, C. Gore, *The Body of Christ*, 195; B. J. Kidd *The Later Medieval Doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice* (London, SPCK 1898) 94.

After a brief description of the hymns, I shall set out to make a modest contribution to the interpretation of them and to the evaluation of their place in liturgical history, by means of a tentative presentation of them as one Western counterpart to the kussâpê prayers of East Syrian tradition. These prayers, because they are generally agreed to be comparatively late additions to the main text of the *Qurbana*, have usually for that reason been ignored by Western liturgists, whose first concern has been to identify the oldest recoverable strata, in quest for what is original and (as we tend to assume) therefore most authentic. However, every stage in Christian History is part of the history of all Christians, and the liturgy as celebrated in any generation, early or late, has a uniform claim upon our scientific attention. As Dr Spinks (1982/1983) has also cogently shown, the kussâpê prayers, even if we feel obliged to criticize them, convey a wealth of serious devotional and moral reflection that must be treated with respect, and they are integral elements of the liturgy to which they belong, as it is indeed celebrated.

It may seem strange at first to compare the kussâpê and the Wesley Eucharistic hymns. The differences are obvious. The kussâpê are for the celebrant to say; the hymns are set in the mouths of all the congregation alike. The kussâpê are, quite unambiguously, said during the service by the celebrant; the hymns, for the most part, do not fit into the course of the liturgy as set out in the liturgical books, and could in any case not be used in the public liturgy of the Church of England, of which both the Wesley brothers were presbyters. The kussâpê, at first sight, seem only to emphasize what is already present in the principal texts of *Rasa*; the hymns bring in themes that (as we shall observe) are little or not at all explicitly mentioned in the official liturgical formulary. The kussâpê are prayers, addressed to the Trinity; the hymns are in many cases, at least as much theological reflection, and even polemical theology, as address to the Deity.

Nonetheless, comparison between the two bodies of text is more reasonable than it might appear. Both sets of material are in origin *supplementary* to established liturgy; they are called into being by that established liturgy, and they reflect both its limitations, which create the need for supplementation, and also its generative power and effect upon those who engage in

it. One aspect of the career of the hymns raises a general question about the role of liturgical supplements in general, and of the kussāpê in particular, though with reference to the latter I do not presume to begin to answer it: what do the liturgical supplements say about the parent rite as perceived,³ and about the directions in which those parent rites, if they can be allowed to develop organically,⁴ ought to grow in the future? This issue is certainly relevant to the Wesley hymns: as we shall see, they have contributed, after a long lapse of time, to the ecumenically informed enrichment and dogmatic amplification of the liturgical tradition which bore them.

The Hymns; Their Subjects; Their Later Career

The collection (to be referred to from this point as HLS), consists of 166 hymns, varying in length from a single stanza to 22: the majority are of 3-4 stanza length. They are grouped under six headings: I - 'The Lord's Supper As it is a Memorial of the Sufferings and Death of Christ' (27 hymns); II - 'As it is a Sign and a Means of Grace' (65 hymns); III - 'The Sacrament a Pledge of Heaven, (23 hymns); IV - 'The Holy Eucharist as it implies a sacrifice' (12 hymns); V - Concerning the Sacrifice of our Persons' (30 hymns); VI - 'After the Sacrament' (9 hymns).

The sequence of subjects is deliberate. We contemplate first the Eucharist as a sacred institution, and are led by an appreciation of the authority of the one who instituted it for his *anamnesis* into the adoration of his saving Passion. The Eucharist does not only portray the saving acts of Christ: it depicts them with their *meaning*, and enables them to *realize* their meaning in the Church (note that, whereas Brevint separates the sign-function of the sacrament from its function as a means, the Wesleys emphatically unite them). As the worshippers move deeper into an awareness of the human needs revealed by this mystery and the wonders of redeeming love both present and active as well as made manifest in it, they discover that

3. Underlying methodology discussed by the present author in 'Shape and Liturgy', pp. 65-82 in K. W. Stevenson, ed., *Liturgy Reshaped*, London, SPCK 1982.

4. On this desideratum, see J. Vellian, *Raza* (as in bibliog.) 104, and W. H. Frere, *Some Principles of Liturgical Reform* (London, John Murray 1911).

the celebration unites the earthly and heavenly worlds, as well as transcending time: in the temple of heaven, the once-for-all offering made in the temple of this world is perpetually offered, eternally accepted. Contemplation of that sacrifice leads us into active meditation on the offering of ourselves. The conclusion for use 'after the sacrament' gathers up and concentrates some of the preceding themes, but in a rather desultory fashion; indeed, one wonders if this section was abbreviated by John, not very elegantly, to prevent the book from getting unmanageably long.

The theological content of the hymns is largely, but not solely, derived from a treatise of 1673, *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice: by way of Discourse, Meditation and Prayer, Upon the Nature, Parts, and Blessing of Holy Communion* by Daniel Brevint, a condensed form of which the Wesley brothers published with the hymns. Brevint himself (1616-1695), an Anglican with strong French Reformed connections, had written the work for two French princesses of the Reformed Church, who, weary of the polemical divinity that dominated the times, asked for a practical and devotional (and eirenic) guide to eucharistic worship.⁵ By republishing his work in association with their own, the Wesleys identified themselves with his mediating presentation (not entirely typical of his style) of a vigorous sacramental theology. But it cannot be said that they first learned it from him; everything they found in Brevint they had already encountered in their own father Samuel Wesley's *The Pious Communicant Rightly Prepared* (London, 1698).

The hymns do much more than versify Brevint's theologoumena; indeed, Precentor Venables⁶ goes so far as to say that the hymns are 'pitched in a somewhat higher key of eucharistic doctrine than Brevint's works.' They go beyond him in the vivid depiction of realized eschatology:

By faith and hope already there
 Ev'n now the marriage Feast we share,
 Ev'n now we by the Lamb are fed (xciii,4: 11. 1-3)- is

5. See Venables; also Rattenbury 1948.

6. 272; further remarks in Rattenbury 1948; for the whole context, see F. Baker, *John Wesley and the Church of England* (London, Epworth 1970).

typical. The Wesleys' assertion of the identity of Christ with his whole Body, and with each of its members, similarly goes far beyond Brevint:

O Thou, who hast our sorrows took,
 Who all our sins didst singly bear,
 To Thy dear Bloody Cross we look,
 We cast us on Thy Offering there;
 For pardon on Thy death rely,
 For grace and strength to reach the sky.
 We nail the Old *Adam* to the tree,
 Till not one breath of life remain,
 But what we can present to Thee,
 (To Thee whose blood hath purg'd our stain,)
 Conjoin'd to Thy great Sacrifice,
 Well-pleasing in Thy Father's eyes.
 The saved and Saviour now agree,
 In closest fellowship combined;
 We grieve, and die, and live with Thee,
 To Thy great Father's will resign'd;
 And God doth all Thy members own
 One with Thyself, for ever one.

(cxxxiii, 1, 4, 5)

Brevint is interested in the role of the Spirit as the medium of Christ's self-offering, but does not, at least in the extract, touch upon the subject of the *epiklesis*; in HLS, by contrast, the theme is a major feature (see lxxii, lxxv, cl), while other pieces (vii, xvi, cli) are devoted to the distinct but complementary topic of the Spirit's illapse upon and work within the worshippers. Totally unknown to Brevint's exposition is the Wesleyan emphasis on *theiōsis*, the work of divine grace transforming the being of believers through the gift of charity, and there by making them partakers of God's own nature.⁷ The brothers sing of 'sweetness which is, and makes divine' (clx, 2).

7. From a large literature, we single out: R. N. Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology* (London, OUP 1934); H. W. Perkins, *The Doctrine of Christian or Evangelical Perfection* (London, Epworth 1927); W. E. Sangster, *The Path to Perfection. An Examination and Restatement of John Wesley's Doctrine of Christian Perfection* (London, Hodder and Stoughton 1943); Erich von Eicken, *Rechtfertigung und Heiligung bei Wesley* (diss. Heidelberg 1934); H. Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification* (London, Epworth 1950).

In the pneumatology of HLS we may find the secret of the Wesleys' combination of high views of eucharistic sacrifice,⁸ eucharistic presence, *theiōsis*, and the transcendence of time in the Christian mystery and in soteriology. Most of these themes coalesce in hymn xvi, one of the few HLS hymns that have been widely used since the publication of the collection:

Come, Thou everlasting Spirit,
 Bring to every thankful mind
 All the Saviour's dying merit,
 All His sufferings for mankind;
 True Recorder of His Passion,
 Now the living faith impart,
 Now reveal His great salvation,
 Preach His Gospel to our heart.
 Come, Thou witness of His dying,
 Come, remembrancer Divine,
 Let us feel Thy power applying
 Christ to every soul and mine;
 Let us groan Thine inward groaning,
 Look on Him we pierc'd, and grieve;
 All receive the grace atoning,
 All the sprinkled Blood receive.

Only about twenty of the hymns remain in even occasional use, among (chiefly English-speaking) Methodists. The essence of this working corpus was arrived at by some process of self-selection in the decades immediately after the deaths of the Wesley brothers. This course of events is neither surprising nor distressing. The mortality rate among hymns is always high. HLS was not designed chiefly, perhaps at all, with their use by the liturgical assembly in mind. They are primarily for meditation, and at many points

8. More investigation is needed into (e. g.) the influence of Jonson's *Unbloody Sacrifice*. It must be noted here that this topic has caused controversy with some British Calvinistic Anglicans in recent years: cf R. T. Beckwith, 'Methodism and the Mass' in *The Churchman* 83/2 (Summer 1969) 116-120. Discussion seems hitherto to have ignored the pneumatological dimensions of the matter, which reflects a failure to retain the essential Trinitarian context. Among neglected Methodist resources must be noted W. Cooke, *The Three Intercessions United*, London, Cooke 1860; J. S. Lidgett, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, London, Kelly 21898, esp. Ch. V, Ch. VIII.

it is clear that they are intended for continuous reading. Some are clearly also designed solely for silent recitation, or for singing, in individual meditation,⁹ with no thought of corporate rendition at all. Several of the hymns address controversies now past, or employ imagery that is now unusable. But, in addition to the individual items that have continued in use, HLS as an entity has survived as an abiding source of eucharistic song for Methodists, Anglicans and some other traditions, a source drawn on more now than at any other time since the last complete edition of 1825. (The subsequent complete editions have been essentially academic or propagandistic publications).

Themes of the Kussape and Themes of HLS; and Their Relation to the Organic Sequence of the Parent Rite

Beside each of the Kussāpê can be set at least one of the Wesley eucharistic hymns, to show a striking parallel of thought and feeling, even when differences of theological tradition are given due weight. The prayers, and one hymn chosen in relation to each, are displayed in the Appendix to this paper.

There cannot be the slightest suggestion of any historical connection, for the Wesley brothers can have had no knowledge of the East Syrian rites, despite their interest in liturgical studies, and the early grounding in the sacred languages, including Syriac, which the two brothers received from their father.¹⁰ The similarities between the two bodies of material are not, however, to be dismissed as insignificant coincidence.¹¹ They are examples

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9. In the manuscripts of Charles Wesley's poems clearly meant for solely individual and personal use (such as the volume entitled 'Friendship' preserved in the Methodist Archives in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester), we find verses with the names of tunes attached: in the composition of these stanzas, we must infer, particular tunes were in the poet's head, supplying some essential factors in the creative process.
 10. The first Methodist who examined the Syriac liturgies at first hand and in detail seems to have been J. W. Etheridge, in *The Syrian Churches: Their Early History, Liturgies and Literature* (London, Longmans 1846). His own remarks on Adam Clarke in his *Life* (London, T. Woolman 1858, 300) suggest that the latter may have anticipated him to some extent.
 11. Anton Baumstark's *Liturgie comparee* has taught us to note primarily those similarities which point to historical contacts and common ancestors; allowing due respect to his great authority, one must also plead for an examination and interpretation of similarities which are due to *no* historical contacts. Repeated

of a vast number of such parallels and similarities which mark the diverse continuum of Christian liturgical history and cross the boundaries of sundered traditions: these parallels and similarities, we may suggest, are results and evidence of the essential unity and homogeneity of Christian ritual life.

HLS and the kussāpê, in their different contexts and ages, reflect the same Christian instincts: for adding to the established liturgy an openly personal element which is complementary to, not incompatible with, the corporateness of the parent rite; for dwelling upon the solemnity and power of the moment of offering; for entering with the imagination upon the width of the divine compassion, in intercession; for asking more gifts, inward as well as outward, from the divine mercy. In this paper, we ask also whether the hymns and the prayers share, in addition, comparable roles in the historical careers of their respective parent rites. We cannot speak of identical roles, because the parent rites are so different. The liturgy of Addai and Mari (for example) achieved a high degree of fixity a long time ago, although, as Father Vellian's edition shows, substantial changes were possible even into recent times. Cranmer's eucharistic rite, one of the Reformation attempts to reconstruct the primitive liturgy from first principles, seemed also to have reached a steady state after the big bangs of drastic revision. John Wesley himself had a great respect for it, but felt it right to permit his co-workers to supplement it with hymns and extempore prayer. These differences being duly acknowledged, we may still enquire: Do these (and similar) supplementary items appear at points in the liturgy where development and change have taken place (resulting in slight unevenness in the flow of liturgical action), or where development and change are likely to happen, in response to the needs of the worshipping Body?

In the case of the kussāpê, if the question is felt to be apt at all, its discussion must be left to others.¹² The question

patterns are as morphologically interesting in rites and ritual communities as they are in comparative biology.

12. Most cautiously, I enquire whether the kussape in the Syro-Malabar rite may have begun their growth at two points in the anaphora—: where the Sanctus has been introduced (E), then generating similar supplements at

is surely apt in the case of the hymns, although an answer may not be as easy to give as the question is to pose.

As Dr K. W. Stevenson has rightly observed in his important study *Eucharist and Offering* (1986, p. 168), these hymns 'do not localize particular liturgical actions, but rather speak by their very medium of the total celebration of the eucharist.' There is indeed in HLS hardly any direct reference to the course of the rite, neither the rite of the Reformed Church for whose members Brevint had written, nor that of the Book of Common Prayer, the use of Brevints' and the Wesley brothers' Church of England. Hardly any: but there is some!

Part VI, 'After the Sacrament' (Nos. clviii-clxvi) is designed for communicants to read in church after receiving, as well as at home later. The only anticipation here of the prayers which will soon occur in the liturgy is in clxiii, a versification of *Gloria in excelsis* (a post-Communion feature in Cranmer's eccentric rite), in which there may just be an allusion also to the Our Father (another post-Communion item with Cranmer):

Sovereign Father, heavenly King,
Thee we now presume to sing (clxiii. 2)

compare the introduction that was to be added to the Our Father in the abortive Anglican revision in 1928, and the addition made to the British Methodist rite of 1936;

(1928): 'As our Saviour Christ hath commanded and taught us,
we are bold to say.....'

(1936): 'And now, as our Lord hath taught us,
we are bold to say.....' -

audemus dicere!

The other direct liturgical allusion in this post-Communion material is the reference back to the preface and Sanctus¹³ in clxi:

progressively earlier stages in the sequence of the prayer (D, B and C, then A); and at the point where the people's petition for their priest has been expanded (G), with a consequent intercessory supplement at F.

13. The Wesley hymnody includes other paraphrases of Preface and *Sanctus*, and also of *Gloria in excelsis*, but these are in other of their hymn-collections; see H. Bett, *The Hymns of Methodism* (London, Epworth 1945) 114-5. Note that in clxi it is the distinctive BCP version of the *Sanctus* that is reflected.

Lord and God of heavenly powers,
 Theirs – yet oh! benignly ours;
 Glorious King, let earth proclaim,
 Worms attempt to chant Thy Name.

Thee to laud in songs divine,
 Angels and archangels join;
 We with them our voices raise,
 Echoing Thy eternal praise.

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
 Live by heaven and earth ador'd!
 Full of Thee they ever cry,
 Glory be to God most high!

The following hymn might look like an allusion to the liturgy too:

Hosanna in the highest,
 To our exalted Saviour,
 Who left behind
 For all mankind
 These Tokens of His favour.

His bleeding love and mercy,
 His all-redeeming Passion,
 Who here displays
 And gives the grace
 Which brings us our salvation.

Louder than mighty waters,
 Or bursting peals of thunder,
 We lift our voice,
 And speak our joys,
 And shout our loving wonder!

Shout, all our elder brethren,
 While we record the story
 Of Him that came
 And suffer'd shame
 To carry us to glory.

Angels in fix'd amazement
 Around our Altars hover,
 With eager gaze
 Adore the grace
 Of our eternal Lover:

Himself, and all His fulness,
 Who gives to the believer;
 And by this Bread
 Whoe'er are fed
 Shall live with God for ever!

(clxii)

Those familiar with the Latin Mass will not be surprised at the appearance of a paraphrase of *Hosanna in excelsis* following one of the *Sanctus*. However, in the Anglican rite of the Wesleys' time the *Benedictus qui venit* and *Hosanna* had been long since removed. They knew of the presence of these items in the Roman and other rites, and the juxtaposition of these two hymns and their non-Anglican liturgical associations at least suggests in the Wesley brothers an instinct to restore a lost liturgical detail preserved elsewhere in the *Oikoumene*.

The first four sections of the collection are for use at home in preparation for the Lord's Supper, and also in Church, both before the start of the service and then during the time spent in waiting to come up to the communion rails. If John Wesley's experience was at all typical,¹⁴ this time could sometimes be very long indeed at well-attended communion services. A search in these sections for references to the text of the Prayer Book communion order is strangely disappointing. There may just possibly be an extended application of the Third Exhortation's summons to faith and repentance in the long sequence xxxix-Ixxxi. Ivi (picking up a hint from Brevint) definitely echoes that Exhortation's minatory assertions on the results of unworthy communion:

14. See Bowmer 1951.

How dreadful is the Mystery,
Which, instituted, Lord, by Thee,
Or life or death conveys!
Death to the impious and profane;
Nor shall our faith in Thee be vain,
Who here expect Thy grace.

Who eats unworthily this Bread
Pulls down Thy curses on his head,
And eats his deadly bane;
And shall not we who rightly eat
Live by the salutary Meat,
And equal blessings gain? ...

(lvi, 1-2)

The Prayer of Humble Access, which in Cranmer's rite falls between the *Sanctus* and the 'Prayer of Consecration' (a prayer for fruitful communion, which concludes with an appeal to and a recitation of the Institution) makes its appearance as HLS xliii, but in a form which reflects much more of Matthew 8.8. and Luke 5.8—and of the *Domine, non sum dignus* of the Latin Mass, yet another feature which Cranmer had set aside:

Saviour, and can it be
That Thou shouldst dwell with me?
From Thy high and lofty throne,
Throne of everlasting bliss,
Will Thy majesty stoop down
To so mean a house as this?

I am not worthy, Lord,
So foul, so self-abhorr'd,
Thee, my God, to entertain
In this poor polluted heart;
I am a frail sinful man,
All my nature cries, Depart!

Yet come, Thou heavenly Guest,
And purify my breast;
Come, Thou great and glorious King,
While before Thy Cross I bow;
With Thyself salvation bring,
Cleanse the house by entering now.

Domine, non sum dignus turns up yet again in lxxviii (see v.5 for *sanabitur anima mea*; v.10 for *ut intres sub tectum meum*), but now wrapped within a paraphrase of *Agnus Dei*. Cranmer had not quite suppressed the latter, but in his rite of 1552, and so in the book of 1661/2, it survived only as part of the *Gloria in excelsis*, among the post-Communion devotions. HLS brings *Agnus Dei* back before Communion, and associates it intimately with *Domine non sum dignus*, as in the Tridentine Missal. Is the unreasonable to detect here also echoes of *Domine Jesu Christe, qui dixisti*, and *Domine Jesu Christe, Filii Dei vivi*, and even of *Perceptio corporis tui*? The text reads:

1. Lamb of God, for whom we languish,
Make Thy grief our relief,
Ease us by Thine anguish.
2. O our agonizing Saviour,
By Thy pain let us gain
God's eternal favour.
3. Suffer sin no more to oppress us;
Set us free (all with me)
By Thy bonds release us.
4. Clear us by Thy condemnation;
Slain for all, let Thy fall
Be our exaltation.
5. Thy deserts to us make over;
Speak us whole, every soul
By Thy wounds recover.
6. Let us thro' Thy curse inherit
Blessing's store, love and power,
Fulness of Thy Spirit:
7. The whole benefit of Thy Passion,
Present peace, future bliss,
All Thy great salvation.
8. Power to walk in all well-pleasing,
Bid us take, come and make
This the accepted season.

9. In Thine own appointments bless us;
Meet us here, now appear,
Our Almighty Jesus.
10. Let the Ordinance be sealing;
Enter now, claim us Thou
For Thy constant dwelling.
11. Fill the heart of each believer;
We are Thine, Love Divine;
Reign in us for ever.

(Punctuation slightly amended)

Particularly striking, when at last one notices it, is the fact that the post-Communion section of HLS says virtually nothing about the element of offering, whether of the commemorative oblation (briefly noticed in clxiv, 1) or of the self-oblation of the communicants. Both these aspects of sacrifice loom very large in the earlier section of HLS. Repeated reading of the texts leaves the growing impression that, at least subliminally, the Wesleys were uneasy about the separation of the self-oblation of Christ's members from the commemorative oblation of the sufferings of Christ: the two oblations are one, and ought to be presented as one.¹⁵

Thou Lamb that sufferd'st on the tree,
And in this dreadful Mystery
Still offer'st up Thyself to God,
We cast us on Thy Sacrifice,
Wrapt in the sacred smoke arise,
And cover'd with the atoning Blood.

15. The underlying issue, for both sacramental theology and soteriology, is Christological. To insist on a separation of the oblation of the members of the Body from that of their Head is to divide both the God-to-humanity and humanity-to-God movements, which in the one Christ are united in one event and one Person. Behind such a division is an inchoate and barely conscious Nestorianism, which affects much English theological discussion, and is none the less all-pervasive and all-affecting for being unsophisticated. The Wesleys were themselves affected by it, note HLS xxxvi, 1: 'God saw His rebels from above, / And stoop'd into a moral man.'

Thy Death presented in our stead
 Enters us now among the dead,
 Parts of Thy mystic Body here;
 By Thy Divine Oblation rais'd
 And on our *Aaron's* ephod plac'd,
 We now with Thee in heaven appear.

Thy death exalts Thy ransom'd ones,
 And sets amidst the precious stones,
 Closest Thy dear, Thy loving breast,
Israel as on Thy shoulders stands;
 Our names are graven on the hands,
 The heart, of our Eternal Priest.

For us He ever intercedes,
 His heaven-deserving Passion pleads,
 Presenting us before the throne;
 We want no sacrifice beside,
 By that great Offering sanctified,
 One with our Head, for ever one.

(cxvii)

In cxxxix, we find the self-oblation theme united with the thank-offering through the *vere dignum* (and there is a direct allusion to its Latin form) and the *Sanctus*:

Just it is, and good, and right,
 That we should be wholly Thine.
 In Thy only will delight,
 In Thy blessed service join.

O that every thought and word
 Might proclaim how good Thou art!
 Holiness unto the Lord,
 Still be written on our heart.

(cxxxix, 3-4; cf Exodus 28.36)

The hymns, as already noted, dwell lovingly on the *epikl̄sis*. This too is absent in the 1661/2 Book of Common Prayer, although it had featured in the 1549 book, and (as the Wesleys well knew) had a secure place in Scots Episcopalian as well as Eastern usage. Here too, in the way in which elements are brought

back from other traditions, or restored to a place in the liturgical sequence which they had lately lost, HLS seems to reflect ecumenical-liturgical desiderata appreciated by the Wesley brothers.

All the features mentioned – *Sanctus* with *Benedictus*+*Hosanna*, oblation of the members of the Body united with the anamnesis-oblation, epiklēsis – were to appear in the renewed eucharistic rites provided for Methodist use, first in the 1950 eucharistic order of the Church of South India, and then, partly under ecumenical pressure, in the specifically Methodist liturgies of the 1960's and onwards, in both Britain and the United States¹⁶. Certainly in Methodist tradition, these developments are partly attributable to the considered example of the Wesley eucharistic hymns¹⁷.

These observations, on both the kuššāpê from the East, and on Methodist hymns from the West, are offered as tentative, and calling for rigorous testing; I hope that at least a case has been made for these two bodies of liturgical text to be studied, interpreted and evaluated together, and in one another's light.

APPENDIX

THE PRAYERS OF THE SYRO-MALABAR 'RAZA' SAID "IN A LOW VOICE", WITH THEMATIC PARALLELS FROM 'HYMNS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER'

Note: the text of the prayers is from J. Vellian's version of *Raza* (citing by the separate pagination of the appendix to that work), and that of the hymns is from Dutton's 2nd edn, 1880 (citing numbers only, without page references). The identifying letters for the prayers are my addition.

16. cf the present author's 'Il rinnovamento della preghiera eucaristica nelle chiese metodiste' in *Rivista Liturgica* (Turin) LXX (1983) 353–373. The *Agnus Dei* and *Domine, non sum dignus* (cf HLS liii) reappear in British Methodist *Sunday Service* in *Methodist Service Book* (London, Methodist Publishing House 1975) p. B 37.
17. The hymns continue to exert influence as a text studied and prayed over, and those that remain in the various hymnals are sung in the liturgy at the celebrants' discretion, most often at the offertory, sometimes during the communion of the people, or before the final blessing and dismissal. On occasions when the sermon concentrates on the eucharist or the stonement, some of the hymns are used in the liturgy of the Word.

A. (before the Peace; p. 36 Vellian)

Lord God almighty, in your mercy, help my weakness and by your grace make me worthy to offer before you this living and holy sacrifice for the benefit of the whole congregation and for the praise of your adorable Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for ever.

Hymn cxxi

1. Father, behold Thy favourite Son,
The glorious partner of Thy throne,
For ever plac'd at Thy right hand;
O look on Thy Messiah's face,
And seal the covenant of Thy grace,
To us who in Thy Jesus stand.
2. To us Thou hast redemption sent;
And we again to Thee present
The Blood that speaks our sins forgiven,
That sprinkles all the nation round;
And now Thou hear'st the solemn sound
Loud echoing thro' the courts of heaven.
3. The Cross on *Calvary* He bore,
He suffer'd once to die no more,
But left a sacred Pledge behind:
See here! - it on Thy Altar lies,
Memorial of the Sacrifice
He offer'd once for all mankind.
4. Father, the grand Oblation see,
The death as present now with Thee,
As when He gasp'd on earth - *Forgive!*
Answer, and shew the curse remov'd,
Accept us in the Well-belov'd,
And bid Thy world of rebels live.

B. (before Dialogue; p. 37 Vellian)

O Lord, you have graciously made me worthy of your Body and Blood. So may I come before you with confidence on the day of judgement. Amen.

Hymn cxiii

1. Give us, O Lord, the children's Bread,
By ministerial angels fed
(The angels of Thy Church below);
Nourish us with preserving grace
Our forty years or forty days,
And lead us through the vale of woe.
2. Strengthened by this Immortal Food,
O let us reach the Mount of God,
And face to face our Saviour see;
In songs of praise and love and joy,
With all Thy first-born sons employ
A happy whole eternity.

C. (after Dialogue; p. 37 Vellian)

Lord, give us confidence in your sight, that with our conscience free from every stain and evil, from envy, deceit and bitterness, we may trustfully accomplish this living and holy service. Sow in us, O my Lord, love and concord with one another and with all men by your grace and mercies. Amen.

Hymn x

1. Father, Thy own in Christ receive,
Who deeply for our follies grieve,
And cast our sins away:
Resolv'd to lead our lives anew,
Thine only glory to pursue,
And only Thee obey.
2. Faith in Thy pardoning love we have;
Willing Thou art our souls to save,
For Jesu's sake alone:
Jesus Thy wrath hath pacified,
Jesus, Thy well-belov'd, hath died
For all mankind to atone.
3. The death sustain'd for all mankind
With humblest thanks we call to mind,
With grateful joy approve:
And every soul of man embrace,
And love the dearly ransomed race
In the Redeemer's love.

4. Receive us, then, Thou pardoning God,
Partakers of His Flesh and Blood
Grant that we now may be;
The Spirit's attesting seal impart,
And speak to every sinner's heart,
The Saviour died for thee!

D. (after Sanctus; p. 38 Vellian)

Holy are you, God; you alone are the Father of truth from whom is all fatherhood in heaven and on earth. Holy are you, Eternal Son, through whom all things were made. Holy are you, Holy Spirit, the Being by whom all things are sanctified.

Hymn lxxv

1. Father, the grace we claim,
The double grace bestow'd
On all who trust in Him that came
By water and by Blood.
2. Jesu, the Blood apply,
The righteousness bring in;
Us by Thy dying justify,
And wash out all our sin.
3. Spirit of faith, come down,
Thy seal with power set to,
The Banquet by Thy Presence crown,
And Prove the record true:
4. Pardon and grace impart:
Come quickly from above,
And witness now in every heart
That God is perfect love.

E. (immediately after the preceding; p. 39 Vellian)

Woe is me, for I am dismayed because I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the Lord of hosts. How dreadful is this place, for this day I have seen the Lord face to face and this is none other than the house of God. And now, O Lord, let your grace be upon us, and purify our uncleanness and sanctify our

lips and mingle, O my Lord, the voices of our feebleness with the hallowing of the seraphim and of archangels. Glory be to your mercies who have united the earthly with spiritual beings.

Hymn xxi

1. God of unexampled grace,
 Redeemer of mankind,
 Matter of eternal praise
 We in Thy Passion find;
 Still our choicest strains we bring,
 Still the joyful theme pursue,
 The Friend of sinners sing,
 Whose love is ever new.

2. Endless scenes of wonder rise
 With that mysterious Tree,
 Crucified before our eyes,
 Where we our Maker see:
 Jesus, Lord, what hast Thou done:
 Publish we the death divine,
 Stop, and gaze, and fall, and own
 Was never death like Thine!

3. Never love nor sorrow was
 Like that my Jesus show'd;
 See Him stretched on yonder Cross,
 And crush'd beneath our load!
 Now discern the Deity,
 Now his heavenly birth declare;
 Faith cries out, 'Tis He! 'Tis He!
 My God, that suffers there.

4. Jesus drinks the bitter cup,
 The wine-press treads alone,
 Tears the graves and mountains up
 By His expiring groan.
 Lo! the powers of heaven He shakes;
 Nature in convulsions lies;
 Earth's profoundest centre shakes:
 The great Jehovah dies!

- 5 Dies the glorious Cause of all,
 The true eternal *Pan*,
 Falls to raise us from our fall,
 To ransom sinful man;
 Well may *Sol* withdraw his light,
 With the Sufferer sympathise,
 Leave the world in sudden night,
 While his Creator dies.
6. Well may heaven be cloth'd with black,
 And solemn sackcloth wear,
 Jesu's agony partake,
 The hour of darkness share:
 Mourn the astonied hosts above,
 Silence saddens all the skies;
 Kindler of seraphic love,
 The God of angels dies.
7. Oh, my God, He dies for me,
 I feel the mortal smart!
 See Him hanging on the tree,—
 A sight that breaks my heart!
 O that all to Thee might turn!
 Sinners, ye may love Him too,
 Look on Him ye pierc'd, and mourn
 For one who bled for you.
8. Weep o'er your Desire and Hope
 With tears of humblest love;
 Sing, for Jesus is gone up,
 And reigns enthron'd above!
 Lives our Head, to die no more:
 Power is all to Jesus given,
 Worshipp'd as He was before,
 The immortal King of heaven.
9. Lord, we bless Thee for Thy grace
 And truth which never fail,
 Hastening to behold Thy face
 Without a dimming veil:
 We shall see our heavenly King,
 All Thy glorious love proclaim,
 Help the angel choirs to sing
 Our dear triumphant Lamb.

F. (before the IV G'hantha; pp. 41-2 Vellian)

O Lord God Almighty receive the Qurbana for the supreme Pontiff Mar N., Pope of Rome, the ruler and head of the universal church, for our holy Father Mar N. the bishop now in authority over our people, for the holy catholic church entire, for priests, rulers and those who are in authority, for the honour of all prophets, apostles, martyrs and confessors, and for all the just and holy Fathers who have found favour in your presence and for all those who mourn and are in distress, for all the poor and the oppressed, for all the sick and the afflicted and for all the departed who have been severed and have gone forth from among us in your name and for this people who look for and await your mercies and for my own weak, miserable and unworthy self.

Hymn xxv

1. In an accepted time of love
To Thee, O Jesus, we draw near;
Wilt Thou not the veil remove.
And meet Thy mournful followers here,
Who humbly at Thy Altar lie,
And wait to find Thee passing by?
2. Thou bidd'st us call Thy death to mind,
And Thou must give the solemn power;
Come then, Thou Saviour of mankind,
Bring back that last tremendous hour,
And stand in all Thy Wounds confest,
And wrap us in Thy bloody vest.*
3. With reverential faith we claim
Our share in Thy great Sacrifice:
Come, O Thou all-atoning Lamb,
Revive us by Thy dying cries;
Apply to all Thy healing Blood,
And sprinkle *me, my Lord, my God!*

* In this 18th-century text, 'vest' still means 'vesture' or specifically 'vestment': sc., Christ the Great High Priest clothes his sacerdotal people not only in his righteousness (cf. Job. 29.14) but also in his priesthood.

G. (immediately after the foregoing, before the people's prayer for the celebrant; p. 42 Vellian)

O our Lord and our God, deal with your people and with me according to your mercies and the abundance of goodness and not according to my sins and transgressions, that I and these may be made worthy of the pardon of debts and the remission of sins through this holy Body which we receive in the belief of the truth and by the grace which is from you. Amen.

Hymn cxxvi

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Father, to Him we turn our
face,
Who did for all atone,
And worship toward Thy
holy place,
And seek Thee in Thy Son. | 4. The Lamb as crucified
afresh
Is here held out to men;
The tokens of His Blood and
Flesh
Are on this Table seen. |
| 2. Him, the true Ark and
Mercy-seat,
By faith we call to mind,
Faith in the Blood atoning
yet
For us and all mankind. | 5. The Lamb His Father now
surveys,
As on this Altar slain,
Its bleeding and imploring
grace
For every soul of man. |
| 3. To Thee His Passion we
present,
Who for our ransom dies;
We reach by this great
instrument
The Eternal Sacrifice. | 6. Father, for us, e'en us, He
bleeds,
The Sacrifice receive:
Forgive, for Jesus inter-
cedes;
He gasps in death - <i>Forgive!</i> |

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SIN, HELL AND DEATH

Sin, Gehenna and death do not exist at all with God, since they are effects, not substances.

Sin is the fruit of self-will. There was a time when sin did not exist, and there will be a time when it will not exist.

Gehenna is the fruit of sin. At some point in time it had a beginning, but its end is not known.

Death, however, is a dispensation of the Creator's wisdom. It will rule only a certain time over nature; then it will certainly disappear.

TASTING THE WELLSPRING

From stillness a person can gain possession of the three causes of tears: love of God, awestruck wonder at his mysteries, and humility of heart. Without these it is unthinkable that anyone should be accounted worthy to taste of the wellspring of flaming compunction arising from the love of God.

There is no passion so fervent as the love of God. O Lord, deem me worthy to taste of this wellspring!

Therefore, if a person does, not have stillness he will not be acquainted with even one of these, though he perform many virtuous deeds.

He cannot know what the love of God is, nor spiritual knowledge, nor can he possess true humility of heart, He will not know these three virtues, or rather, these three glorious gifts.

(St Isaac of Syria)

La Fete De La Dormition De Marie En Syrie A L'epoque Byzantine (The Feast of Mary's Dormition in the Syriac Area during the Byzantine Period)

La tradition littéraire syriaque nous a transmis de très anciens et de très précieux documents sur le sort final de Marie, que l'on connaît généralement sous le vocable de "Transitus Mariae".¹

En revanche, la liturgie syriaque ne nous a conservé que fort peu de sources qui puissent nous permettre de remonter aux origines de la fête de la dormition de Marie. Cette indigence des sources est tout aussi valable pour l'aire syriaque occidentale dite "jacobite" que pour l'aire syriaque orientale dite "nestorienne". Notons aussi que cette situation est également valable pour la Syrie de langue grecque.²

* Dr. Simon C. Mimouni, from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, is a scholar in the early literature on Mary's Dormition.

1. Au sujet de ces *Transitus Mariae*, cf. S. C. Mimouni, "La tradition littéraire syriaque de l' *Historie de la Dormition et de l' Assomption de Marie*. Preliminaire a une, nouvelle edition critique", in *Parole de l' Orient* (a paraître).
2. La theologie antiochienne s' est, dans l'ensemble fort peu preoccupee de mariologie. En ce qui concerne la fete de la memoire de Marie dont la celebration n'est attestee qu'aux Veme et VIeme siecles, la Syrie ne nous a conserve que quelques rares pieces dont l'attribution demeure parfois fort problematique. Il s'agit de trois homelies attribuees a Severe d' Antioche: les homelies cathedrales II et XIV (CPG 7035/II et 7035/XIVm conservees en syriaque); ainsi que le sermon sur la Vierge Marie (CPG 7038, conserve en copte)

La mariologie syriaque a fait l'objet de nombreux et importants travaux.³ Les études sur Aphraat et sur Ephrem ont laissé apparaître une doctrine mariale fort laudative mais assez fruste, surtout chez Ephrem.⁴ Autrement dit, avant les *Transitus Mariae*, dont les plus anciens témoins manuscrits datent de la fin du V^{ème} siècle ou du début du VI^{ème} siècle, la mariologie syriaque est pauvre, pour ne pas dire inexistante, du moins en ce qui concerne la dormition.

Les sources qui nous permettent de reconstituer l'histoire de la fête de la dormition en Syrie aux VI^{ème} et VII^{ème} siècles sont de trois ordres. Il s'agit tout d'abord de documents hagiographiques et homilétiques; auxquels s'ajoutent bien sûr, mais dans une moindre mesure, des documents liturgiques.

Dans cette contribution, j'examinerai d'abord les informations liturgiques que fournissent les *Transitus Mariae* de langue syriaque. Je présenterai ensuite les rares documents homilétiques syriaques relatifs à la fête de la dormition. Après une rapide investigation dans les sources liturgiques syriaques, j'essayerai de brosser l'histoire de cette commémoration mariale.

Cette documentation sera examinée en fonction d'une problématique que j'ai déjà exposé par ailleurs,⁵ à savoir que les écrits syriaques sur le sort final de Marie relèvent de la

3. La bibliographie est très importante on ne se permettra de citer que: S. P. Brock "Marie dans la tradition syriaque", in *Lettre de Liguge* 189 (1978), p. 5-15; I. Ortiz de Urbina, "Maria en la Patristica Siriaca", in *Scripta de Maria* 1 (1978), p. 29-114; P. Podipara, "La Mariologia della Chiesa siro-orientale (caldea)", in *SROC* 3 (1980), p. 49-63; S. P. Brock, "Mary in Syriac Tradition", in A. Staepoole (Ed. by), *Mary's Place in Christian Dialogue*, Slough, 1982. p. 182-191.

4. Cf. E. Beck, "Die Mariologie der echten Schriften Ephrams". in *OrChr* 40 (1956), p. 22-39; I. Ortiz de Urbina, "La Vergine Maria nella teologia di S. Ephrem", in *Symposium Syriacum* 1972, Rome, 1974, p. 64-104; P. Youssef: "La Vierge Marie et le disciple bien-aimé chez Saint Ephrem de Nisibe" in *OrChrP* 55 (1989), p. 283-316.

5. Cf. S. C. Mimouni, «"Histoire de la Dormition et de l'Assomption de Marie." Une nouvelle hypothèse de recherche», in *Studia Patristica* XIX; Tenth International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 24-29 August 1987, (à paraître).

croissance en la dormition et non pas de la croyance en l'assomption.⁶ La question est maintenant de savoir s'il en va de même pour la documentation liturgique, qui bien souvent se recoupe avec la documentation littéraire. Autrement dit, si en Syrie, la fête commémorant le sort final de Marie relève également de la croyance en la dormition.

I. Enquete liturgique dans les *Transitus Mariae*

L'enquête portera principalement sur les *Transitus Mariae*, mais elle les débordera puisqu'elle s'intéressera aussi à la Vie de la Vierge en syriaque.

La Dormitio syriaque dite des "Six Livres" (BHO 620-625) et la Dormitio syriaque dite des "Cinq Livres" (BHO 626-630), fournissent d'importantes informations sur la liturgie de la dormition, sous la forme d'un véritable calendrier.⁷

Le Livre IV de la Dormitio en "Six Livres" fait mention d'une triple commémoration en l'honneur de Marie durant l'année liturgique.⁸ Ces trois fêtes, selon les prescriptions des apôtres, doivent avoir lieu le 24 du mois de Kanun I (= 24 décembre), le 15 du mois de Iar (= 15 mai) et le 13 du mois de Ab (= 13 - août). Elles ont pour but d'obtenir la protection de Marie sur les semences pour la première, sur les épis pour la seconde et sur les vignes pour la dernière. Notons de plus que la fête du 13 août célèbre aussi la mémoire de la mort et du départ de Marie.

Le Livre IV de la Dormitio en "Cinq Livres" fait également mention d'une triple commémoration⁹. Au 6, janvier,

6. Par dormition il faut comprendre la mort non suivie de resurrection. Par assomption, il faut comprendre soit l'immortalité de Marie, soit la mort suivie de resurrection.

7. La Dormitio syriaque dite des "Six Livres" a été éditée par W. Wright, "The Departure of my Lady Mary from this World", in *The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record* VI (1865), p. 417-448 (introduction et première partie du texte syriaque) VII (1865) p. 108-128 (seconde partie, du texte syriaque) et p. 129-160 (traduction anglaise). La Dormitio syriaque dite des "Cinq Livres" a été éditée par A. Smith-Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca in Sinaitica Studia*, t. XI. Londres, 1902, p. 22-115 (texte syriaque) et p. 12-69 (traduction anglaise).

8. Cf. W. Wright, op. cit., in *The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record* VII (1865), p. 152-153.

9. Cf. A. Smith-Lewis op. cit., in *Sinaitica Studia*, t. XI, Londres, 1902, p. 89 et 99 (texte syriaque), p. 54 et 59 (traduction anglaise).

est placée la célébration de la mort et du départ de Marie. Au 15 mai et au 13 août, les deux autres festivités afin d'obtenir la protection sur les épis et sur les vignes.

Ily a donc une sérieuse divergence entre ces deux calendriers, qui commémorent la mort de Marie a des dates radicalement différentes: au 13 août et au 6 janvier.

Le Calendrier de la Dormitio en "Cinq Livres" se rapproche de la liturgie constantinopolitaine qui célébrait aux alentours de la fête de la Nativité de Jésus une fête en l'honneur de la memoire de Marie. Alors que le calendrier de la Dormitio en "Six Livres" présente des analogies avec la liturgie hiérosolymitaine qui fêtait au 15 août la dormition de Marie. Etant donne que la Dormitio en "Cinq Livres" est un texte originaire du monastere du Mont Sinai, création justinienne, il n'est pas étonnant qu'elle ait adopté un calendrier proche de la capitale impériale. De ce fait, on peut faire l'hypothèse que le calendrier de la Dormitio en "Cinq Livres" est originaire d'un milieu monophysite s'étant rallié à Justinien et peutêtre même d'un milieu melkite.

Dans son ouvrage sur les origines du culte des saints, E. Lucius faisait remarquer que dans l'Eglise ancienne, ce sont les attributions des déesses de l'agriculture qui ont été sans doute le plus complètement transférées à la Vierge Marie¹⁰. De fait, au VIème siècle, dans le monde syriaque, Marie passait pour la protectrice des champs et des vignes et la médiatrice des bonnes récoltes. Toutes les fêtes de la Mère de Dieu, célébrées à cette époque dans l'Eglise syrienne, étaient en rapport direct avec l'agriculture; cela apparaît, de manière évidente dans les Dormitiones syriaques dites des "Six Livres" et des "Cinq Livres".¹¹ Dans ces textes, Marie est considérée comme la protectrice des cultures¹²; dans sa prière elle demande à son Fils qu'il veuille bien préserver le pays de ses fidèles des fléaux (sauterelles et grêle) et des maladies, et fair rapporter aux champs et aux vignes

10. Cf. E. Lucius Les origines du culte des saints dans l' Eglise ancienne, Paris, 1908, p. 700-702.

11. Dans la Dormitio arabe dite des "Six Livres" (BHO), les fetes ont la meme motivation, mais d'une maniere plus concise.

12. Cf. W. Wright, op. cit., in The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record VII (1865), p. 151-153.

d'abondantes récoltes.¹³ La relation du culte marial avec l'agriculture ressort de l'organisation liturgique de la fête du 13 août. Dans la Dormitio syriaque dite des "Six Livres", les apôtres or donnent aux fidèles d'apporter dans l'église des aliments pétris et cuits. Ils leur demandent de les déposer sur l'autel durant l'office et de les remporter chez eux, après la cérémonie, où ils pourront les consommer.¹⁴ Cette coutume rappelle à maints égards l'offrande culinaire des Collyridiennes dénoncées par Epiphane de Salamine dans son Panarion.¹⁵ On pourrait donc de ce fait supposer que les Collyridiennes celebraient déjà Marie en tant que médiatrice pour l'abondance des récoltes. Il faut aussi relever que dans la Dormitio syriaque dite des "Six Livres", on trouve aussi une intercession de Marie auprès de Jésus pour les marins menaces par la tempête.¹⁶

Comme dans les Dormitiones syriaques, la Vie de la Vierge syriaque contient une notice au sujet des fêtes commémorant la mémoire de Marie.¹⁷ Dans cette dernière-, elles sont aussi au nombre de trois et elles ont lieu:¹⁸

– au mois de Kanun I (= décembre), dès la veille du samedi qui suit Noël, car Marie quitta ce monde le jour même de Noël;

– au 15 du mois de Iar (= 15 mai), pour obtenir la protection de Marie sur les épis ;

– au 15 du mois de Ab (= 15 août), pour obtenir la protection de Marie sur les vignes.

Il apparait donc qu'à l'époque de la rédaction de cette Vie de la Vierge, on célébrait une fête de la mémoire de la dormition

13. Les calendriers syriens postérieurs mettent aussi en relation les fêtes mariales avec l'agriculture.

14. Cf. W. Wright, op. cit., in *The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record* VII (1865), p. 153.

15. Cf. Epiphane, *Panarion* 79, 5, 1-3 (GCS 37, p. 279, 27-480, 6).

16. Cf. W. Wright, op. cit., in *The Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record* VII (1865), p. 151.

17. La Vie de la Vierge syriaque a été éditée par E.A.W. Budge, *The History of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, in *Luzac's Semitic Text and Translation Series*, t. IV, p. 3-153 (texte syriaque) et t. V, p. 3-168 (traduction anglaise), Londres 1899.

18. Cf. E. A. W. Budge, op. cit., in *Luzac's Semitic Text and Translation Series*, t. V, p. Londres, 1899.

de Marie au mois de Kanun I juste après la fête de la nativité de Jésus. Il est possible que l'on ait là un témoignage ancien, remontant à une époque où l'on célébrait la dormition de Marie en relation avec la nativité de Jésus ; plus tard en effet, les nestoriens, tout comme les jacobites d'ailleurs, célébreront la fête de la dormition au 15 août.

II. Documentation homilétique

La documentation homilétique syriaque concernant la fête de la dormition est assez pauvre. On ne dispose que de deux pièces :

- l'homélie sur la dormition de Marie attribuée à Jacques de Saroug (BHO 676);

- l'homélie - sur la dormition de Marie attribuée à Jean de BIRTHA (BHO 679).

Étant donné le caractère spécifique de ces deux homélies, une présentation s'impose. Le caractère doctrinal sera particulièrement mis en relief, afin de savoir si ces pièces commémoreraient la fête de la dormition ou celle de l'assomption.

II/1. Homélie sur la dormition de Marie attribuée à Jacques de Saroug (BHO 676)

L'homélie sur la dormition de Marie attribuée à Jacques de Saroug, est attestée par de nombreux manuscrits. Par ailleurs, on connaît une traduction arménienne de ce sermon.

En 1902, Paul Bedjan a publié une édition de cette homélie fondée sur le manuscrit de Londres, BL Add 12165¹⁹. En 1905, Anton Baumstark a également donné une traduction de cette même pièce; celle-ci était basée sur le manuscrit de Jérusalem, syriaque 43²⁰.

Il s'agit d'une poésie syriaque de Jacques de Saroug en douze vers métriques. L'auteur, mort en 521, aurait prononcé cette homélie, probablement avant la fin du V^e siècle, plus précisément en 489, devant le concile monophysite qui était

19. P. Bedjan, *S. Martyrii qui et Sahdona quae supersunt omnia*, Paris-Leipzig, 1902, p. 709-719.

20. A. Baumstark "Zwei syrische Dichtungen auf das Entschlafen der allerseligsten Jungfrau", in *OrChr* 5 (1905), p. 91-99. Le ms. édité par Baumstark présente de nombreuses variantes par rapport à celui publié par Bedjan.

reuni à Nisibe, dans l'église de Saint Cyriaque. Ce serait donc une oeuvre de jeunesse du célèbre orateur syriaque.

M. Jugie a douté de l'authenticité de l'attribution de cette homélie à Jacques de Saroug, uniquement à cause de l'âge tardif des manuscrits qui la contiennent²¹. En revanche, pour ce critique, le fait que l'homélie parle de la sépulture de Marie non pas à Gethsèmani, mais "sur le sommet du Mont des Galiléens ou des Oliviers milite en faveur de son authenticité.²² De fait, aucune raison n'autorise douter de l'authenticité de l'attribution de cette homélie à Jacques de Saroug.

A partir du contenu de l'écrit, certains auteurs ont émis l'hypothèse que cette pièce avait été composée pour la fête de la dormition, celle-ci aurait donc existé dans l'Eglise syriaque monophysite dès la fin du Vème siècle²³. M. Jugie s'est élevé contre une telle hypothèse²⁴. Selon lui, à l'époque de Jacques de Saroug, c'est-à-dire à la fin du Vème siècle et au début du VIème siècle, "l'Eglise syrienne, comme l'Eglise grecque, ne connaît qu'une seule fête mariale, à savoir, la Mémoire de Sainte Marie, préparatoire à la fête de Noël". Pour lui, même si la pièce est de Jacques de Saroug, elle n'a pénétré dans l'office liturgique qu'après l'institution de la fête de la dormition. La position de cet auteur, qui repose uniquement sur les titres divergents que la pièce porte dans les divers manuscrits, est discutable: la fête de la mémoire de Marie, à Jérusalem en tout cas, était célébrée au mois d'août et non pas au mois de décembre.

Pour O. Faller²⁵, cette poésie est inspirée par la fête du jour où elle fut prononcée, et cette fête, conclut-il, n'est autre que celle de l'assomption au 15 août. Cette opinion repose sur deux arguments. Le premier relève de la critique externe: il s'agit du titre de la poésie dans un manuscrit du XIIème-XIIIème siècle, qui affirme qu'elle fut prononcée le 14 août. Le second relève de la critique interne, dans les mots répétés plus de dix fois "*Hoc*

21. Cf. M. Jugie, "La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vierge dans la tradition des cinq premiers siècles", in EOr 25 (1926), p. 283.

22. Cf. M. Jugie, op. cit., in EOr 25 (1926), p. 283. n. 1.

23. Notamment A. Baumstark.

24. Cf. M. Jugie, op. cit., in EOr 25 (1926), p. 282-283.

25. Cf. O. Faller, *De Priorum Saeculorum Silentio circa Assumptionem B. Mariae Virginis*, Rome, 1946, p. 20-22.

die... Hoc die...” l’auteur voit la mention d’un anniversaire liturgique.

A. Raes²⁶ est d’un avis contraire. Pour lui, dans cette pièce le poète distingue nettement le sort du corps de la Vierge et celui de son âme ; le corps est mis en terre, l’âme est accompagnée au ciel par les séraphins et les anges. Autrement dit, *Hoc die* désigne le jour de la vraie sépulture et non pas celui d’un anniversaire. Il en conclut qu’il n’y a dans cette poésie aucun témoignage de l’assomption, mais seulement de la dormition; il n’y voit par ailleurs aucun report direct avec une fête mariale.

Sans rejoindre totalement la position de A. Raes, il apparaît que rien ne permet de mettre en doute l’existence d’une fête de la dormition qui aurait été célébrée dès la fin du V^{ème} siècle dans l’Eglise syriaque monophysite, et dont la présent homélie serait un précieux témoin.

Caractéristiques doctrinales

L’auteur de cette pièce décrit les funérailles de Marie dans un style poétique et avec une fantaisie extraordinaire. Elles ont lieu derrière un voile de nuages brillants sur le Mont des Oliviers. Tous les chœurs des anges et les âmes des saints participent avec les apôtres aux obsèques que Jésus préside:

“Et ainsi, il exécuta les funérailles de sa mère selon le
corps,
sur le haut de la montagne, au milieu des nuages clairs. Les
funérailles du grand Moïse étaient exécutées par Dieu,
comme
celle de Marie sur la Montagne des Galiléens”²⁷.

Le parallélisme entre la fin de Marie et celle de Moïse exclut un parallèle entre Marie et Jésus; il exclut aussi la conception d’assomption avec résurrection.

La poésie décrit de très près le moment où Jean, soutenu par les anges, pose le corps de Marie dans le tombeau

26. Cf. A. Raes “Aux origines de la fête de l’Assomption en Orient”, in *OrChrP* 12 (1946), p. 271-272.

27. Cf. ms. Jerusalem syriaque 43, f. 23vC.

du rocher; elle décrit en détail comment toute la création éprouve un tel moment, en frissonnant, en jubilant, en revivant en plus grande beauté à une vie plus intensive; elle se termine ensuite par une prière à la Mère de Dieu qui exclut toute idée d'une résurrection du corps. Elle dit clairement que c'est "l'âme de la Mère de Dieu que les anges font rentrer dans la patrie éternelle"²⁸.

Pour l'auteur, il est évident comme le dit Dt 34, 6 à propos du tombeau de Moïse, que le tombeau de la Marie est inconnu "jusqu'à nos jours". Cette incise est très importante: elle permet de soutenir que, dans les milieux monophysites de la fin du Vème siècle, on ignorait tout de la tombe de Marie, si ce n'est qu'elle devait se situer sur le Mont des Oliviers.

L'homélie de Jacques de Saroug présuppose donc clairement la croyance à la dormition, et non pas cella à l'assomption.

Si cette homélie est authentique, elle est un témoin très important, puisqu'on peut la dater très précisément de la fin du Vème ou du début du VIème Jacques de Saroug ayant vécu de 449 à 521. Elle est une des rares pièces de l'Histoire de la dormition et de l'assomption de Marie que l'on puisse dater aussi sûrement et qui fournisse des informations précises au sujet de la fête du 15 août, qui commémorait la dormition²⁹.

11/2. Homélie sur la Dormition de Marie attribuée à Jean de BIRTHA (BHO 679)

L'homélie sur la dormition de Marie attribuée à Jean de BIRTHA est connue par trois manuscrits au moins.

D'après certains critiques, dont P. Peeters³⁰ et A. Baumstark³¹, cette pièce ressemblerait à l'homélie sur la dormition de Marie de Timothée de Gargara, qui a vécu au XIème siècle (BHO 678)³².

28. Cf. ms. Jerusalem syriaque 43, f. 24rB.

29. Cf. V. Vona, *Omelia mariologica di S. Giacomo di Sarug*. Introduzione, traduzione dal siriano e commento, Rome, 1953.

30. Cf. P. Peeters, in *AnBoll* 29 (1910), p. 476. L'auteur de cette remarque avoue qu'il n'a pas le moyen de contrôler jusqu'à quel point s'étend cette ressemblance.

31. Cf. A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, Bonn, 1922, p. 191. L'auteur, dans l'expectative, préfère ranger cette pièce parmi les œuvres de Timothée de Gargara.

32. Cette homélie a été éditée par G. Cardahi *Liber thesauri de arte poetica syrorum necnon de eorum poetarum vitis et carminibus*. Rome, 1875, p. 144-159.

En 1905, Anton Baumstark a donné une édition de cette pièce, accompagnée d'une traduction latine.³³ Cette édition repose sur un seul manuscrit.

Il s'agit d'une poésie métrique sur la dormition de Marie à Jérusalem. L'auteur de l'homélie se réfère explicitement au témoignage du Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite; celui-ci sert de garantie à l'écrit.³⁴ Il n'est pas étonnant que l'auteur cite un témoin qui est plutôt réservé vis-à-vis de l'assomption.

Selon M. Jugie, cette homélie attribuée à Jean de Britha présente "des ressemblances frappantes avec certains passages des homélies d'André de Crète" sur l'assomption.³⁵ L'auteur ne croit pas que ces rencontres d'idées et d'expressions, en ce qui concerne la mort de Marie, soient fortuites; pour lui, Jean de Britha dépend d'André de Crète.

La poésie métrique de Jean de Britha est impossible à dater, étant donné le mystère qui plane sur son auteur. Elle est vraisemblablement postérieure au Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite qui est cité à André de Crète. Elle ne saurait donc être antérieure au VIII^{ème} siècle.

Caractéristiques doctrinales

L'auteur affirme clairement que le corps de Marie est resté incorruptible par la puissance de Jésus, mais il ne dit pas qu'il a été ressuscité.

Il décrit le sort final de Marie de la manière suivante: l'âme est transférée au paradis; quant au corps, il n'en est rien dit, si ce n'est une allusion furtive à son incorruption.

C'est pourquoi on peut affirmer que cet écrit témoigne de la croyance à la dormition, comme tous les documents de la tradition littéraire syriaque.

Les rares pièces homilétiques consacrées à la commémoration du sort final de Marie ignorent l'assomption et proclament la dormition, tout comme l'ensemble de la documentation hagiographique.

33. A. Baumstark, op. cit., in OrChr5 (1905), p. 100-125.

34. Cf. A. Baumstark, op. cit., in OrChr 5 (1905), p. 110-112.

III. Documentation liturgique

La liturgie syriaque nous a conservé les plus anciens documents connus, notamment pour ce qui est des martyrologes et des ménologes.

En ce qui concerne la fête de la dormition de Marie, il faut souligner le silence des sources liturgiques avant le VII^{ème} siècle. Le martyrologe syriaque de 411, édité par F. Nau, ne contient aucune notice concernant Marie.³⁶

La documentation liturgique se partage en fonction des divisions des Eglises syriaques. L'Eglise jacobite a précédé l'Eglise nestorienne dans la célébration de la fête de la dormition. Aussi présenterai-je d'abord la documentation liturgique de l'Eglise jacobite et ensuite celle de l'Eglise nestorienne.

III/ 1. La fête de la dormition dans l'Eglise jacobite

Les ménologes jacobites marquent très nettement la triple commémoration mariale attestée dans les *Transitus Mariae* de langue syriaque.³⁷ L'un d'entre eux ne mentionne que la première fête et omet les autres.³⁸

Entre les ménologes et les *Transitus Mariae*, des différences sont cependant à relever.³⁹

Certains ménologes ajoutent au 15 du mois de Kanun II (= 15 janvier), une célébration supplémentaire assez semblable à celle du 26 du mois de Kanun I (= 26 décembre).⁴⁰ Il est possible de voir là une influence de la liturgie copte, qui place au 21 du mois de Tobé (= 16 janvier) la dormition de Marie.

35. Cf. M. Jugie, op. cit., Vatican, 1944, p. 243.

36. Cf. F. Nau *Un martyrologe et douze ménologes syriaques*, Paris, 1912, p. 5-26 (PO 10).

37. Les ménologes jacobites ont bénéficié d'une excellente édition que l'on doit à F. Nau op. cit., Paris, 1912 (PO 10).

38. Il s'agit du ménologe Londres BL Add 17134 (de la fin du VII^{ème} siècle), qui mentionne au 26 de Kanun I: *Memoire de la Mere de Dieu*. Cf. F. Nau op. cit., Paris, 1912, p. 31 (PO 10).

39. Seule la Dormitio en "Six Livres" est prise en compte. La Dormitio en "Cinq Livres", à cause de son caractère melkite, ne peut pas être comparée à des ménologes d'origine monophysite.

40. Il s'agit des ménologes Londres BL Add 14519 (du XI^{ème}-XII^{ème} siècle) et Londres BL Add 14503 (de l'an 1166).

Dans d'autres ménologes, la première commémoration, celle de *Notre-Dame des semences*, a été déplacée du 26 du mois de I (= 29 décembre) au 15 du mois de Kanun II (= 15 janvier).⁴¹ Selon M. Jugie, ce déplacement est à imputer à une volonté d'uniformisation des dates, toutes fixées au quinzième jour du mois.⁴²

Dans tous les ménologes, la dernière commémoration, celle de *Notre-Dame des vignes*, a été déplacée du 13 au 15 du mois de Ab (= août). Il est possible que ce changement intervienne sous l'influence du Décret de l'empereur Maurice.⁴³

En ce qui concerne le titre de la fête du 15 août, il faut remarquer que la plupart des ménologes jacobites parlent de la mort de la Mère de Dieu, de son départ, de sa migration. Par exemple, dans un des ménologes que Moïse de Nisibe a transporté à Scète en 932, on trouve au 15 août: *La sainte et illustre Mère de Dieu: par toute la terre, on fête sa mort*.⁴⁴ Cette terminologie renvoie à l'idée de dormition et non à celle d'assomption.

Le tableau suivant permet d'avoir une vue d'ensemble des notices mariales fournies par les ménologes.⁴⁵

41. Il s'agit de deux ménologes d'Alep datés du XVI^e et du XVII^e siècle, qui mentionnent au 15 de Kanun II: *La Mère de Dieu qui préside aux semences*.

42. Cf. M. Jugie op. cit., Vatican, 1944, p. 302.

43. Le Décret de l'empereur Maurice (582-602), d'après l'historien byzantin Nicéphore Calliste (XIV^e siècle), institue la fête de la dormition à la date du 15 août.

44. Il s'agit du ménologe Londres BL Add 14504. Cf. F. Nau, op. cit., Paris, 1912, p. 44 (PO 10).

45. Tous les ménologes publiés par F. Nau ne figurent pas dans ce tableau. Dans l'ensemble, les sept ménologes qui ne sont pas pris en compte présentent les mêmes caractéristiques que les ménologes d'Alep.

Ms. Londres BL Add 17134 fin du VIIème	Ms. Londres BL Add 14504 IXème	Ms. Londres BL 14519 XIème-XIIème	Ms. Londres BL 14503 an 1166	Ménologes d'Alep (2Mss.) XVIème-XVIIème
26 Kanun I Mémoire de la Mère de Dieu	26 Kanun I La Sainte Mère de Dieu Marie	26 Kanun I La Mère de Dieu.	26 Kanun I. La Vierge en tout et la bienheureu- se Mère de Dieu Marie.	26 Kanun I Les louanges de la Mère de Dieu.
		15 Kanun II La Mère de Dieu.	15 Kanun II La sainte et la toute belle Mère de Dieu. Notre Dame Marie.	15 Kanun II La Mère de Dieu qui préside aux semences
	15 Iar La Sainte Mère de Dieu Marie.	15 Iar La Mère de Dieu.	15 Iar La Mère de Dieu a l'occasion des epis.	15 Iar La Mère de Dieu qui protège les epis
	15 Ab La sainte et illustre Mère de Dieu Marie, par toute la terre on fête sa mort.	15 Ab Mort de la Mère de Dieu.	15 Ab Le départ de la Vierge Mère de Dieu.	15 Ab Départ de la Mère de Dieu Marie.

Une constatation s'impose: les ménologes, qui ne fournissent qu'une notice mariale au 26 du mois de Kanun I, pourraient bien relever d'une époque où on ne célébrait qu'une seule fête en l'honneur de Marie. Cette fête concernait sa mémoire, et non pas sa dormition. Quant à la date du 26 Kanun I, elle renvoie à la célébration mariale de Constantinople, qui avait lieu le 26 décembre.

La documentation liturgique permet d'établir que l'Eglise jacobite, contrairement aux Eglises égyptienne et éthiopienne, également monophysites, célèbre au 15 août le souvenir de la mort de Marie; elle ignore sa résurrection et admet que son corps, transporté en un lieu connu ou inconnu, est conservé incorruptible jusqu'à la résurrection générale.⁴⁶

46. En ce qui concerne les Eglises jacobites maronite, melkite et catholique, cf. I. Nasrallah, "La devotion mariale en Syrie", in H. du Manoir (Ed.), *Maria*, vol 4, Paris, 1956, p. 875-883 (point de vue melkite); M. Doumith "La liturgie syro-marionite", H. du Manoir (Ed.), *Maria*, t. 1, Paris, 1949, p. 327-340; M. Doumith "La devotion mariale populaire au Liban", In H. du Manoir (Ed.), *Maria*, t. 4, Paris, 1956, p. 867-874 (point de vue maronite)

III/2. La fête de la dormition dans l'Eglise nestorienne

Comme on a pu le voir, la Vie de la Vierge syriaque est un important témoin de la liturgie mariale dans l'Eglise nestorienne.

En accord avec le calendrier de la Vie de la Vierge syriaque, le patriarche Iso'yabh III (647-658?), grand réformateur de la liturgie nestorienne, a fixé la commémoration de la dormition au mois de Kanun I, à la veille du samedi qui suit la Nativité de Jésus: "Car le jourdu départ de Marie de ce monde fut le jour de la naissance de Notre Seigneur; au jour où elle lui donna naissance, elle partit de ce monde. Et les docteurs de l'Eglise ordonnèrent que la première commémoration de la Vierge devait se placer après la fête de la Nativité".⁴⁷

Par la suite, sous l'influence de l'Eglise jacobite, l'Eglise nestorienne fixa au 15 août la fête de la dormition et instaura même, comme les autres Eglises orientales, un jeûne préparatoire de 15 jours, appelé "jeûne de la migration de la Vierge". Ce changement n'apparaît pas dans la Vie de la Vierge syriaque. On ne sait pas à quelle époque ce changement s'effectua, mais il ne peut être que postérieur au VIII^{ème} siècle, puisqu'au milieu du VII^{ème} siècle, le patriarche Iso'yabh III est en faveur d'une célébration de la dormition au mois de Kanun I.

On ne connaît aucune homélie nestorienne consacrée à la fête de la dormition.

Tout comme l'Eglise jacobite, à qui elle emprunte beaucoup en ce qui concerne le sort final de Marie, l'Eglise nestorienne célèbre au 15 août la mort de Marie; elle proclame la dormition et ignore l'assomption.⁴⁸

La documentation liturgique de langue syriaque, tant celle de l'Eglise jacobite que celle de l'Eglise nestorienne, s'accorde avec les données doctrinales des textes hagiographiques et homilétiques relatifs aux traditions sur le sort final de Marie.

47. Cf. R. H. Connolly, *Anonymi auctoris. Expositio officiorum Ecclesiae. Georgio Arbelensi vulgo adscripta*, Rome, 1915, p. 116-117 (CSCO 76).

48. En ce qui concerne l'Eglise nestorienne catholique," cf. A. M. Massonnat, "Marie dans la liturgie chaldéenne", in H. du Manoir (Ed), *Maria*, t. 1, Paris, 1949, p. 341-351.

Il est temps maintenant de réunir dans un tableau toutes les données liturgiques syriaques concernant les commémorations mariales.⁴⁹

Calendrier de la Dormitio syriaque dite des "Six Livres"	Calendrier de la Dormitio syriaque dite des "Cinq Livres"	Calendrier de la Vie de la Vierge syriaque	Calendriers des ménologies syriaques
<u>3 commémorations mariales:</u> - 24 du mois de Kanun I (objet: protection des semences) - 15 du mois de Iar (Objet: protection des épis). - 13 du mois de Ab (objet: protection des vignes et mémoire de la mort et du départ de Marie)	<u>3 commémorations mariales:</u> - 6 du mois de Kanun II (objet: mémoire de la mort de Marie) - 15 du mois de Iar (Objet: protection des épis). - 13 du mois de Ab (objet: protection des vignes)	<u>3 commémorations mariales:</u> - au mois de Kanun I, le samedi suivant la Nativité (objet: mémoire de la mort de Marie) - 15 du mois de Iar (objet: protection des épis) - 15 du mois de Ab (objet: protection de la vigne)	<u>3 ou 4 commémorations mariales:</u> - 26 du mois de Kanun I (objet: mémoire de Marie). - 15 du mois de Kanun II (objet: protection des semences); - 15 du mois de Iar (objet: protection des épis); - 15 du mois de Ab (objet: la mort ou le départ de Marie)

Les documents les plus anciens montrent une importante divergence à l'intérieur de l'Eglise syriaque occidentale, de même qu'entre cette dernière et l'Eglise syriaque orientale. L'Eglise jacobite a commémoré la mort de Marie soit au 6 janvier, soit au 13 août. L'Eglise nestorienne a célébré la mort de Marie le samedi suivant la fête de la nativité de Jésus.

Le calendrier nestorien semble avoir été influencé par le calendrier de la Dormitio en "Cinq Livres", plutôt que par le calendrier de la Dormitio en "Six Livres". Rien d'étonnant que

49. Les données concernant les ménologies sont resumées. Pour plus de détail, cf. *supra*, p.

les nestoriens aient préféré adopter un calendrier d'origine probablement melkite plutôt qu'un calendrier d'origine monophysite.

Plus tard, les deux Eglises syriaques adopteront la date du 15 août, à des époques et pour des raisons différentes.

Peut-on retracer, à partir des éléments examinés, l'histoire de l'origine et de l'évolution de la fête de la dormition en Syrie occidentale et orientale?

Avant la fin du V^{ème} siècle, on constate l'existence d'une fête de la dormition dans l'Eglise syriaque monophysite; l'homélie de Jacques de Saroug en est le précieux témoin.

Au VI^{ème} siècle, le calendrier de la Dormitio Syriaque dite des "Six Livres" nous apprend que la fête de la dormition est célébrée le 13 août. De la même époque, le calendrier de la Dormitio syriaque dite des "Cinq Livres" place la dormition de Marie au 6 janvier, comme la nativité de Jésus. Il faut donc postuler que ces deux calendriers, qui ont coexisté, sont issus de deux milieux syriaques différents, voire opposés. Comme je l'ai déjà dit, il est possible que le premier calendrier ait subi l'influence de Jérusalem, qui célébrait, au 13 ou au 15 août, d'abord une fête en l'honneur de la mémoire puis une fête en l'honneur de la dormition; il est possible que le second ait subi l'influence de Constantinople, qui commémorait, au 26 décembre ou au 6 janvier,⁵⁰ une fête en l'honneur de la mémoire. Allant dans le même sens, il est donc possible de proposer:

– que le calendrier de la Dormitio en "Six Livres" provienne de milieux monophysites;

– que le calendrier de la Dormitio en "Cinq Livres" dérive de milieux monophysites ralliés à Justinien, et peut-être même de milieux melkites.

Quoiqu'il en soit, dès la fin du VI^{ème} siècle, la date du 15 août s'impose pour célébrer la fête de la dormition de Marie; la plupart des ménologes Jacobites l'attestent.

50. Ces deux dates s'expliquent au regard des fêtes de la nativité et de l'épiphanie de Jésus dont le sens varia au gré des conflits christologiques et selon les provinces de l'Empire romain.

L'Eglise nestorienne célèbre la fête de la dormition de Marie dans le sillage de la fête de la nativité de Jésus. Elle paraît subir l'influence de l'Eglise melkite. Cette situation est attestée au milieu du VII^{ème} siècle.

Plus tard, on le sait, elle adoptera la date du 15 août; ce changement ne saurait être antérieur au VIII^{ème} siècle.

Si l'évolution de la fête de la dormition se laisse entrevoir, il est en revanche plus difficile de remonter à son origine, qui ne se comprend qu'au regard de toutes les traditions linguistiques sur le sort final de Marie et des nombreux conflits issus du concile de Chalcédoine de 451. Question intéressante, mais qui dépasse le cadre de cette contribution.

Puisque nous sommes dans le pays de mission de l'apôtre Saint Thomas, un mot sur la dévotion mariale des chrétiens du Kérala de rites syriens, jacobite ou nestorien.⁵¹ Il est difficile de savoir quand et comment le culte marial se développa parmi les "chrétiens de Saint Thomas". Avant l'arrivée des colonisateurs portugais, il n'est pas facile de connaître la répartition des diverses influences syriennes.

Toutefois, en Inde du Sud, quelque soit l'influence subie-jacobite ou nestorienne- la liturgie mariale adoptée correspond en gros à celle des ménologes syriaques déjà examinés. En tout cas, le sort final de Marie est célébré le 15 août, et, à ma connaissance, on ne trouve pas trace d'une autre date.

Les chrétiens syriaques de l'Inde conservent, ce qui est logique, d'importantes traditions liturgiques mariales originaires de Syrie. Outre la fête de la dormition, rappelons pour exemple la fête des moissons qui se placent sous la protection de Marie, et qui se célèbre au 15 du mois de mai (en Syrie, il s'agit de la fête des épis). Ce jour là, on porte la statue de Marie en procession à travers les campagnes, et on apporte à l'autel de Marie les prémices de la récolte.⁵² Commémoration liturgique que l'on

51. M. Thekaekara "La devotion a Notre Dame dans les Indes", in H. du Manoir (Ed)., Maria, t. 4, Paris, 1956, p. 917-933, L'auteur s'intéresse essentiellement à la dévotion mariale des catholiques indiens.

52. Dans l'Eglise jacobite du Kerala, la fête de la moisson appartient au calendrier liturgique, et on la connaît sous le titre de *Commémoration de la Mère protectrice de la Moisson*.

retrouve pour la première fois dans les calendriers transmis par les Dormitiones syriaques.

Notons enfin que ces mêmes Dormitions syriaques font transporter, par les anges, l'apôtre Thomas d'Inde à Bethléem, pour qu'il puisse assister à la fin de Marie, et le font ramener par la suite à sa mission.⁵³



SAYINGS

The prayer of someone who harbours a grudge is a seed upon a stone.

An ascetic without compassion is a tree that beares no fruit.

A rebuke springing from envy is a poisoned arrow.

The praise of a crafty man is hidden snare.

A foolish counsellor is a blind watchman: a wise counsellor is a wall of confidence.

Live with vultures rather than with the covetous:

live amidst lions rather than among the proud.

Be persecuted, rather than be a persecutor.

Be crucified, rather than be a crucifier.

Be treated unjustly, rather than treat anyone unjustly.

Be oppressed, rather than be an oppressor.

Be gentle, rather than zealous.

Lay hold of goodness, rather than justice.

(St Isaac of Syria)

53. Cf. les Dormitiones syriaques dites des "Six Livres" ou des "Cinq Livres", au Livre II.

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David Lane*

The work of Subhalmaran

I

This article builds on an earlier study,¹ presented to the Symposium Syriacum IV, in that it discusses one work (*ktb' dmnwt'*) identified from a collection of writings by Mar Subhalmaran, sometime Metropolitan of Bêt Selôk which is now Kirkuk in Iraq. He lived in the closing stages of the Sassanian rule, and was involved in the unfortunate and unsuccessful attempt to persuade Chosroes II to restore the Catholicate. He himself was exiled for his part in the attempt. Now the Paris manuscript B. N. Arabe 6725 folio 2 and the London manuscript B. L. Or 6714 folios 1-73 present a collection of his writings on spiritual life, regulations for monastic living, and homiletic exegesis; but the concern of the present study is only with the Paris folio 2 and the London folios 1-30. Here there are fifteen chapters concerning the divine gifts, or virtues, whose foundation and crown is love—the love which the Christian has for the Father. These virtues and this love are seen chiefly and most characteristically in our Lord, but are to be seen too in the figures of the Old Testament, the New Testament, and in past and present guides of the Christian life. The present article is to give some description of the work, *ktb' dmnwt'*, and to convey its flavour with reference to its content and the author's method.

* (Dr. David Lane is the Principal of the college of Resurrection, Mirfield, West Yorkshire, U. K. and a renowned scholar in Syriac literature).

1. O. C. A. 229 (1987), pp 411-417.

The fifteen chapters vary in length and in quality. The 8th on Fasting is long, and the 9th on Asceticism is short; and the writer seems happiest and most successful when he can give instances of the virtue or gift as embodied in scriptural persons, especially when an extended homiletic exegesis engages the attention and the imagination of author and reader alike. A particular example, too long to quote, is the series of linked debates between Jesus and the Devil which is based on the Temptation narrative.² Here quotation, allusion, spiritual penetration and a ribald wit combine to give a most attractive passage which can compare with the verse dialogues of Syriac³ or mystery plays of Western tradition. But while there may be pleasure in the method, there is sternness in the purpose. The effect is (to give a Western example), that of St John of the Cross.⁴ Subhālmāran uses the traditional terms of demons and passions⁵ as being agents which first destabilise a person and then detach from God. St John too, (also writing for a limited readership) goes beyond the physical senses into the imagination and fantasy where the final conflict between self-will and divine will must take place. It is not enough to be detached from objects of desire or anger; it is necessary to be free from the source of desire or anger so that the will to love God alone is unhindered. With both Subhālmāran and St John there is the same knife-sharp penetration to essentials, for both are in the tradition of the desert fathers. Conquest of the sins of the flesh is not a matter of the voluntary renunciation of the things of the world and persons in the world alone. Rather it is a conquest of the fantasies which their memory stirs and the emotional pull which their absence

2. Chapter 8. The devil is called "a dog forever barking, now made dumb."

3. e. g. S. P. Brock, "A Syriac verse homily", *Le Museon* 102 (1989), pp 93-103.

4. cf the convenient and valuable Ruth Burrows, *Ascent to Love*, London 1987.

5. These may be summarised as *rgt'* and *hmt'*, though Subhālmāran does not use these terms as such he is more concerned to characterise specific instances for which these are general terms. *Rgt'* covers the overmastering urge draw into oneself (food and self-enhancing possessions and companions), *hmt'* the overmastering urge to reject (in impatience, contempt or jealousy): So specific and portrayable replaces, for Subhālmāran, the general and abstract. For English equivalent approach the classic instances are William Law. *Introduction to a Devout and Holy Life*, or, earlier and shorter, Earle's *Microcosmographica*.

provokes. There is too the renunciation of the desire for spiritual equivalents where physical satisfaction is denied.

Now this of course, raises the question of those for whom Subhalmaran wrote. He addresses his readers as 'brethren', and uses terms concerning the ascetic life, eremitical or coenobitic (*mdbrnwt'*, '*ksnywt'*, *dyr'*'), and gives instructions about clothing. But at the outset, in the first chapter, he makes it clear that there is only one Christian life, there are not superior and inferior forms of it. He recognises, however, that some may have obligations of family which Scripture as well as society command, and so have to moderate their asceticism to circumstance. So it would seem that the *ktab' dmnwt'* is as much a general work as a specialist one. It inclines in practice, if not in principle, to those who can renounce the circumstances of the present world—monasticism keeps breaking in; but it is best to conclude that he has monastic life in mind rather than in view. For it is the whole race that belongs to Christ and which he perfects.⁶

II

A summary of the fifteen chapters makes it clear that the fifteen gifts or virtues form part of a whole. Their cohesion is suggested by the choice of words, and further made plain in the shape of the argument. The argument is that there is resemblance between creator and created being, a resemblance made plain in Jesus the Messiah who is both image of God and exemplar of humans. The resemblance between creator and created increases rather than removes the need for asceticism, for only is so far as it is purified can the world be an image of its maker: its first state at creation reflects what shall be. In its purified state the world makes plain the nature of God and goodness and virtue, and the restraint of evil whose evidence is passions and demon. As will be seen below, this approach leads to a demonstration of the interlocking of the virtues and gifts whose presence is evidence and guarantee of the purified order. This same cohesion is suggested also by the choice of language. Each gift or fragment is described as either morally beautiful (*spyr*) or desirable (*rhym*), and each is described as built upon, or crowned by, love. The effect is that

6. Chapter 1.

of a building, whose foundations and component parts are lovingly detailed, separately and together. And as well as by argument and choice of words, the interdependence of the fragments and gifts is shown by the cumulative presentation, chapter by chapter. There is a climax in the 14th, concerning the goodness and generosity of God which are to be appropriated and reflected. This suggests that the acceptance of the gifts is a participation in the deity, or at least in the characteristics of the deity. And this is, of course, of a piece with the imitation of Jesus the Messiah, participant in the godhead ('*Ihwt*')— a theme sketched in 2 Peter 1:4 and in St John of the Cross. Imitation and receptivity are the God-given means to enter life eternal, in part knowable and enjoyable now, but in part defined in contrast to the turbulence and tribulation now experienced as the mark of the present. Chapter 15 makes this plain, with discussion and description of concord unity and peace.

But as well as climax, there is interlocking. The relation between the chapters and between the virtues is not that of externally imposed order, nor that of a fixed and given order which needs no demonstration. The order is that of narrative, it has purpose, in that one element leads inevitably to its successor. So here again there is clarity in the relation of parts to whole, and of portions to their origin and flowering. So what at first sight seems haphazard (voluntary giving up of worldly possessions; monastic life; humility; notable obedience; steadfast endurance; patience; kindness; fasting; ascetic life; voluntary poverty; modesty; ordered calm; voluntary poverty; the goodness and kindness of God; concord)⁷ become purposive. The interlocking of each is seen in the ending and beginning of successive chapters. Admittedly there is a lacuna, which means that the end of the first and beginning of the second chapter is missing, but even so the voluntary renunciation and distancing from this world leads irresistably into a discussion of the concept of the displaced person, the exile, voluntary or involuntary, who is such a feature of Syriac asceticism. This chapter 2 ends with a commentary on our Lord's saying "these are my mother and my brothers, who have ordered their life and their dwelling with

7. The Syriac terms are: *msrqwt* ; ('*ksnywt*') ; *mkykwt* ; *mstn'nw* ; *msybrnw* ; *mgrt rwh* ; *bsymwt'swm* ; *nzyrwt* ; *msm'lw* ; *knykwt* ; *slywt* ; '*nwywt*' ; '*lbwt*' ; *wmrhmnwt d'lh* ; *swywt* .

me, and who fulfil the commands of my Father", leading into the next chapter (3) on humility. This humility was taught by our Lord to his disciples, and is suitable both for the righteous and for the penitent, because it is rooted in example and teaching: "unless you become children", where children are understood to be neither small in mind nor in size, but large in simplicity and humility—that is to say, recognizing all as made in the image of God, and showing a readiness to listen to others for advice, wisdom and guidance. In contrast to humility, the humble man, is the headstrong son and the presumptuous disciple—so, inevitably, chapter 4 concerns notable obedience, the stamp on the gold coin of humility. This chapter begins with a discussion on the leaving of one's own will and subordinating it to commandments and precepts – as, it might be said, an expression of loyalty in affection. How unlike the behaviour of Absalom...and then follows instance of lack of notable obedience.

It would be a weariness to continue, as the pattern of Subhalmaran is now clear, and it can be expected that the chapter on notable obedience will be followed by one on patient endurance. And it will be remembered from above that the climax is the participation in divine characteristics with consequence of concord harmony and peace.

III

Something should now be said about the purpose of the work. Not the immediate purpose, the religious life that he had in mind, if not in view, but the theological purpose, with which is associated his Christology and understanding of salvation—that is, the being drawn into life in this world and in that which is to come. Elsewhere it has been shown that his Christology is Cappadocian,⁸ more concerned with Christ's relation to the Father than with the two natures of the incarnate Lord. It will be interesting to see whether further study shows his spirituality similarly to be of a traditional kind, a Gregory of Nyssa to match Basil—a preliminary survey does show resemblances to the former's *On Christian Perfection*.⁹

8. Symposium Syriacum V, Leuven 1988. To appear in *O. C. A.*

9. cf *Patrologia Graeca*, 46, 254–255; 283–286.

The basis of Subhāmaran's redemptive theology is the patterning of life on the Messiah who is sharer in the godhead. A clear example is found in chapter 14, on the necessity of acquiring the godlikeness of the attributes goodness and kindness. The ground of the relationship and likeness (also set out in chapter 1) is creation, an expression of divine goodness and kindness. The description and characterisation of these attributes rests on an exposition of the parable of the two debtors, one of whom does, and one of whom does not, reciprocate goodness and kindness in good and kind generosity. For it is in the unforced and unconstrained expression of this that mankind becomes the image and copy of God, our exemplar. A little further on he develops this theme of making a generous response with what is one's own, and speaks of those who on earth "seize the glorious inheritance of our Lord Messiah and clothe themselves with his holy likeness. A somewhat similar approach is made in the chapter on fasting, where examples of great and creative fasting are given. While our Lord's example of fasting is set out as example and standard, it is pointed out that the Lord's fast was just 40 days—not too little and not too much, lest he be despised for cutting it short or show conceit by making it exceed. Great as the demands are, they are within the normal compass—whether of the fast for a season or of the fast for the day. In fact, Subhāmaran's ready practicality and clear vision of scripture are of the same pattern as the majority of Syriac ascetical writers who regard spiritual activity as simply a more intense and purposive form of daily living. In this way he shows that the real gift and quality of a "patristic" writer is that of pastor and preacher.

IV

It is very much to the point then that Subhāmaran's strength and attractiveness are shown in the telling phrase and delicate exposition of scripture used to the end of alluring individuals to the life in God. Short and telling images and phrases lodge in memory and imagination alike as spur to respond: "What a man sows, that he reaps: beauty in the seed brings beauty in life; goodness of soil brings goodness in growth"; "To sow wisdom in the ear of a fool is to reap a harvest of opposites from his mouth and heart alike"; "Humility is a ladder of many rungs—the topmost in heaven beside the one who humbled himself to death, its lowest rung;" "The embittered heart is hell enough

for itself". Or there are longer passages: one of the fruits of the unity and concord, and its evidence, comes in the last chapter's discussion of that virtue. Moses' unity with the Israelites and with Aaron and Miriam results in the state of their clothing, which matched that of their virtue. The image appears again, in an earlier passage on John the Baptist, example of one who never abandoned his prophet's grab either in palace or prison. Never in his life did he change his clothes—miraculously they adjusted themselves to him for fit, and repaired themselves when in holes. The use of Dt 8:4's reference to clothes not wearing out is not unusual, but it is interesting to note Subhālmāran's use of the same background passage to prove the presence of different virtues.

But perhaps more important are the longer passages which are part quotation, part expansion, part fancy. There are notable passages in the chapters on fasting, on humility and on concord—and in each the method is clear enough. Such figures as Adam, Abraham, Moses (and above all) Jesus the Messiah are taken in climactic order as outstanding examples and patterns. They are outstanding and remarkable, not because they are unusual and inimitable, but because they are signal instances of general and necessary virtues. They demonstrate the possible, not the impossible. Reference to the chapter on humility is instructive. There is a passage which ends "the humble heart is the house of God", having developed the theme that humility gives entry into, and possession of, the land of promise and deliverance. "A trodden path, a road made easy, a place prepared, and our great and humble king awaiting." Examples of this humility are Moses, "a god upon earth"; David "who overcame Saul"; Hezekiah "who overcame Sennacherib"; the Maccabees "who laid low many kings"; Zechariah and Elizabeth "parents of the treasure house of forgiveness"; Mary "who saw her Lord"; Simon, "chief of the companions". Here is carefully built up a firm and positive virtue interpreted and characterised so as to be desirable and imitable. Too long for quotation is the section on the 15th virtue, concord, which is similarly demonstrated from characters in scripture, and above all Jesus the Messiah and the apostles. Concord is both the cause and the consequence of spiritual and physical possibility.

A different, but related approach, is found in such passages as one in chapter 13, concerning voluntary renunciation. This virtue leads to continual meditation, a turning of the gaze, from earthly things to heavenly. Whereas apostles proclaim and prophets pronounce upon the importance of the virtue, our Lord uses the combination of promise and threat in order to coax and gently persuade. To show this, Subhālmāran expands each of the beatitudes and woes in characteristic fashion. "Blessed are those who mourn as an offering for their sins and for the errors of the world, for theirs is the comfort of the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who are like me in poverty, for theirs is the true wealth of good things to come. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness in their understanding and their upright deeds, for they will be satisfied with the good things that are mine." And after the promises, the threats. "Woe to you with riches gained by wrong and by lawless desires, who in your pleasures of the present have received the delight which was yours and yet to come. Woe to you who are filled, being aflame with desires that are unrighteous, for a state of hunger will come upon you in the life to come, and the breaking of your stubborn heart, and you will for ever be in want." (This compares well with the comment on fasting elsewhere: fasting is both preparation and proof for the world to come where there is neither food nor need of it.) Finally, "Woe to us whose heart is hardened by our sins and not made soft by the salve of encouragement."

V

In conclusion, then, the fifteen chapters present a very clear pattern for those whose hope is fixed on a world where there is freedom from passions, demons, and the accompanying physical and spiritual turbulence and distress and detachment from God. The Christian life is both foretaste and preparation for that, whether that life be practised in its entirety outside the boundaries of normal social living, or in principle only within it, amid the constraints of family and business. The foundations and component interrelated segments, the gifts or virtues, are set out in such a way as to show the presuppositions and share the values of Subhālmāran. He presents a pattern of

life given shape by actions and attitudes which interpret and define: a pattern which is found in the fathers, in the scriptures, and above all in Jesus the Messiah. So relationships are established and resemblances made possible in order to be imitators of our Lord himself, who, sharing in the mystery of the godhead, dwelt in the temple of his mother and lived so as to display for us the life of virtue. By invitation, and by imitation of this life of virtue, mankind is brought to that image of God which once was, in Eden, and will be again in the world to come, demons and passions being overcome. Sûbhâ lemāran.



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10. The writer wishes to express gratitude to Dr S. P. Brock for introducing him to Subhalmaran, and for interest and encouragement. And also to the College of the Resurrection, for generous financial support and encouragement. The early work on the text was made possible by financial support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, to whom thanks are expressed.

ANSWERS TO PRAYER

If God is slow to grant your request and you do not receive what you ask for promptly, do not be grieved, for you are not wiser than God.

When this happens to you, it is either because your way of life does not accord with your request, or because the pathways of your heart are at odds with the intention of your prayer.

Or it may be because your inner state is too childish by comparison with the magnitude of the thing you have asked for.

It is not appropriate that great things should fall easily into our hands, otherwise God's gift will be held in dishonour, because of the ease with which we obtain it.

For anything that is readily obtained is also easily lost. whereas everything which is found with toil is preserved with care.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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Rev. Zacharia John *

Holy Spirit in the Anaphorae: a Perspective

Invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit is the Cardinal part of the liturgy, especially the Eucharistic liturgy. In this paper, I would like to focus on the Epiclesis to portray the work of the Holy Spirit in our liturgical tradition.

Let us have a brief survey of the prayers of Epiclesis in some of the ancient liturgies.

The Epiclesis in the Apostolic tradition of Hippolytus of Rome, written about 215 A. D. may be read as follows:

‘And we beseech thee that thou wouldst send thy Holy Spirit on the oblation of thy holy Church. Do thou gather into one and grant to all the Saints who partake the fulness of the Holy Spirit for the confirmation of faith in truth.....’ etc.

The liturgy of St. Sarapion, bishop of Thmuis, in Egypt between 339-362 A. D. reflects the early Alexandrian tradition, which differs from other liturgies in its invocation of the logos rather than of the Spirit.

‘O God of truth, let thy holy word come upon this bread, that the bread may become the body of the word, and upon this cup that, the cup may become the blood of the Truth...’

In the east syrian tradition, the liturgy of Addai & Mari is the oldest one, which is believed to be written in the 4th or 5th century.

* Rev. Fr. Zacharia John is one of the few Syriac Scholars of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of India.

'And may there come, O my Lord, thine Holy Spirit and rest upon this offering of thy servants and bless it and hallow it that it be to us, O my Lord, for the parden of offences and the remission of sins and for the great hope of resurrection from the dead and for new life in the Kingdom of heaven with all those who have been well pleasing in thy sight.....

In the west Syrian tradition, St. James liturgy is of primary importance. All the Churches in Kerala of Antiochean tradition use this liturgy with.

'God our Father, have mercy on us. Send us your Holy Spirit who is equal to you and to your son in Kingship and in essence, who spoke through the old and the new covenants, who descended at the river Jordan on our Jesus Christ in the form of a dove and on the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire so that he may sanctify us and this offering. As we try to analyse these Epiclesis, certain basic questions are to be answered.

- 1) To whom do we pray for the indwelling of the Spirit
- 2) On whom or on what should the Spirit make dwelling
- 3) What must happen as a result of the indwelling.

The liturgy of Hyppolytus of Rome presents as a thanksgiving prayer to God the Father. According to Serapios and of St. Jame's liturgies, the prayers are addressed to God the Father. But in Addai & Mari, whether the prayers are addressed to the Father or to the Son is not at all clear. In some other ancient liturgies these prayers addressed directly to the Holy Spirit.

The next question is regarding the object upon which the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling. According to the liturgical traditions of Hyppolytus, Serapion, Addai, & Mari, the prayer is offered for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit or the Logos upon the elements offered. In the epiclesis of Serapion the prayer is offered to the Logos and hence the presence of Christ, the incarnate word is referred to. It is often said that in the early period the words, Logos & Spirit were used interchangeably. But the universal acceptance of the Trinitarian doctrine led to the change of the Logos epiclesis to the spirit epiclesis. But in St. James liturgy the prayer is for the dwelling of the Holy Spirit upon the people as well as elements. In the Greek and Syrian liturgies of St. James there is no distinction in this regard. According to

the liturgies of St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil & Theodore, the epiclesis is for the indwelling of the Spirit upon the people as well as the elements.

There is clear indication for the indwelling of the Spirit upon Bread & wine in all the above mentioned liturgies. But in the liturgy of Hyppolytus, Addai & Mari even though there are prayers offered for the sanctification of the elements, there is no prayer offered, that the elements might become the body & blood of Jesus Christ. In the liturgies of Serapion & St. James, the prayer is offered that the Holy Spirit may abide and transmute the bread and wine into the very body & blood of Our Lord.

The benefits of communion are mentioned in the latter part of the Epiclesis.

The petition in Hyppolytus is for the unity and strengthening in True faith by the fulness of the Holy Spirit.

Serapion emphasises healing of diseases, energy for effective ministry, Pardon from judgement etc.

In Addai & Mari, Forgiveness of sin, hope of Resurrection, hope of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God etc are mentioned.

On the other hand, in St. James liturgy the prayer is for the sanctification of the believers so that they might bear fruit for the stability of the Church and for the establishment of the Church on the rock of faith against the gates of hell and for her preservation to the end from strife and error.

The theological significance and relevance of the Epiclesis are to be mentioned in order to grasp the function of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Qurbano.

In the liturgy of St. James the prayer is to God the Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit as already mentioned. Thus petition has got a special significance, i.e. the spirit who spoke through the old & New covenants, who descended at the river Jordan on our Jesus Christ in the form of a dove and on the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire etc.

In both the old & new covenants it is the word regarding the work of salvation that God the Father has declared to the world and both the Old & new covenants are part and parcel of

the divine work of salvation. It is the commission for this salvific work that Jesus Christ received by the Holy Spirit at the time of his baptism. And it is to carry on this ministry that the Church was annointed on the day of pentacost. In short, in the prayer, the celebrant remembers the partnership of the Holy Spirit in salvation history. The Holy Spirit who worked as the transforming divine force in salvation history, might work as the transforming force on the elements and on the believers who offered them. 'The owe living Holy Spirit, who perfects and fulfills all that is and that has been' is to be sent to sanctify the people & their Qurbono.

In some epiclesis the prayer is for the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the elements only and not on the people. According to the Hebrew thinking and Xn thinking the offerings represent the submission of believers. Therefore it is not possible to see the offerings isolated from the doners. The offerings represent the people and hence the indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon them ipso facto includes the people also. Through the Epiclesis both the people and their offerings become under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit.

God the creator, recreates by remoulding through the Holy Spirit. That is why through the indwelling of the spirit the bread & wine become a new reality to us. Even though it is a mystery, and beyond words they become the media for the out pouring of God's grace to humanity through the divine sacrifice.

The elements represent the transformation of the Church. The Church is placed in the sinful world and it represents the sinful world. It is on the bread and wine, the offerings of the sinful Church is sanctified and becomes the body of Christ.

Through the receiving of the holy elements the Church enters into the communion of the broken body and of the blood shed of Our Lord. When we come together to worship we come with sinful separations. But when the Church turns to the part of the body of Christ, separations are removed and becomes part of his broken body. The early Church assembled on the first day of the week and enjoyed this communion. Even today the communion with the sanctified elements prepares the Church for her ministry.



THE HARP

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Leela Jacob*

The background, rationale and the scope for the study of Syriac in the Universities of Kerala

1. Introduction

The main objective of this paper is to evaluate the provisions for Syriac studies in the Universities of Kerala and to probe in to the possibilities of further widening the scope for the same.

2. Background: *Syriac and the St. Thomas Christian Communities in India.*

The St. Thomas christian communities in India share in varying degrees the liturgical, spiritual and theological heritage in Syriac. There was a time when the entire worship, including the daily hours at home, was conducted in Syriac. Col. Munro, the British Resident in Travancore, observed that even in 1816, Syriac language was essential for the worshipping life of the laity among the St. Thomas Christians (see the letter of col. Munro to the Secretary of C. M. S.. at Madras cited in P. Cherian, *The Malabar Syrians and the C. M. S.* p. 341).

It is generally accepted that the eastern Syriac has a longer and earlier usage among the Syrian Christian Communities, although there are differences of opinion as to the theological and ecclesiastical implications of such an East Syrian connection. The

* Mrs. Leela Jacob is the only lady Syriac Professor in India and teaches Syriac in the Catholicate College, Pathanamthitta, Kerala.

transition to the Western Syriac on the part of a significant number of St. Thomas Christians was an effect of the domination of the West Syrian (Jacobite) church especially since 1876. In 1876, in the famous Synod of Mulanthuruthy there was the formal decision to propagate the West Syrian tradition in the Church that accepted the spiritual supremacy of the Patriarch of Antioch. The origins of such a transition can not be traced earlier than 1665, the date of arrival of the first west syrian bishop Mar Gregorios. It can also be pointed out that during the early centuries, till the Portuguese period, the eastern Syriac functioned also as a commercial language for the trade links between this part of the country and the West. The keyrole of the St. Thomas Christian businessmen in these trade-connection can be better understood in this context.

The emergence of the Portuguese power in India and the subsequent ecclesiastical changes weakened the social and economic status of the St. Thomas Christians. Naturally the prominence of Syriac began to decline. As commercial language, Portuguese substituted Syriac. However, during the course of years there evolved a vocabulary in which certain Syriac terms were adapted in the vernacular. For example, *Alahanayan* (the one who is God), *Marthamariamamma* (St. Mary), *Sleevaperunal* (Festival of the Cross), *Aneedhakurbana* (H. Eucharist for the departed), *Tareesapalli* (Orthodox Church), *Mahaitayode* (with faith), *Baskiamma* (the daughter of the contract -- ; wife of a priest) etc. In addition to the adaptations in the local language, there evolved the vernacular liturgical texts, being the translations or transliterations of Syriac. In these texts, many of the technical terms continued to be the same Syriac originals. For example, *Thaksa*, *Kurbana*, *Kauma*, *Kuklion*, *ekba*, *raza*, *kasa*, *pilasa*, *kaukba* etc.

Also, beyond any ecclesiastical and liturgical connection Syriac continued to attract some people due to its beauty and rich literary heritage. With this survey of the background, it would be easier to discuss the rationale of Syriac studies in the universities of Kerala.

3. Rationale for Syriac studies in Kerala

The educational pioneers in Kerala felt the need of enriching the major religious and cultural heritages here. Therefore, along with Sanskrit and Arabic, the importance of Syriac was

noted. The connection between Syriac and the St. Thomas Christian communities was recognised and the study of Syriac as an additional language was encouraged in the higher education. The rationale for the Syriac studies involves the two-fold objectives: i. to enable the students from the Syrian Christian Communities deepen in their own cultural and religious heritages, ii. to enable everyone acquaint with the beauty and richness of Syriac literature.

In connection with the latter point I would like to add a few words. Day by day we witness to the signs of a global culture by way of international integration. In the place of a past slogan, 'national integration' we hear the new slogan of 'inter-national integration' or 'global integration.' In spite of the continuing threats of communalism, racism and regionalism, we can see the signs of an emerging global culture transcending the many frontiers of the past. In this process, the study of ancient and modern languages becomes a necessity. Many of the Western universities have gone ahead in this direction and have promoted the study of languages that have contributed to the world-history and culture. Naturally, Syriac has found a place in the academic programmes of many of these universities. Also, the translations from the Syriac heritage have not only enriched the modern languages but also contributed to their mutual dialogue. In the same way in India, especially in Kerala, it is necessary to encourage the study of languages like Syriac that have definite contribution to the world-literature and culture, to pave our way to the global culture.

However, according to certain corners, the main objective of Syriac studies in the universities of Kerala is ironically presented as "less work, more mark." Many people think that compared to the high load of work expected in Malayalam or Hindi, there is less load of work in Syriac. Here, it would suffice to respond that, there are always chances for short-cuts and 'easygoing' everywhere (including 'doctoral' researches) but that does not mean that all tread the same path.

4. Syriac studies: a probe into the future possibilities

The present provision for Syriac studies in the Universities of Kerala is rather limited. Although, all the universities in Kerala

(Kerala, Mahatma Gandhi and Calicut) have approved Syriac as additional language, still it is not recognised as a language eligible for a full-fledged degree course. There is not yet sufficient provision for the study of Syrian christian culture in the Kerala History. Therefore, a full-fledged degree course in Syriac, as that in Arabic and Sanskrit, can bring to light some of the important but ignored areas of South Indian Culture. The possible relation between Christian life in South India during the early centuries and the Sangham Tamil literature, is an area yet to be explored. Moreover, this can bring to light some of the best fruits of Syriac poetic, philosophical and scientific innovations in history. But this would require, in addition to financial and administrative sanctions, availability of sufficient literature and trained personnel. In the matter of providing literature and trained personnel, the possible contribution of SEERI (St. Ephraim Ecumenical Research Institute) would be monumental. In this connection, may I urge all those interested to co-operate at three levels:

- i. to convince the Universities and the Govt. in Kerala on the matter of special study of Syriac language and Syrian Christian Culture.
- ii. to collaborate with the other academic centres in training the personnel.
- iii. to produce books and research studies on selected avenues of Syrian Christian culture in particular and the Syriac literature in general.



THE HARP

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Benedict Mar Gregorios*

The gem in the centre of the cultural mosaic which is India*

The Syriac Conference organised under the auspices of the St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute has come at a time of critical importance in the life of the St. Thomas Christians in India. As Fr. Van der Ploeg has stated in his book 'The Syriac Manuscripts of St. Thomas Christians', "the first scholar in Kerala systematically to study Syriac manuscripts" was Francis Rose S.J. towards the end of 16th century. Strangely enough, it was not to preserve the manuscripts, but to detect the supposed errors in them and to destroy them. Today things have changed completely and we find our best friends and the strongest supporters of our traditions, among scholars in the West. The President of India, Sri Venkita Raman, a Hindu by religion, recently stated in Trivandrum, while releasing a postage stamp in honour of Blessed Kuriakose Chavara, that he was happy and proud that message of Jesus Christ was received in India centuries before it was announced in many countries of Europe. It is really a matter of pride and satisfaction to all well-meaning people in India, that the Christian religion has been an integral part of the life and culture of this sub-continent from the very beginning.

* Most Rev. Benedict Mar Gregorios, the Archbishop of Trivandrum is the Patron of SEERI.

* This is an excerpt from the address by Archbishop Benedict Mar Gregorios of Trivandrum on the occasion of the Syriac Conference.

It was exactly 1200 years ago that Sri Sankaracharya, the Founder of Hinduism, as we know it today, went about establishing temples and monasteries all over India. Christianity as an organised religion had then a history of 700 years.

The Gospel of Christ was preached here, not in the abstract. The People of God in the Old Testament, who were deliberately prepared by God for the coming of the Saviour, had already given some external form to their revealed religion, in their cultural and social formulae and symbols. The Word of God communicated to them was expressed in a definite cultural milieu. Although Divine Revelation in itself transcends all external forms and realities, it actually was incarnated in the language and the cultural forms of the Jewish people. To some extent, these original expressions have become inseparably associated with God's revelation. "At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our time, the last days, He has spoken to us through His Son, the Son that He has appointed to inherit everything, and through whom, He made everything, there is" (Heb. 1:1).

It was in these particular cultural forms which the early Christians inherited, that the Apostle St. Thomas communicated this new Way of Life to our ancestors in this country. This Way of Life and its concrete forms found a congenial soil in this land of Rishis and Sages. Gradually, and slowly, it struck deep roots here and has continued to this day inspite of the vicissitudes of history.

Christianity in the form it was planted in this land has drawn nourishment from this rich soil; it has become part of the mosaic, which is India. Recently our Prime Minister, Sri Viswanath Pratap Singh told a group of our Bishops, "India is a mosaic; you Christians are a small piece in it; but this piece is the gem in the centre of this mosaic giving it lustre."

I started saying that this is a critical period in our life in this country. I should explain myself; strangely enough, in recent times, some who claim a certain prominence in the community, have begun to entertain doubts about their Christian identity. It would seem, according to them, that only by bodily

taking over typically Hindu customs and practices, they could be good Indians. They are asking for a kind of self-renunciation of all cultural realities from our very ancient Christian traditions and for putting on a new garb, which they think is really India. This seems to me to be a step that is suicidal and is actually the result of gross mis-conceptions of history and theology.

As a matter of fact what goes by Hinduism, its Vedas and customs were imported into this country by Aryans who came from Central Asia and all these religious and cultural elements remained in a nebulous state for many centuries. It was Sri Sankaracharya, who, towards the end of 8th century, gave Hinduism a more or less definite organic form.

At this critical period, it is providential that our friends from abroad are taking such deep interest in the study of this sacred language and its rich literature, as well as in the great spiritual and cultural treasures contained in them. It is a great incentive for all of us, to keep alive our own interest and to promote it in others when it is on the wane. This is not merely a question of preserving an ancient tradition; more than that, it is an immense and invaluable heritage, which has to be preserved, lived and passed on to posterity. It is, in brief, a channel of living waters.

It will be a great risk to try, to divert these waters to channels which are artificially constructed and that in a hurry.

There is the real possibility of the new channels getting completely dried up.

History provides us with instances of such mishaps. This does not mean that the Syrian Christians should, all become experts in that language and its literature. Surely, some should be. All have to be conscious of these treasures which should be kept alive in their daily lives. The debris and the slush that have perhaps accumulated in the ancient channels should be cleared so that water flows freely and in abundance.

The Syrian Christians in Kerala, especially the Catholics and Orthodox, have the great blessing of a life, centred upon

the liturgy. Indeed, the II Vatican Council teaches that for the Christian Community the liturgy should be the source, the moving spirit and the apex of Christian life. There is in fact, all over the Church, a great effort to realise this ideal. It is the great advantage of the Syrian Christians in Kerala, that they have a continuous tradition in this respect. The Sacraments are celebrated with intense participation of the people. The official prayers of the Church, among us, are not-set aside solely for the priests and the Religious. The canonical hours, the breviary, according to the seasons of the ecclesiastical cycle, are prayed by every devout family all throughout the year.

As a consequence, the life of the Church in Kerala is an object of admiration for all. The stability in family life, the numerous vocations to priesthood and Religious life, the loyalty to the traditions of the Fathers, the respect for the teaching authority, all these are, in no small measure, due to the inspiration of a living and wholly participated liturgy. The Malankara Church owes to itself and to the Universal Church to keep alive and to foster this tradition.

FOLLOWING CHRIST

Do not be astonished if, when you begin to practise virtue, severe tribulations break out against you on every side.

Virtue is not accounted virtue if it is not accompanied by difficulty and by labours.

That is why all those who in the fear of the Lord wish to live in Jesus Christ will suffer affliction.

For he says, Whoever wants to follow me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. If anyone wishes to save his life in comfort, he will lose it; if anyone shall lose his life for my sake, he shall find it.

For this reason, then, our Lord placed before you the cross, that you might sentence yourself to death, and then send forth your soul to go after him.

(St Isaac of Syria)

THE HARP

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Kaniamparampil*

A Brief Sketch of SYRIAC IN INDIA

1. The Kerala Tradition says that St. Thomas arrived at Cranganade in 52 A. D. The first introduction of Syriac Language therefore in Indian soil goes back to the 1st Century. Scholars say that the Language spoken by our Lord, His Mother and disciples was Aramaic, the spoken Language of Palestine at that time.

2. The Syrian colonisation of 325 AD, under the guidance of Bishop Joseph of Urha (Edessa) and the leadership of Thomas of Cana enhanced the growth of Syriac in Kerala. In all probability, they might have brought down Syriac Liturgy and Rituals. Moreover, records are extant that there were Indian students in the great college at Antioch.

(Fr. Placid, Malabar Syrian Church)

3. This new connection between Malabar and the Middle East Churches, paved the way for further arrivals of Prelates either from Bagdad or from Antioch; who used Syriac, as the Liturgical Language. Mar Sabor and Mar Prodh who arrived at Kollam around 825 established many churches and ordained many; by all means spread the study of Syriac, when all prayers and High Mass were conducted in Syriac.

* V. Rev. Kurien Kaniamparampil Cor-Episcopa a renowned Syriac Scholar from Tiruvalla. He was the president of the Board of Syriac Studies of the Kerala University, Trivandrum, Kerala.

4. Next come, the Persian crosses in the Big Church Kottayam and also in Muttuchira and some other Churches with Syriac inscriptions in Estrangela, of 10th or 11th Century origin and an asset to the Syrians in India.

5. At the beginning of the 19th century, Dr. Clandius Buchanan of England visited Mar Dionysius T., Metropolitan of the Jacobites. The Bishop presented him with a Syriac Bible (still preserved in the Cambridge University Library) presenting it, the Bishop said that it was preserved here for nearly one thousand years; which shows that Syriac books from time to time, were brought down from the Middle east; and the local clergy were well-versed in the language.

6. The period of the Prelates from Bagdad from 1490 to 1599, (when Bishops Yakoob, Simon Youseph and Abraham were governing the Malabar Church) was undoubtedly an era of growth for the Syriac Language in Kerala—Church historians mention of a Syriac New Testament, copied by a Deacon of Bishop Yakoob (which is preserved in the Vatican Library). Before the Synod of Diamper in 1599, Archbishop Dom. Alexis Menezis exhibited before Archdeacon George, a number of Syriac books which were in use here, in all of which he found out “heretical teachings” (James Hough) such books were burnt together with many other valuable manuscripts. Indeed – a great loss, as far as, the language is concerned.

7. Fr. Roz (afterwards Bishop) “well versed in Syriac and Chaldaic” was appointed by the Arch Bishop to examine and correct books, used here in Malabar, which shows that some-how or other Eastern as well as Western Syriac had been in use in Kerala.

8. The less scholarly in Syriac used books written in *Gershuni* or *Karzon* (Malayalam words in Syriac characters) as in still Vogue in the Middle East (Arabic Words in Syriac characters). This writer could go through a Dictionary (Syriac – Karzon) compiled by Malpan Kadavil Chandy Kathanar (1650–1700) famous Malpan and leader of his time.

9. The growth of West Syriac in Kerala was enhanced by the arrival of Mar Gregorius of Jerusalem in 1665 who brought –

it is said – a good number of manuscript books. Other Antiochean Prelates who came in 1685, 1751 etc. had brought valuable books – liturgical, commentaries and the like which might be seen in the Libraries of Jacobite – Orthodox, and the Mar Thomite Churches and East Syriac books in the libraries of the Catholic Church and of the Church of the East. The SEERI, above all has rendered conspicuous and unique service by its collecting valuable manuscripts and books from the East and the West.

10. Teaching of the language in the past centuries, centred in churches where there were famous and scholarly priests, called Malpans. There were no institutions like the present day Seminaries. Aspirants for priesthood stayed with their Malpans for years and became well-versed in the language. They copied Evangelion, Thaksas and other books for their use. The name of SEERI and its 'all in all' Rev. Dr. Jacob Thekeparampil and Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Panicker (and others) will ever be remembered with respect and esteem for their whole-hearted extentions in preserving the ancient manuscripts and books, and doing everything for the progress of the language.

11. Seminaries

The first attempt was made by the Carmelites at Varapuzha. The Old Seminary at Kottayam, followed in 1812. The Pampakuda Seminary under the V. Rev. Mathew Cor Episcopa Konat and the Zion Monastery Seminary at Kandanadu under the most famous Scholar in Syriac – V. Rev. Augen Remban (Moran Baselious Augen, Catholicos of the East; whose student, the writer is) are worth mentioning. At present the major and minor Seminaries of the Catholic Church, the Old Seminary Kottayam, and Manjanikara and Vettikal Seminaries under competent Malpans, impart studies in Syriac. Manjanikara could boast of V. Rev. Abdul Ahad Remban (Moran Mar Ignatius Yakoob III Patriarch of Antioch and all the East) the most scholarly Malpan of his time, who served there for 12 years.

12. Some of the famous Malpans of yesterday:

- 1) Kadavil Chandy Kathanar
- 2) Kariyattil Joseph Malphan (Bishop)
- 3) Paremakal Malpan

- 4) Nidhiri Mani Kathanar
- 5) Kalapurackal Andrews Malpan
- 6) Vadakel Mathai Kathanar
- 7) Pulikottil Joseph Remban (Mar Dionysius II)
- 8) Cheppat Philipose Remban (Mar Dionysius III)
- 9) Palakunnath Abraham Malpan
- 10) Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan (Mar Dionysius VI)
- 11) Konatt Mathen Malpan
- 12) Mattakal Alexander Malpan
- 13) Elavinamannil Scaria Malpan
- 14) H. H. Moran Mar Baselius Augen I Catholicos
- 15) Maraseril Abraham Malpan
- 16) Konat Abraham Malpan

13. Valuable contributions

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Malpan – Kadavil | Dictionary (Syriac – Karzon) |
| 2) Malpan Nidhiri | Translation of the New Testament |
| 3) Vattasseril | Grammar in Malayalam |
| 4) Malpan Mathew Konat | i) Translation of the N. T.
ii) Grammar in Malayalam. |
| 5) Malpan Abraham Konat | –do– and translation of
Liturgies and Rituals. |
| 6) H. H. Moran Augen
I Catholicos | –do– and composition of
Syriac Hymns. |
| 7) Malpan Kalapurackal | Dictionary (Syr–Mal) 1907 |
| 8) Malpan Mathai Vadakel | Dictionary (the same) improved
in 1940 |
| 9) Rev. Fr. Gabriel | Grammar in English |
| 10) Rev. Fr. Arayathnal | Grammar in English |
| 11) Rev. Fr. Abraham
Marasseril | „ in Syriac |
| 12) Rev. Fr. Alexander
Mattackal | Translation of Liturgies and
promiyons of the Holy week. |

14. Syriac in Universities

Serampore was the first and Madras was the second university to include Syriac. This writer in 1940 made an attempt to include course in Syriac in the Travancore University by forming an All-Travancore Syriac Association, (Mar Augen Timotheos Metropolitan Chairman and myself secretary). It didn't bear fruit. By the efforts of the Veteran Syriac Schoolar His Grace Archbishop Mar Ivanios a Board of Studies was instituted in the then Travancore (afterwards Kerala) University, Archbishop Mar Ivanios being the Chairman, and Bishop Augen Mar Timotheos of the Orthodox Church and a few others remaining members. Later on persons like Fr. William T.O.C.D., Fr. Gabriel C.M.I., Dr. Geevarghese Panicker, Fr. Samuel Mannil succeeded Mar Ivanios as Chairman of the Board. At present Syriac is taught in nine colleges affiliated to the Kerala, Mahatma Gandhi, and Calicut Universities.

15. In conclusion

I would beg Rev. Dr. Thekeparampil and his colleagues, who have worked wonders in this sphere - to chalk out further ways to resurrect this dead language - May I humbly suggest the publication of a Quarterly in Syriac, through the columns of which scholars may rejuvenate the language.



THE KINGDOM WITHIN

The spiritual country of the person who is pure in soul is within him.

The sun which shines within him is the light of the Holy Trinity. The air which the inhabitants of that realm breathe is the strengthening and all-Holy Spirit. The holy and bodiless beings make their abode within him.

Christ, the light of the Father's light, is their life, joy and happiness. Such a person is gladdened at every moment by his soul's contemplation, and he is held in wonder at the beauty which lies within him, a beauty which is truly a hundred times more resplendent than the brilliance of the sun itself.

This is Jerusalem and the Kingdom of God, lying hidden within us, as the Lord says. This country is the cloud of God's glory into which only the pure of heart may enter, so as to behold the countenance of their Master, having their minds enlightened by the rays of his light.

(St Isaac of Syria)

THE HARP

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Jacob Thekeparampil *

The Prayer for the Departed in the West Syriac Liturgy¹

Remembrance of the departed and petitions requesting God's favour for them are very common in the West Syriac Liturgy. It would not be an exaggeration to say that there is no West Syriac Liturgical service that does not mention the departed at least once. The departed form the last group of people remembered in the prayers: Mother of God, Martyrs, Saints, Departed. An example for such an order of prayers is the "qwqlywn" (a series of strophes sung during the eucharistic service and other service in commemoration of the Mother of God, Saints and the dead).

This paper will not deal with all the liturgical services for the dead, nor with the many and varied prayers for the departed. That would go beyond the scope of this paper. Here I will limit myself to the "Shimo"² the Book of Common Prayer of the West Syriac Church. It contains the prayers for the week days and corresponds to the "breviary" of the Latin Liturgy.

Of the several kinds of prayers which constitute the "Shimo", two categories of hymns are particularly pertinent to

* Rev. Dr. Jacob Thekkeparambil, the Director of SEERI is a scholar in the Syriac Liturgy.

1. This paper was read in the 5th Symposium Syriacum, held in Louvain, 1988.
2. Shimo = ordinary. Here it refers to the book containing the prayers of week days.

the present subject. These hymns are sung at the evening "ramšo" and morning "sapro"³ services ("tesmesto")⁴ of each day of the week. The first category is the one called "Hymn of Incense" (qolo d-pirmo) and the second "Hymn after Incense" (qolo d-botar pirmo). Both are composed of groups of four stanzas, each with a subtitle. The subtitles are: Mother of God, Martyrs, Saints, and finally the Departed. Thus the last four stanzas of these hymns deal with the dead. To these can be added the last stanza of the noon prayer (sixth hour) and the Hymn (qolo) of the ninth hour. Also the supplications (bouthe) of Mar Balai, Mar Aphrem and Mar Jacob have stanzas on the theme of the departed. In this paper all these stanzas, but mainly those of the departed, sung at the evening and morning services of each day will be analysed. By way of strengthening the data of these hymns, reference will also be made on occasion to other types of prayers, both prose and hymns, if they have passages dealing with the dead.

The hymns of the departed are the official prayers of the West Syriac Church. They are the prayers of the living for the departed. They most commonly refer to the dead as "anide" "departed" or as "škibe" "those who lie down" or "sleep". The term "mythe" is not as common as "anide" and skibe. Other qualifications of the dead, for whom prayer is made, are as follows: "who have slept in Christ," "who died in your hope" or "who await your second coming or your glorious manifestation" etc.

The dead are Christ's. They belong to him. In their baptism they put on Christ⁵ and were sealed with his seal ("rušmo"). They are his holy body and drank his precious blood. The Church of the living prays for the dead, because they belong to her as her children. They are in fellowship with her. They are part of her communion. In short it is for the faithful departed (anide mhaimne) that the Church prays. She seems to keep silence over the dead who were outside her communion in their life time.

3. Ramso = Vespers: Sapro = Laudes.

4. Tesmesta literally means service. Liturgically it refers to the services. Eg. Service of the burial for the dead:

Our prayers for the dead are centred around a number of themes, each of which I shall now briefly present.

1. The Voice of Christ (Qolo damšyho)⁵

The dead lie buried in the dust and await the second coming. A voice that calls them will raise them up. It is the voice (Qōlō) of the calling of Christ. The Hymn, the supplication of Balai, sung at the 9th hour and at the end of the commemorative services of the dead contains this theme.

“Glory to Christ who calls the dead (d-qore l'anide) and they rise without corruption and sing praise”

(p. 29) = p. 89⁶

In another stanza of the Hymn of the dead, recited at the Ramšo on Monday, Christ is asked to make dead hear “his sweet voice”.

“Christ, full of mercy, make your sweet voice (qolok basimo) to be heard by those who lie in the dust, who were clothed in you in baptism.” (p. 33) = p. 92.

The voice which calls to resurrection is the same voice that called the dead into being when they were formed in the womb of their mothers. This is stated in a Boutho⁷ of Mar Jacob of Sarug sung at the Ramšo on Wednesday.

“O you departed, who dwell in the grave, take courage; there is good news for you; Behold, the resurrection has drawn near to its coming; the beckoning (remzo) which

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5. Qolo d-misho = the voice of Christ. It is Christ's voice that calls the dead “Qore l'anide.” For the theme of the dead hearing the voice of the Son of God cf. John 5, 25, 28.
 6. p. 29 = 89. The first number refers to the page number of the English version of the shimo, translated by Bede Griffith, the Book of Common Prayer of the Syrian Church, Kurisumala Ashram, Vagamon, India (year is not marked). The second number refers to the Syriac Text of Shimo published by Fr. Abraham Konatt, Ktobo d-sluto shimto, Mar Julius press, Pampakuda, 1977. The page numbers given after all quotations in this article refer to these two books.
 7. Supplication, petition Boutho is one kind of liturgical hymns, petitional in nature and attributed to authors like St. Ephrem, Jacob of Sarug and Balai.

formed you in the womb of woman, will call you (qore l-kun) and will raise up your bodies without corruption".

(p. 137 = p. 204)

The call to rise operates like a command. This is stated in a Boutho of Mar Aprem which is sung in the 3rd "Qaumo" of the Lilyo on Saturday.⁸

"Call with a voice of command (qri b-qolok poqudo'yt) and they shall rise swiftly, all those ate your flesh in purity and drank your blood worthly".

(p. 290=368)

The loud voice of Jesus that raised Lazarus announces the voice of Christ at the General Resurrection:

"Glory to you, Lord, at whose voice (b-qolok) Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, arose after he was corrupted,⁹ at your entrance the daughter of Jairus was awakened;¹⁰ and at the sound of the last voice (b-qolo hroyo) with which you will call, the dead will rise." (Sapro of Saturday Ist Qolo,) (p. 302-3=371=372).

According to another strophe of the departed the Voice of Our Lord not only raised Lazarus but also explained to him whose voice it was:

"Our Lord came to Bethany to visit
his friend and he found him
laid four days in the grave:
He called to him with his loud voice
and raised him up and said to him:
I am the Son of God who makes to die
and makes to live".¹¹

(p. 305=375).

This voice is further qualified as that voice of the Son of God that wakes up the dead from the graves for the resurrection

8. Qaumo = Statio. Lilyo = night vigil. Here Qaumo refers to the different services or parts of the Night Prayers.

9. John. 11, 43,

10. John. 8, 41-56.

11. cf. Dt. 32, 39; Wis. 16, 13.

of life and judgement. On this point the second qolo of Monday Sapro has:

"Listen to the Son when he says
that in the hour when the dead
shall hear the living voice of God
(qoleh hayo), they shall stand up
and rise: those who have done good,
to the resurrection of new life and
those who have done evil, to the
resurrection of judgement".¹²

(p. 68=132-133)

A few hymns relate this voice to that voice of God which Adam heard in Paradise.

"Adam says: I adore that voice which once called me among the trees and I was afraid of it. It shall call me and my children in the resurrection and place me at the right hand of his Godhead."
(9th Hour, Wednesday p. 174=244)

The following stanza more clearly brings out the similarity of the voice Adam heard in Paradise to that which he heard in Sheol.

"Our Lord called Adam: Adam why do you sleep in Sheol? Rise. Adam heard the voice of the Son and began to say thus: How sweet is this voice and how pleasant is its sound; (qmo basim qolo hono) this voice is like that which called me among the trees."

(Sapro of Saturday, p. 312-3=383-4)

The voice is not a mere sound which merely wakes one up. It is not an ambiguous voice. In one of the hymns the voice means a definite call and an invitation to inherit the Kingdom.

"May the dead who have slept and gone to their rest in your hope, Lord Jesus, hear the sound of your voice, full of mercy and compassion, saying to the sons of the right hand, come, enter, inherit the Kingdom."¹³

(Sapro on Thursday p. 212=283)

12. Joh. 5, 28-29

13. Mt. 25, 34

In another hymn, the significance of the voice is rather different:

“There has passed away from Adam the voice which cried you shall return to the dust.¹⁴ And another voice comes which cries: come forth like Lazarus and leave the grave and come to Eden.¹⁵ For now is the time when the exiles shall return to their inheritance”.

(9th Hour on Tuesday p. 78=143)

The first voice that called “Adam, Adam”, did expel him and his children from Eden. The last voice, sweet and vivifying, leads the exiles – the dead – back to their inheritance. The prayers request Christ to make the exiles hear that voice which will let them enter paradise.

“Because the dead within the grave seek you, that you may come and raise up their bodies, call them by your voice (qri b-qolok) and make them rise from the grave to paradise”.

(Eniyono of Sapro: Thursday, p. 203=272-3)

According to another hymn, the voice is also that, which was heard from the cross:

“The voice which sounded on the top of the tree of the Cross and made the creation tremble,¹⁶ shall call and arouse from the dust those who have slept in Christ; they shall be clothed in a garment of glory¹⁷ and shall go forth to meet the Son of their Lord at his second coming.”¹⁸

(Tuesday Ramso, 2nd Qolo of the dead P. 86=p. 151-2)

The descent of Christ in Sheol, which is a favourite theme in the Syriac literature,¹⁹ did wonders for the dead. It is described in one of the hymns as a thundering of Resurrection in the

14. Gen. 3, 19

15. John. 11, 43.

16. Mk. 15, 37-38; Lk 23, 45-46.

17. “Garment of glory”: see Brock.

18. cf. Mt. 25, 1-12.

19. Descending into and destruction of Sheol is the main theme of holy saturday prayers:

place of depth. At its loud sound death is dismayed and the forms (yūqone) which were wasted away are renewed".

(Epbo: Saturday Ramso p. 283=353)

The loud voice of Christ in Sheol destroys its high walls and lays it waste.

"He cried with a loud voice in the place of death; that devourer of the nations; and its high walls were cast down and he laid waste its palaces and its treasures, and showed that the race of Adam shall rise in glory."

(Saturday Sapro, p. 310=381)

2. The "Bosom of Abraham" ('ubeh d-abrohom)

The petition to place the dead in the bosom of Abraham,²⁰ Isaac and Jacob, already found in the Apostolic constitutions (VIII, 41, 2), is taken up by a few stanzas of our hymns for the dead:

"In the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob make to: rest Lord, your servants who have slept in your hope."

(Boutho of Mar Balai p. 89)

The general tendency is to mention the names of the Patriarchal trinity: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Occasionally, however, one also comes across formulae with a mention of Abraham alone.

"In the bosom of Abraham and in the tabernacles of light make dwell, Lord God, your servants who slept in your hope".

(Saturday, Ramso p. 285 = 354)

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20. The imagery of the bosom of Abraham comes from the parable of Lazar and the evil rich. After his death, Lazar was taken to the bosom of Abraham (Lk 16, 22-23). This expression has an allusion in 4 Mac. 13, 17; Abraham is the father of believers. It is he who received the promises first Jesus himself states this: "Abraham Your father rejoices to see my day. He saw it and rejoiced." (John 8, 56). Therefore it is not surprising, that Abraham's name is used as a symbol of the joy and bliss of the elect. In this connection also the names of Isaac and Jacob are mentioned: "Many will come from the East and West and will take place with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God". (Mt. 8,11). For further comments, see B. Bottle, *ibid.* p. 93-95.

This theme of the dead, given rest in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is frequent also in other oriental liturgies.²¹

3. The Dew (t'alo)

The old testament theme of "dew"²² is also taken up in some of the prayers for the dead. Boutho of Balai, sung at the daily 6th Hour reads.

"Sprinkle, Lord, the dew of gladness on the faces of our fathers and brothers who have rested in your hope (talo d-busome). (p. 28 = 87)

The wording of the hymn of the dead sung on Saturday "Sapro" is different: the dew of gladness becomes the "dew of mercy":-

"May he who gave light to the blind and hearing to the deaf, and loosed the tongue of the dumb and gave health to the paralysed, *shed the dew of mercy on the bones* of all the faithful departed who rest in his hope." talo d-rahme (p. 305 p. 375)

The stanza of the hymn for Wednesday Sapro qualifies the dew as the dew of mercy and compassion (talo d-rahme w-dahnono).

"Christ who promised resurrection and a new life to the race of Adam, Sprinkle the dew of your mercy and compassion, O our saviour, in your grace, on your servants who died in your hope and await the day of your coming:..."

(p. 164 = 233)

21. In the East, the most ancient witness is the prayer of the Apostolic constitutions (VIII, 41, 2) where God is asked to place the departed "in the land of the pious people who rest in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and with all those who pleased you from all eternity and did your will". For other witness in the East and also in the Roman Liturgy, Cfr. B. Bottle, *ibid.* p. 93. 95.

22. Talo = "dew" is a symbol of God's blessing: "I will fall like dew on Israel. He shall bloom like the Lily." (Hos. 14, 6). It's falling on the heights of Zion points to the blessing, the everlasting life, that Yahweh confers there (Ps. 133, 3). The prophecy of resurrection, as recorded in Is. 26, 19 connects dew with the rising of all who lie in the dust.

A reference to the angel who delivered the three young men Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the furnace by sprinkling dew on them (Dan. 3, 49, 92, 95) is mentioned in one hymn:

May the angel, who sprinkled dew on Anania and the young men with him, sprinkle the dew of mercy on the bones of the dead”

(Boutho of Mar Aphrem, Wed. Lilyo p. 153)

The function of the dew is to cover and deliver the departed from heat as in the furnace of Babylon:

“May the dew which descended on the furnace in the land of Babylon and delivered the young men from the fire, cover our departed and deliver them from the torment of heat, halleluia, and may they inherit life”²³

(Monday 6th Hour, p. 76 =)

To this theme of dew, also the theme of the “rain of life” (metro d-haye) to be showered on the dead should be joined:

“Blessed be the rain of life that descended and sprinkled the resurrection on those lying in sheol”. (p. 381)

4. Rest (nyoho)

The theme of rest²⁴ is prominent in our hymns and prayers for the dead. We find petitions to Christ, pleading with him to give rest (nyoho) to the departed. In a hymn for the departed, which is sung at the Ramšo on Monday, our Saviour is requested to grant rest to the departed: “Grant rest, Our Saviour, to your servants who slept in your hope, in the world which does not pass, on the great day of your coming” (p. 93) Another stanza of the hymn for the departed records a different wording

“Give rest and remembrance, (Nyoho-w-dukrone)

O son of God, to the departed who received your body, and when your coming is revealed, let them fly to meet you with faces unveiled, halleluia, that they may praise you”. (p. 37 = 97)

This petition asks the son of God to grant to the departed not only rest (nyoho) but also remembrance (dukrono). This leads us to the theme of “Remembrance”.²⁴

23. A few Prayers take up also the imagery of rain, which, like the dew, sprinkles resurrection on the dead: “Blessed be the “rain of life” (metro d-haye) that descended and sprinkled the resurrection on there lying in Sheol...”

24. For this theme of rest, found in all the tradition, cfr. B. Bottle. *ibid.* p. 87-88d

5. Remembrance (dukrono)

Also the biblical theme of God's remembrance is largely recorded in our prayers.

Several hymns ask Christ to remember the dead, to make their memory good, "dukrono tobo". The morning hymn of Monday reads:

"Make a good memory, Lord, of the faithful departed (ábéd, mor, dukrono tobo) who ate your holy body, and drank your living blood; let them stand at your right hand on the day of the manifestation of your majesty".

(p. 63 = 126)

The hymn destined for the 9th hour on Monday, further qualifies that the Lord remember the departed both here in the church on earth and above in heaven.

"Of all the departed who descended and were clothed in you in baptism, who ate your flesh and drank your blood and slept in your hope, make remembrance, Lord, here and above in heaven and give repose to their spirits".

(p. 77 = 142)

The remembrance of the dead "above in heaven" means concretely that the departed be remembered at the great altar above in the heavenly Church, namely in the church of the "first born" (Hebr. 12, 23). This can be read in the hymn of the departed for Ramso on Friday:

"Let remembrance be made of all the departed, who died in your hope, at the great altar above in the church of the first-born; may they be raised by you from the dust and rejoice with you in your marriage-chamber."

(P. 226-7 = 295-6)

These are some of the themes recorded in the prayers for the departed of the West Syriac liturgy. To deal with all of them would go beyond the scope of this paper.

25. When God remembers some one, it is blessing and salvation to him. As the water rose on earth "God remembered Noah" (Gen. 8, 1). It meant salvation for Noah and his household from flood. When Sodom and Gomorrah were under fire, Lot was rescued from it, because "God remembered Abraham" (gen. 19/29), remembrance of God, for which the thief on the right hand side of the cross prayed, guaranteed him the Paradise: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom. Indeed, I promise You, today you will be with me in paradise". (Lk. 23, 42-43.)

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P. M. Mathew Cor. Episcopa*

Stewardship of Wealth

As Seen In The Lenten Prayers

This is an attempt to find out the teaching of the Syrian Church Fathers about the attitude a Christian should have about material wealth, and how he should utilise the wealth he earns. The search is being made in the Lenten Prayers.

Jesus Christ Himself has said that just as you cannot serve two masters you cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time. But He has also advised to make friends with the Mammon of unrighteousness to get entrance into eternal life. Prima facie, these ideas seem to contradict. But it was said by Jesus Christ. So the Church ought to have a certain teaching on the subject for the ordinary believer.

Why search for it in the Lenten Prayers of West Syrian Church instead of searching in the Bible?

It is a well-known fact that copies of the complete Bible was very rare till the 17th century. Bible was translated into Syriac in the 2nd century; and it is the renowned Pshitto version. But the Pshitto was not printed till 1555 A. D. And then only the N. T. was printed. The Patriarch of Antioch was the one who did everything he could to get it printed. He had to solicit the good will and help of the Pope of Rome and Emperor Ferdinantez of Germany to get it printed at Vienna. In the preface to the printed Book it is said that even many of the houses of the Lord (ie. Churches) did not possess a copy of the whole Bible, but only manuscripts of Bible portions from here and

there, meant for reading in worship and on feast days. So in those days it was practically impossible to teach the ordinary believer through the Bible.

Moreover, the literacy rate was very poor. So commentaries, or philosophical treatises were not suitable to teach the average believer. Hence the Syrian Church Fathers included essential teachings of the Church and duties of the believer in the obligatory prayers. Most parts of the prayers were written in poems so that they could be easily committed to memory.

Lent is the time when the believer has to abstain from certain food items. That is why, the teaching about the utilization of wealth is being sought for in the Lenten Prayer Book.

Lent begins on Monday. So the Lenten prayers can be considered to begin with the Monday evening prayer and end with the Friday afternoon prayer. The first reference with respect to material properties is found in the first stanza of the Monday afternoon prayer.

I You Must Fast; But Feed the Needy

Monday afternoon prayer says:-

“Blessed is the man who keeps the Holy Lent in purity and divides his bread to the needy with a willing heart. He will receive his reward from the Lord and inherit Heaven”.

The savings from your fasting is not to be used to add to your wealth, but to be given to the needy.

II Social Significance of Fasting

Again the believer is reminded of his social responsibility by referring to the Prophet Isaiah (Chapter 58). The exhortation runs like this:

“The Prophet declares to us what is real fasting. He preaches the procedure to be followed saying “Loosen the bonds of wickedness from your hearts, and cut off ties of deception from your minds and break your bread for the poor, and bring the homeless to your house. Then you will call upon the Lord and He will answer and show mercy to you”.

(Tuesday Evening prayer)

See how explicitly the social responsibility of the believer is depicted here! Unless you have a sense of social justice, and a desire to do what you can for social justice, you cannot please God by abstaining from food alone.

The magnificance of generosity to the poor is extolled in the prayers quoted below

“Fasting by abstaining from food and drink is counted as insignificant. If charity is added to fasting it is great in the eyes of the Lord. The reward to him who fasts from food and gives alms to the poor is great, and his fasting is acceptable to the Lord.”

(Tuesday morning)

“Happy the man who passes away from this world sowing generosity to the poor, Blessings to him on the harvest day, that is, on the day of resurrection. He who sows charity, fasting, meditations and good works wait for the messiah. When He comes He will bestow on him blessings not heard of by ears or imagined of in the heart of any man”.

(Wednesday evening)

“Blessed is he who keeps the lent with charity. He who adds alms giving to his fasting has a special beauty. He becomes like the Spiritual beings and gets mingled with them. He inherits eternal life and kingdom and blessings; and sings the praises of the Lord”.

(Wednesday Morning)

III Advise to the Rich:- He is only a steward.

Generosity was being extolled till the Wednesday morning prayer. Now the Fathers who composed and compiled the prayers, are beginning to exhort the rich. The last stanzas of the Wednesday morning prayer directly address the rich member of the church in the following words.

“What for do you keep lent if you do not show mercy to your neighbour? Showing mercy is the lent chosen by the Lord. Oh rich man, earn and treasure mercy. Oh poor man, take heed that you do not murmur against the donor.

It is common duty that everyone should take pity on his fellow men. A pitiless man will be punished by Righteousness. Oh rich man, know that you are not the owner of your possessions. but a steward appointed by our Lord to utilise them for the good of your fellow men"

What a noble concept of Christian stewardship!

IV Danger of Wealth

Having pointed out that the rich people are only stewards, the compilers of the prayers point out the danger of wealth. In the Thursday night prayer, they make riches witness against the rich. The witness is reminiscent of St James 5:1-5.

"If gold and silver had the power of speech they would have told those who amass them; Don't approach me you have robbed me from the orphans and the destitutes; from the widows and the farms of the poor. Woe to you when death comes and carries you away. For, I will remain here, but you will have to go to the judgement, and then to everlasting fire".

"How does this world confound and deceive you, that you flutter about for the treasures that will not benefit you. You are feverish to add to it every day. But when you have amassed it all, it remains but for an hour".

"Bring all your earnings. Fetch all your treasures and heap them. If it can save you from dangers let it be with you. If it cannot even quench your fever, what is the use of it? If it is of no use, why should you amass it?

V. Profitable Use of Wealth

Thursday Forenoon prayer directly quotes from the 25th chapter of St Matthew's gospel and says:-

In His Gospel Christ says to those on His right side, "I was hungry; you gave me food. I was thirsty; you gave me drink. I was in prison; you came and visited me. You loved me; you hated the world. So you come and enjoy heaven and eternal life".

So we see that generosity to the poor is not just an act of compassion, but it is a service to Christ Himself.

VI. Search Out the Poor and Serve His Needs

Since we see Christ Himself in the poor man, we are not to wait for him to come to us and ask for help. We have to search him out and serve his needs. In the thursday afternoon prayers it is said:-

You who fast, call the poor and give him food. Not that he should come to you, but that you go after him and feed him. Remember that the fields do not go seeking the farmer but the farmer goes to the fields, carrying the seed to sow.

When the poor man knocks at your door, do not tell that it is God who feeds him. That reply is vain talk, carrying no reward. No harm if you feed him, and then tell him these words. For, he knows better who feeds him.

Very clearly, the last stanza is a direct quotation from the Epistle of St. James.

To verify that it is our bounden duty to feed the needy without waiting for him to ask, the prayers make reference to the Parable of Lazarus and the rich man. It is assumed that the parable is familiar to the Believer. For, it is described at length in the Shehimo prayers. In the lenten prayers, imaginary lamentations of the rich man is given. They are scattered all through the prayers on Friday.

The rich man, scorched by the flames, sighs and cries out, "Blessed is the man who does not see wealth as I saw it. For, I earned much, but now I am sore afflicted. Lucky the man, who, having not enjoyed temporal life, lives here in happiness.

(Friday Evening)

He laments again,

Where is my table full of all delicacies? Behold, I have to beg for a drop of water, and I do not get it. Where is all my treasures I feverishly amassed? I am ready to lose all of it for just a drop of water.

(Friday Night)

Having learnt a very profitable lesson from the rich man of the parable, the supplicant earnestly prays God to save him from hellfire in the following words.

The wicked cry from the fire like the rich man. They beg for a drop of water, but it is denied. My Lord, Thy grace is immensely larger than our iniquities. My Lord, forsake me not, Thy image, to be punished in eternal fire.

(Friday Morning)

VII Transience and Impotence of Wealth

Friday is the last day of lenten prayers. It abounds with the conclusions drawn from all the previous prayers. These prayers dwell upon the thought of the deception of wealth and its incapability to save man from everlasting punishment. The last portion of the Friday morning prayer runs like this:

Gold is a burden and bondage to him who amasses it. But the wealth of a man who has linked his soul to God is real and true. All the treasures of all the kings on earth is insignificant to a man who has his trust on God. Worldly treasure is a deadly poisonous fruit. One who has not amassed wealth does not taste of it.

In the forenoon prayer it is said:

Oh rich, you are proud and glorious; handsome and attractive; you wear fine clothes and eat delicious food; you have luxuries and all pleasant things; you are honoured and respected and worshipped. Many are those who praise you.

But glorious one, observe the day-time. It shines all over the world in beauty and glory and radiance. But when evening approaches, day grows dim and the night strips off its glory.

In the noon prayer, exhortation is given against love for worldly gains.

"Love of eternal life is disrespected. Love of world burns like flames of fire. All are running about for worldly gains, without giving heed to exhortation."

Last portion of Friday afternoon prayer is the last portion of the lenten prayers. It is a reminder of the transience of the world and worldly treasures, and its impotence to save a man from death. The prayer runs as:-

“Is there anyone who does not know that death is the end of life in this world and that the hour of death always hangs suspended above the head of man?

Is there anyone who does not know that this world is like a dream or a shadow; and that he who loves it has no control over it?

Is there anyone who does not know that at the hour of death, even if all the treasures are offered, it will not be accepted in exchange of life? Is there anyone who does not know that on death all worldly glories will be left behind here”.

VIII Conclusion

It is intriguing that the first part of the Prayer book, ie; Prayers from Monday to Wednesday noon, give importance to repentance and purity of heart and mind; references to material wealth or generosity are scanty. But from Wednesday noon onwards advice on wealth and its use gets prominence. Why, such an arrangement? Just because good works are the natural fruit of true repentance and faith. That is what St. James teaches in his epistle (James 2:14-26). St. Paul also teaches it, especially, in the Pastoral Epistles (1. Tim. 6:17-19; Titus 2:14).

The teaching of our Fathers about wealth is quite explicit

- (i) Wealth in itself is not bad.
- (ii) An inordinate love for wealth is dangerous and a hindrance to spiritual life.
- (iii) A rich man is only a steward appointed by our Lord to utilise wealth for the benefit of his fellow men.

Whereas our Fathers have called the rich man a steward, why is it that ‘stewardship of wealth’ is generally looked upon as a new concept formulated in this century? The reason is that we failed to give due importance in teaching and practising it. If we teach it so that the idea gets engraved in the hearts of the people it will be good for the Church as well as the society at large. It will be good for the members of the Church in this world and in the world to come.

+ +

ACQUIRE FREEDOM WITHIN

Honour the labours involved in keeping vigil, so that you may discover consolation close at hand within your soul.

Persevere in reading in stillness, so that you may be drawn towards the wonder of God at all times.

Love poverty with patience, so that your mind may be recollected from wandering.

Detest superfluity, that you may be preserved from confusion of mind.

Withdraw from multitudinous affairs and have your own conduct as your concern, so that your soul may be saved from any fragmentation of its interior tranquillity.

Acquire purity by your conduct, so that your soul may shine with joy during prayer, and that at the remembrance of death joy may be kindled in your mind.

Acquire freedom by your way of life, so as to be freed from turmoil. Do not bind your freedom by what affords you pleasure, lest you become a slave of slaves.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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Abraham Nuro*

Video Teaching of Syriac

Syriac linguists and those who admire that language in the East already have an idea of the modest efforts we have undertaken for forty years, in the service of promoting the Syriac language. The same is true of our Orientalist friends in the West, who have realized since twenty years ago, the concrete results which, we have been able to obtain in this field, and in particular, in the teaching of the language and its modern terminology.

But I shall not speak here of our work in the field of Syriac neologisms and the modernization of our Syriac language according to the demands of the twentieth - century.

As far as teaching goes, and above all, in the *simplification* of the *didactic*, *linguistic* and *grammatical rules*, our colleagues, both teachers and Orientalists, have been able to observe the fruits of our endeavours in our latest manual SULOKE edited, over a year ago, in Holland. I thank all those who have helped and encouraged me in this difficult task. I have received over a hundred letters from specialists from all countries.

Encouraged and fired by what I modestly call the success of SULOKE and thanks to the repeated advice of our friends we have decided to go further and have tried with a team of teachers and students, guided by video specialists, to use modern technology in the service of our language. This undertaking was

* Prof. Malpan Abraham Nuro, hailing from the native place of Syriac is one of the best teacher of Syriac.

quite beyond my capacities and experience, but thanks to God it slowly, but surely came to fruition. It is with joy that I can announce to you, dear Colleagues, the birth of direct teaching of Syriac with the audio-visual method (I mean with Cassette-Video).

All of the SULOKO manual has been recorded on tape according to the author's tried and tested method: teaching Syriac by Syriac and avoiding the introduction of any foreign words during the explanation. The student is obliged to concentrate all his faculties in order to understand, follow and reproduce the text.

As teachers and students of SULOKO, will already have noticed each lesson is divided into five parts:

1. Conversation
2. Grammar (practical)
- 3 and 4. Writing and reading
5. Exercises

This is why, the first pages upto page 22 which contain the two parts of Lesson 1:

Conversation

and Grammar,

are there for good understanding, but they should not be read by the beginner. In fact we give a very simple dialogue between the teacher and the pupil.

It is an initiation by the ear to which the pupils are submitted. They have to *look* and *listen* attentively in order to *pronounce* and *articulate well*: get used to the *intonation*, one might say, the musicality of the Syriac language.

Thus by looking and listening attentively to the short sentences and grammatical rules, the student is meant to understand the dialogue and follow it; he then has to *repeat* this dialogue successively taking the part of the teacher and the student. The tape then presents the whole team of pupils who, by repeating the short sentences and rules engrave them in the beginner's memory and ends up, not only by understanding all the texts studied but also by learning them byheart. We have tried out this method and verified it both with native Syriac speakers and others, both Easterners and Westerners. Forthcoming

results will let us know if we were right in adopting the direct method of sight, sound and repetition.

From page 23 onwards, that is to say, from the third and fourth part of Lesson 1 that, is taught:

Writing
and reading

As far as I am concerned, *writing* should *precede reading*. I beg teachers never to undertake teaching reading, without writing. They must go together as *far as* page 71, that is, the end of the Writing and Reading sections of Lesson 3.

For writing and calligraphy there is an explanation in Syriac in the Preface (p. 8-12) in three stages.

- a) The teacher explains the formation of each letter.
- the pupil imitates the teacher. The teaching is checked.
- b) The pupil writes on letters outlined by dots.
A new check is made.
- c) The pupil writes out the word under dictation
The teacher corrects, if necessary.

By writing and reading all the texts of the writing and reading sections from Lesson 1 (p. 23-24)

then Lesson 2 (p. 39-43)

and finally Lesson 3 (p. 57-71)

the pupil easily and gradually learns the method so that difficulties in reading are reduced.

Finally the exercises of the 5th part of each lesson (p 25-26; 44; 72-75; 89-93; 122-126) complement the teaching method and help the pupil to progress rapidly.

Dear Colleagues,

Lesson 1 on the tape contains a lot of repetition which, although annoying, are very useful. Lessons 2, 3, 4 and 5 have less and less, in order to save time and limit the number of tapes. I ask teachers, to keep these repetitions in their teaching which I believe to be indispensable.

In five lessons the pupil should be able to read and write Syriac in Western characters and - Estrangelo, be able to hold short conversations and acquire the fundamental principles of grammar : he has already grown familiar with the language and starts to appreciate it.



ANSWERS TO PRAYER

If God is slow to grant your request and you do not receive what you ask for promptly, do not be grieved, for you are not wiser than God.

When this happens to you, it is either because your way of life does not accord with your request or because the pathways of your heart are at odds with the intention of your prayer.

Or it may be because your inner state is too childish by comparison with the magnitude of the thing you have asked for.

It is not appropriate that great things should fall easily into our hands, otherwise God's gift will be held in dishonour, because of the ease with which we obtain it. For anything that is readily obtained is also easily lost, whereas everything which is found with toil is preserved with care.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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George Theckedath*

Romantic Poetry in the Antiochene Marriage Rite

I should like to mention first of all that the term "romantic poetry" in the title of this paper is not used with any kind of reference to the particular genre of poetry developed in English by poets like Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and others, but is to be understood as love poetry of the most subtle kind as we find for instance in Solomon's "Song of Songs", and as was developed by great mystical thinkers and poets of both the East and West as a potent medium for expressing the lasting love relationship between Christ and his bride the Church, or between Christ and an individual soul. It is full of very imaginative and moving symbols. No matter by what term it is designated, love is the motive force of all life - the *elan vital* of this universe.

Life begins with love, and is sustained by love. All living beings enjoy being loved. God himself loves to love and to be loved. Human love whether it is between parents and children, or between man and woman, is ultimately a direct reflection and participation of the love-life of Godhead. To some extent one could say that when there is no love, there is no real life; human existence without love becomes a negation. The

* Rev. Dr. George Theckkedath, Canada, is now the bishop of the "Nazrani Suriani Church".

source of love is the unity of Godhead or Brahmai, the trueness of God as we Christians believe, from which limitless energy flows out into the universe. I would like to mention in passing that it is important to grasp that this great mystery of the unity of God has also got to be permanently reflected in the Church which is the Bride of Christ. On this point Father Alexander Schmemmann (whom the present speaker had the privilege of meeting in St. Vladimir's Seminary, New York in 1965) writes in his book *The Eucharist* as follows:

In unity is the very essence, the very content of faith which is also entrance into unity, the reception of the unity forfeited by the world in fall, and the experience of unity as salvation and new life. ... And the Church is manifested in this world as gift, the presence, the fulfilment of this unity from above, and thus of faith. The Church is not something "other" in relation to faith, although linked with faith, but precisely the fulfilment of faith itself – that unity the reception of which, the entrance into which, the partaking of which is faith.¹

This emphasis on the essential unity of God, as well as of the Church is helpful in our understanding of the unity of the marriage ceremony of the Antiochene Rite, since the prayers and songs in it constantly remind us of the reality that the union of the bride with the groom is a participation in the intimate and life-giving union of the Church with Christ.

The Antiochene marriage ceremony consists of two parts. The first part is the blessing of the rings of the bridegroom and of the bride. Unlike in the Western Rites where the bride and the groom put the ring on each other's fingers, in the Antiochene tradition, it is the priest who acting in the name of the Church, puts the ring on fingers of the groom and the bride. The second part of the ceremony consists of the blessing of the crowns in the Middle East, and in India of the gold necklaces. It should also be noted that in India, in accordance with our ancient tradition, there is also the blessing of a small gold cross which

(1) Alexander Schmemmann: *The Eucharist*, St. Vladimir's, Crestwood, N. Y. 1988. p. 151.

is used as a *thali* of pendant, and also the adorning of the bride by the groom with an ornate veil or *manthracodi*

(veil of mystery)

The very first song in the first part of the marriage rite contains references to the relationship of love between Christ and his bride the Church.

Stanza 1 goes like this: Thou Christ who brought rejoicing to the indwellers of heaven and the inhabitants of this earth, thou are blessed; O Christ, full of mercy, make happy this gathering of thy devotees.

Syriac: Brik th' hadee lasmayone wavsah lahraone. Hedo la kensu d' sogudaik mseeho mle rahame.

Here is the third stanza:

It was with a ring that the Church was wedded to Christ; and from him she received the gifts of flesh and blood.

Syriac: B' esaktho esmakras was eehto kadistho
Lamseehe u kabras fagaré wadmé khadiso

And in the final stanza the unity of the Church with the triune God is emphasized.

Let the mystery of the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, which is blessed and adored by the heavenly hosts and the dwellers on earth, be glorified.

We now pass on the first *prumyon*, a prefatory prayer during which incense is offered.

To that bridegroom be praise who chose as his Church the daughter of the gentiles, and after cleansing her with the blood of his victory, of all blemish and impurity, betrothed her to himself, thus becoming her bridegroom, and who thus freed her from the servitude of evil spirits, and redeemed her from all her debts and sinfulness; to that bridegroom be praise.

In another song which begins like this, "when the heavenly

bridegroom (i. e. Christ) wedded the faithful and holy Church," etc., the faithful are again reminded of the high degree of fidelity and mutual trust, expected of those who are about to enter the portals of wedded life.

The same trend is seen in other songs too. I am giving the translation of some three stanzas from a song which begins like this:

On the day that he wed me, the whole of creation was
amazed that I had been raised to such a lofty role;
I am blessed with this unique honour.
When I heard of his life and actions,
The fire of love consumed my soul;
Even before I met him, I confessed him.
And thus became blessed for all ages.

And the next stanza is about the extreme grief with which the beloved weeps at the foot of the cross, and also how an angel tells her that he is risen from the tomb, the obvious reference being to Mary Magdalene's encounter with the risen Christ.

Then follows this:

The sound of his sweet voice enlivened me;
And my face became radiant with his glory:
I patted him with my hands and kissed him
And he spoke to me these living words.
I welcome you my beateous bride,
Whom I wedded hanging on the cross;
And I on reaching my father's abode,
For you will send the Holy Ghost.

The Second Part of the Marriage Ceremony

The second part of the marriage ceremony consists of the blessing of the crowns as is the custom in the Middle East, or of the golden necklaces in India, as already mentioned.

It begins with an introductory prayer, followed by a song in which the Church prays to God to bless the young

couple, just the same way as he blessed the early faithful followers of Yahveh, and just the same way as he blessed Adam and Eve, just the same way as he blessed Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Rachel.

This is a very solemn song, and I would like to sing a couple of verses for the benefit of the audience.

Alohonu barek Labram wal Sarah hu nu barek,
 La abdov soogedu taiboose rahem, melain Aloho !
 Alohonu barek Yacob wal Rohel, hu nu barek,
 La abdov soogedu vaiboose rahem melain aloho !

But the most solemn song is the one for the blessing of the necklaces, which are blessed separately for the bridegroom and are placed on their necks by the priest.

Although it is a necklace which is used in India, the reference in the song is to a crown.

I shall sing it here, after reading a translation of it.

From the lofty heavens the crown is lowered by the hand of the Lord; how fitting it is for the bridegroom (or the bride), as the priest sets it on his (her) head.

Syriac verse:

Kleelo beede du moran, men smayo soyah nohes,
 La hasno yoye klilo du kohono soem b' reeshé.

I now come to the last part of my paper in which I am giving a free verse translation of what I consider to be perhaps the most delicate and exquisite love poetry in all literature. It is a song which begins like this in Syriac:

Aath isaik thalyo du makréne, nosubo rabo daden.

O thou great Lord of Eden,
 Thou art my groom most beloved;
 From thy blissful bower,
 Comfort me with thy breeze of love.

O font of truth and faithful groom,
 To thee am I in love betrothed;
 In none other have I put my trust,
 Shower on me thy mercies great.

Thy cross and nails are my dowry great;
 And with thy passion blessed might,
 My bondage fetters thou did'st break,
 And did me lift on to the vaults of heaven.

Many a knave round me did flock,
 Longing fondly to make me unchaste,
 But with bonds of love stronger than steel
 Did I them expel to be your spotless dove.

My soul is thrilled with burning love,
 And my poor stricken heart is set on fire;
 Passion's onslaught makes my limbs tremble,
 On thy shoulders strong let me lean.

Thou art the man after my own heart,
 And with thy charm; I am all consumed;
 As on one arm of thine I do rest
 With the other one hold me fast.

From me my Lord do not depart,
 From thy presence throw me not;
 Should thy love's fervour decrease,
 My heart will freeze, and I shall die.

Thy looks are like the sun's radiant rays,
 Thy fragrance beats the smell of roses;
 Never could I cease to kiss thy lips
 As thy life to me from those portals flow.

At my beauty deign to cast thine eyes,
 And lead me gently to the bridal chamber;
 And as I receive, thy embrace sweet
 In reckless slumber may I fall.

Blessed am I when I do hear
 That from death my Lord did truly rise,
 With glory doth he leave the tomb,
 And with sparkling eyes he looks at me.

Many a day and month and year,
 Was I once in sin and darkness held;
 But when thy victory voice reached my ears,
 Then dropped in plenty my joyful tears. + +

Persian Words in Syriac

Syriac includes a number of loanwords from Persian, a fact that becomes easily understandable when we remember that the Persians were once masters of the whole of West Asia;¹ it is also to be recalled here that there were in Persia Syriac-speaking Christian communities made up not only of Syrians but also of converts from Zoroastrianism.² No wonder: then, if there is a Persian substratum in Syriac.³

* Prof. Dr. K. Luke O.F.M. (Cap) gives lectures at the Theological College of St. Francis. Kottayam, and is linguistic Scholar)

1. From 538 B. C., the year in which Cyrus (559–29) conquered Babylon, till 331, the year in which Alexander of Macedon defeated Darius III (336–31), West Asia was subject to Persian rule. Aramaic was the lingua franca of the Persian empire, and quite naturally it absorbed a number of Persian words; Syriac embodies, then, a Persian substratum derived via Aramaic.
2. On Christianity in Persia, cf. Bardy, in A. Fliche-V. Martin (eds.), *Storia della Chiesa* (28 vols. Italian translation. Repr., Turin, 1977) IV, pp. 399–411. H.-G. Beck, in H. Jedin (ed.), *History of the Church* (10 vols., London, 1980) II, pp. 463–69. J. Labourt, *Le christianisme dans l'empire perse sous les sassanides* (224–632). Paris, 1904. B. Spuler, *Religionsgeschichte des Orients in der Zeit der Weltreligionen* (Handbuch der Orientalistik. I. Abteilung, VIII. Band, 2. Abschnitt, Leiden, 1961) pp. 120–69.
3. P. de Lagarde, "Indische, persische und armenische Wörter im Syrischen," *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (Leipzig, 1866; repr., 1966) is not accessible to the writer. K. Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum* (repr., Hildesheim, 1982) offers etymological indications (some of them hopelessly dated).

I. 'āpadnā'. "place, citadel"

1Chr 15:1 states that David built for himself *battīm*⁴, "houses" (= palaces) in that section of Jerusalem which was known as the city of David; the Peshitta has the rendering 'āpadnē' "palaces," which admirably brings out the sense of the Hebrew original, and the word it uses is a modification of Old Persian *apadāna*- (in later Iranian, by a secondary lengthening, *āpadāna*-), "palace." We shall now analyse the word⁵.

Our term occurs in the Old Persian inscriptions;⁶ we add here the relevant passages:⁷

*imam apadānam stūnāya athagainam Dārayavaush XSh
vazraka akunaush*

This palace, of stone in its columns, Darius the great
king built⁸

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4. On this word, cf. H. Bauer-P. Leander, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments* (repr., Hildesheim, 1962) pp. 209, 617. Cf. too F. Brown et alii, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (repr., Oxford, 1962) pp. 108-10. L. Koehler-W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti libros* (Leiden, 1953) pp. 122-23.
 5. C. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*. Repr., Berlin, 1961. W. Brandenstein-M. M. Mayrhofer, *Handbuch des Altpersischen*. Wiesbaden, 1966. R. G. Kent, *Old Persian Grammar Texts Lexicon*. American Oriental Series 33. 2nd ed., New Haven, 1953. H. Reichelt, *Awestisches Elementarbuch*. Indogermanische Bibliothek. I. Abteilung, I. Reihe, V. Band. Repr., Heidelberg, 1967. S. S. Misra, *The Avestan. A Historical and Comparative Grammar*. Chawkhambha Oriental Research Studies 13. Varanasi, 1979.
 6. We add here, for quick reference, the names of the Achaemenid emperors: Cyrus II (559-29), Cambyses II (529-22), Darius I (522-486), Xerxes (486-65), Artaxerxes I (465-24), Darius II (423-404), Artaxerxes II (404-359), Artaxerxes III (359-38), Arses (368-66), Darius III (336-31). On the dates, etc., cf. Brandenstein-Mayrhofer, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
 7. The method of transcription has, for typographical reasons, been simplified.
 8. Inscription of Darius II, at Susa (A). XSh stands for the logogram or ideogram signifying *xshāyathiya*-, "king" (from *kshāyatiya*-); compare the base *xshay*-, "to rule," which is etymologically related to Greek *ktaomai*, "to gain, possess," Indic *kṛāra*-, "rule, might," etc. The term survives in New Persian as *shāh*, "king," and *shāhanshāh*, "king of kings,"

apadānam stūnāya athagainam Artaxshatha Xsh vazraka
akunaush

This palace, of stone in its columns, Artaxerxes the great
king built⁹

imam apadāna Dārayavaush apanayākana akunash

This palace Darius my great-great-grandfather built¹⁰

imam apadāna vashnā AM Anahata ulā Mitra adam akunam

This palace, by the favour of Ahura Mazda, Anahata and
Mitra, I built¹¹

The term *apadāna-* is a rather rare expression, occurring just four times in the Achaemenid inscriptions and never in the Avesta.

The word consists of the preposition *apa-* and the substantive *dāna-* which have their own prehistory. The preposition, corresponding to Indic *apa-*, "away, off," is a modification of Indo-European (abbr. IE) *apo-* which remains unchanged in Greek (= *apo*, "from," etc.) but which has become *ab* in Latin ("by, from"), *af* in Gothic ("of, from, by"), *ab* in German ("of, down, away"), *of/off* in New English; ¹² it is well attested in the Avesta¹³ and occurs in combination with a number of verbs.¹⁴

The element *dāna-*, occurring too in the compound *daiva-dāna-*,¹⁵ "sanctuary of false gods," corresponds to Indic *dhāna-*,¹⁶

presupposes *xshāyathiya xshāyathiyānām*, id. (the official title of the rulers of Persia).

9. Inscription of Artaxerxes II, at Hamdan (B).
10. Inscription of Artaxerxes II, at Susa (A). On *apanayākama-*, cf. Kent, *op.cit.*, p. 168.
11. Inscription of Artaxerxes II, at Hamdan (A). Ahura Mazdā, literally, "Lord Wisdom," is the supreme God proclaimed by Zarathushtra; cf. Luke, "Word-Studies in Syriac," *The Harp* 3/1-2 (1990) pp. 31-43 cf. pp. 33-38.
12. J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (2 vols., Bern, 1959, 1969) I, p. 53.
13. Bartholomae, *op.cit.*, col. 72.
14. E. g. *apa-karet-*, "to cut off," *apa-gaud-*, "to conceal," *apa-gam-*, "to come off," *apa-bar-*, "to bear," *apa-yam-*, "to push forward," *apa-stav-*, "to promise," etc.
15. The word occurs in the Persepolis inscription of Xerxes: "I destroyed the sanctuary of demons" (lines 37-38); cf. Luke, *op.cit.*, pp. 35-37 (the transformation of the devas into demons).
16. In Indic there are compounds such as *agni-dhāna-*, "holder

"container, receptacle," and is created from the base *dā*-¹⁷ "to put, make, produce;" its Indic equivalent is *dhā*-, "to put, make," etc., and both the bases go back to IE *dh̥i*-, which now appears in Greek as *thē*- (cf. *ti-the-mi*), in Latin as (cf. *fī-ci*) etc.¹⁸ As for *dāna*- (= *dhāna*-), it is divisible into the root *dā*- (= *dhā*-) and the suffix *-na*- which is a modification of IE *-no*-, and which is quite productive in word-formation.¹⁹

We wish to note here that Dan 11:45 speaks of the tent of his 'appeden, "palace," i.e. his royal tents, which the mighty king shall pitch between the sea and the glorious holy mountain.²⁰ The rabbinic sources occasionally employ 'appadnā' "palace."²¹ and the Targum on Jeremiah (43:10) uses the term as the equivalent of the hapax legomenon *shaprîr*, "royal canopy."²² Finally Armenian attests *apparankh*, "mansion, palace, court-house,"²³ which too is a derivative of the Persian word we have been studying.

of Agni," etc.; compare too *apa-dhā*-, "concealment, confinement," which corresponds exactly to Greek *apo-thē*- in *apo-thēkē*, "store."

17. Not to be confused with *dā*-, "to give," which is cognate with Greek *di-dō-mi*, Indic *da-dā-mi*, Latin *dō*, etc. The root is very well attested in the Avesta; cf. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 714-24.
18. Full list of correspondences in Pokorny, *op. cit.*, pp. 235-39. The initial sonant aspirate *dh* (which remains intact in Indic) becomes *d* in Iranian; in other words, it loses its aspiration and remains a simple sonant.
19. IE suffixes are primary (i. e. added immediately to the root) on secondary (i. e. added to forms ending in primary suffixes); for *-no*-, cf. Greek *hup-no-s*, "sleep," Latin *som-nu-s* (with the change of *-no*- to *-nu-*), Indic *svap-na-s*, Lithuanian *sap-na-s*, etc.
20. L. F. Hartmann- A. A. di Lella, *Daniel* (The Anchor Bible, New York, 1978) pp. 272-73. J. A. Montgomery, *Daniel* (The International Critical Commentary. Repr., Edinburgh, 1950) pp. 467, 468.
21. M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (2 vols. Repr., New York, 1950) I, p. 100.
22. The translation "carpet" has also been adopted; cf. J. Bright, *Jeremiah* (The Anchor Bible. 2nd ed., New York, 1984) p. 263. J. A. Thompson, *Jeremiah* (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Repr., Grand Rapids, 1985) pp. 670 (n. 4), 671.

II. 'arwānā', "calf, young bullock"

Syriac attests the genuine Semitic term *tawrā*²⁴ "bull," which occurs in the Peshitta, but there is also another word, 'arwānā', "calf, young bullock," which is used in the same source; compare:

...baqrē', the oxen and 'arwānē' that till the ground
(Is. 30:24)

...all of them, the 'arwānē' of Bashan (Ez. 39: 18)

Many *tawrē*' bulls encompass me,

and the 'arwānē' of Bashan surround me (Ps. 22:13)

Rebuke the beast that dwells among the reeds,

and the herd of 'arwānē' (Ps. 68:30)

The Syro-Hexaplar version too employs the present term (Ex. 24:5, 29:1; Joel 1:17, Amos 4:1; cf. too Hos 4:19).²⁵

Syriac *arwānā*' is a derivative of Avestan *aurva-*/*aurvant-*, "quick, fast, rapid, valiant," etc.,²⁶ which presupposes IE *or-wo-*²⁷ and is the equivalent of Indic *arva-*/*arvant-*, 1) running, quick, 2) horse, courser, 3) charioteer;²⁸ the expression is Vedic,²⁹ and has its antecedents in IE tradition.

23. The Old Armenian Gospels use the term as the equivalent of praetorium (Mt 27:27. Joh 18:28,33. 19:9); cf. B. O. Kunzle, *Das altarmenische Evangelium. I. Edition. II. Lexikon. Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe XXI: Linguistik und Indogermanistik. Bern, 1984* (cf. vol. II, p. 64). Cf. too A. Nar Bey Calfa, *Dictionnaire arménien-français* (2 vols. 4th ed., Paris, 1972) I, p. 93. I Miskgian, *Manuale lexicon armeno-latinum* (repr., Louvain, 1966) pp. 26-27.

24. The word is common Semitic; compare Arabic *thawr*, Hebrew *shor*, Accadian *shūru*, Ethiopic *sōr*, and so on. To be noted is the proportion *th : t : sh/s*, which cannot be explained here; details in S. Mosecati (ed.), *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* (Porta linguarum orientaliū. Neue Serie 6. Wiesbaden, 1964) pp. 27-30 (comparative table on p. 28).

25. R. P. Smith (ed.), *Thesaurus Syriacus* (2 vols. Repr., Hildesheim, 1981) I, col. 372.

26. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 190-1. Compare the verb *erenaoiti*, "moves," which corresponds to Indic *ṛnoti*, id.

27. Pokorny, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

28. There is too the feminine form *arvatī-*, "mare."

29. H. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda* (4th ed., Wiesbaden, 1964) cols. 116-17.

The IE designation of the horse was *ek'wos*, which now appears in Latin as *equus*, in Greek as *hippos*,³⁰ in Tocharian as *yuk* (A), *yakwe* (B), in Avestan as *aspa*—³¹ and finally in Indic as *aśva*— (feminine *aśvā*—). The Vedas employ the term,³² and also expressions describing the animal's colour and ability to run fast: *aruṇa*—/*aruṣa*—/*rohita*—/*qiṣāṅga*—, “reddish, ruddy,” *śveta*—, “white,” *śyava*—, “brown,” *hari*—/*harita*—, “fallow, yellowish,” *atya*—, “runner,” *haya*—, “the speeding one,” *vājin*—, “the strong one,” *sapti*—, “the runner,” etc. And here belongs too *arvan*—/*arvant*—, “the speedy one, the swift one,” and through metonymy, “horse, charger, courser.”

The horse was regarded as a sacred animal by the IE peoples, and it had a part to play in their ritual,³³ among the Indo-Aryans the horse-sacrifice was held in the highest esteem,³⁴

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30. On the formation, cf. E. Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*. I. *Allgemeiner Teil. Lautlehre Wortbildung. Flexion* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft. II. Abteilung, I. Teil, I. Band. 4th ed., Munich, 1968) p. 301. The Mycenaean texts attest *i-qo*, “horse” (also *i qo-qe*; *i-qo-jo*, genitive); cf. A. Thumb-A. Scherer, *Handbuch der griechischen Dialekte*. Zweiter Teil (Indogermanische Bibliothek. I. Reihe: Lehrund Handbücher. Heidelberg, 1959) p. 334.
31. In the Achaemenid inscriptions *asa*—; both the forms occur as part of personal names: Vishtāspa, Pourishāspa, Kereshāspa, Druvāspa, Aspacanah, Asagarta, and so on.
32. Grassmann, *op. cit.*, cols. 140–42. A. A. Macdonnell–A. B. Keith, *Index of Vedic Names and Subjects* (2 vols., repr., Delhi, 1967) I, pp. 42–43.
33. Among the Hittites bestiality was regarded as a serious offence, but not sex with mares; in pagan Ireland the new king had to copulate publicly with a mare; in ancient India, on the occasion of the horse-sacrifice, the queen was made to lie down with the animal's carcass, both were covered with a piece of cloth, and then, the priests, standing on either side, exchanged obscenities. For a good orientation, cf. W. D. O'Flaherty, *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (16 vols., New York, 1987) IV, pp. 463–68. J. Pothuvel, “Aspects of Equine Functionality,” *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans. Studies in Comparative Indo-European Mythology* (Publications of the UCLA Centre for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology 1. Berkeley, 1970) pp. 159–72.
34. The author is getting ready an article on *aśvamedha*— (to appear in *Indian Theological Studies*).

immutable and universally applicable (Est 1:19. 4:11.16).³⁸ The Jews have their customs, usages and traditions which constitute their own peculiar *dāt*, "law" (Est 3:8).

The word is to be met with in the Aramaic sections of the books of Ezra and Daniel as well, where three different shades of meaning can be distinguished.³⁹ In the mouth of non-Jews *dātā'* signifies the law of the God of Israel; Artaxerxes calls Ezra "the scribe of the law of the God of heaven," and tells him, "... according to the law of your God, which is in your hand" (Ezr 7:12, 14; cf. too vv. 21, 26); compare, "the laws of your God" (Ezr 7:25).⁴⁰ The decree issued by the king is known as *dālā'*: from Nebuchadnezzar "the decree went forth" (Dan 2: 13, 15); finally there is the immutable *dātā'* of the Medes and the Persians (Dan 6:9, 13, 16).

Rabbinic sources include *dāt*, 1) custom, law, 2) judgment, punishment, 3) religion, religious observance; they also, attest combinations such as *dat Mōsheh*, "the law of Moses," *dāt Yehūdīt*, "the Jewish law, Jewish custom," and so on.⁴¹ The Aramaic equivalent occurs only very rarely in rabbinic literature.

In Syriac texts *dattā'*/*dātā'* is to be found only occasionally,⁴² and even in passages where the Hebrew Bible has the term, the

38. According to Est 8:8 royal edicts were sealed with the king's ring; apart from the testimony of the OT, there is no evidence to show that Persian laws were considered immutable. It is said that Darius III condemned to death a certain Charidemus, and though he soon realized that he had erred, "it was not possible to undo what was done by royal authority" (Montgomery, *Daniel*, p. 270).

39. Brown et alii, *op. cit.*, p. 1089. Cf. too K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen, 1984) p. 558.

40. The Persians respected the laws of the nations subject to them as long as they did not come into clash with their political interests: such is the background of the king's edict (whose historicity cannot be doubted). Compare F. C. Fensham, *The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah* (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Repr., Grand Rapids, 1983) p. 104. R. N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia* (Mentor Books, New York, 1966) pp. 130-31.

41. Jastrow, *Dictionary I*, p. 327.

42. Smith, *Thesaurus I*, col. 958.

Peshitta has not preserved it: thus in Est 2:8 there is *petgāmā'*/*puqdānā'*, "decree/command,"⁴³ and in Ezr 7:12 there is *nāmūsā'*, a modification of Greek *nomos*, "law;" compare, however, Dan 2:9, "If you do not make the dream known to me, there is one *dātā'*, sentence, for you."

There is in Aramaic the compound *detāberā'*, "legifer,"⁴⁴ law-bearer, judge," occurring twice in the book of Daniel; the actual form is *detāberayyā'*, "justices," the emphatic plural (3:2-3). What we have here is a designation of one of the groups of Nebuchadnezzar's officials ("the satraps, the prefects, the governors..."). Syriac sources employ, though only rarely, the compound here cited.⁴⁵

Syriac *dattā'*/*dātā'* is ultimately a derivative of Old Iranian *dāta-* (= Indic *dhāta-*) which, from the morphological point of view, is a neuter participle formed from the root *dā-* (= Indic *dhā-*) mentioned in Section I above, with the help of the suffix *-ta-* (IE *-to-*) which is of common occurrence in Indo-Iranian.⁴⁶ It is part of the vocabulary of the Avesta, where it means 1) right, what is due to a person, 2) statute, decision, command, 3) prescription, law;⁴⁷ compare the following texts from the Gāthās of Zarathushtra:⁴⁸

As in harmony with those things which are *dātā*, laws,
of the foremost existence (Yasna 33:1)
Through such actions you shall assume the truth for your-
selves in accord with the primordial *dātāish*, laws, of the
Lord (Yasna 46:15)

43. The word *petgāmā'* (Hebrew *pitgām*, Aramaic *pitgāmā'* represents Iranian *paitigāma-*, "message;" it occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and also in non-biblical documents (Beyer, *op. cit.*, p. 672. Jastrow, *op. cit.*, II, p. 1250).

44. Koehler-Baumgartner, *op. cit.*, 1067.

45. Smith, *op. cit.* I, col. 958.

46. IE *-to-* (Indo-Iranian *-ta-*) is a primary suffix (cf. n. 19 above); compare Indic *mar-tas-s* = Greek *mor-to-s*, "mortal," Greek *chor-to-s* = Latin *hor-tu-s*, "garden" (with change of *-to-* to *-tu-*).

47. Bartholomae, *Wörterbuch*, cols. 426-27.

48. S. Insler, *The Gāthās of Zarathustra* (Acta Iranica, IIIe Série: Textes et mémoires 1. Leiden, 1975 (we have cited Insler's version after eliminating "ye" the like).

Which clan, which family, shall abide *dātāish*, by your laws (Yasna 49:7)

The Achaemenid inscriptions too employ *dātā*-; compare:⁴⁹

*dātam tya manā avadish adāraiya*⁵⁰

my law – that held them firm

*dātam tya manā hacā avanā tarsantiy*⁵¹

my law – of that they feel fear

*vashnā AM imā dahyāva tyanā manā dātā apariyāyan*⁵²

by the favour of Ahura Mazda these countries show respect toward my law

“Law,” *dātā*-, is a religious concept in the Avesta, and an instrument of government in the Old Persian inscriptions, an instrument on which the Achaemenid emperors laid great stress; the term, so rich in nuances, passed into Aramaic, and thence into Syriac.

As for *detāberā*’, it represents Old Persian *dātā-bara*,⁵³ where the second element (= Indic *bhara*-) corresponds to *fer* in “legifer,” for both the forms go back to the IE *bher*-, “to bear, carry;” from among its derivatives we wish to single out Greek *pherō*, Latin *ferō*, Gothic *bairan*, Indic *bharāmi*, Avestan *barāmi*, and lastly New English *bear*.⁵⁴

IV. *zaynā*’, “arms, armour”

The primary sense of the word that figures as the heading of the present section is clear from such compounds as *bēl zaynā*’, “armory,” *mā’nē zaynā* “engines of war,” etc., but it has too the secondary nuances “furniture, trappings, ornaments.”⁵⁵ Unlike the

49. Brandenstein-Mayrhofer, *Handbuch des Altpersischen*; Kent, *Old Persian* (cf. n. 5 above).

50. Inscription of Darius I, at Naqsh-e-Rustam (A), line 21; cf. too the same emperor’s inscription at Susa (E), line 30, and Xerxes’ inscription at Persepolis (H), lines 18–19.

51. Inscription of Darius I, at Susa (E), line 37.

52. Inscription of Darius I, at Behistan, col. I, line 23.

53. The word has crept into Accadian and appears as *dātabarra*, “Rechtskundiger;” cf. W. Von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* (3 vols. Wiesbaden, 1965–82) I, p. 165. Incidentally Accadian attests too *dātu*, “Gesetz, Verordnung” (*ibid*).

54. Correspondences in Pokorný, *Wörterbuch* I, pp. 128–32.

55. J. P. Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (repr., Oxford, 1985) p. 115. Smith, *Thesaurus* I, col. 1118.

expressions so far surveyed, the one under consideration is more frequent and occurs in both the Testaments; examples are therefore cited from both the sources. We adduce here three texts from the book of Psalms:⁵⁶

Take hold of *zaynā'* and buckler (35:2)
 ... nor can our *zaynā*, save us (44:7)
 There he broke ... *zaynā'* (76:4)

From the NT too we adduce three texts:

Do not yield your members to sin as *zaynā'*, instruments
 of wickedness (Rom 6:13)
 Let your members be *zaynā'*, instruments of righteous-
 ness (Rom 6:13)
 Let us put on the *zaynā'*, armour of light (Rom 13:12)

The texts have as their background warfare, which now forms an integral part of the Bible's world of symbols.

The Hebrew Bible does not embody our term, but the rabbinic texts attest *zayin* (Hebrew⁵⁸ and *zaynā'* (Aramaic).⁵⁹ The Targums make use of the latter form; compare the following passages from Onkelos⁶⁰:

Without your word no man shall lift up his hand to
 hold a *zaynā'*, weapon (Gen 41:44)
tipūn zēn digbar, a man's outfit shall not be upon a
 woman (Dt 22: 5)

The Jerusalem Targum employs the plural:

From the house of God will go forth hosts arrayed in
zēnīn, weapons (Gen 49:19)

56. The word translates, in the Psalter, Hebrew *māgēn*, "shield" (35:2. 76:4), *hereb*, "sword" 44:7), *mad*, "garment" (109:18), and *šinnāh*, "shield" 91:4).

57. Cf. Lk 11:12, Joh 18:3, 2 Cor 6:7, 10:4, and Eph 6:11, 13; for two verbal forms, cf. Lk 11:21 and IPet 4:1.

58. Jastrow, *Dictionary* I, p. 383.

59. Jastrow, *op.cit.*, p. 395.

60. J. W. Etheridge, *The Targum Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch with the Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum*. 2 Vols. Repr., New York, 1968. A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic. I. The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos*. Leiden, 1959.

The word figures sporadically in other sources as well.⁶¹

Aramaic/Syriac *zaynā* is a variant of Avestan *zaiṇa-*, "Weapon;"⁶² here belong too *zaya-*, "offensive weapon",⁶³ and *zayan-*, "armed" (adjective).⁶⁴ The expressions are of rare occurrence in the Avesta, and their meaning will be clear from the following texts:⁶⁵

Bind their hands, smash their *zaïna*, weapons (Yasht 1:27)

... the strongest of *zaīnam*, weapons, the most victorious
of *zaīnam*, weapons (Yasht 10:96)

The victorious Mithra has his own a well-fashioned *zaina*,
weapon (Yasht 10:141)

I invoke Mithra ... *hu-zaēnem*, the well-armed one,
the most gloriously *zaēnem*, armed one
the most victorious *zaēnem*, of armed ones (Vid.
19:15)

The Old Iranian term has become *zēn* in Middle Persian,⁶⁶ and *zīn* in New Persian.

Indic *heti-*,⁶⁷ 1) weapon, 2) missile, projectile, 3) fire-flame, 4) stroke, wound, a word occurring in the Vedas,⁶⁸ is cognate with the Avestan terms. To understand the correspondence between the Indic and Iranian forms, we must know that there is in Indo-Iranian the proportion *h:z*; compare:

hanu-, "jaw" : zanu-

hari-, "pale, yellowish" : *zairi-*

61. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte*, p. 568.

62. Bartholomae, *Wörterbuch*, col. 1650.

63. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, col. 1666.

64. Bartholomae, *ibid.*

65. F. Wolf, *Avesta. Die heiligen Bücher der Parsen*. Repr., Berlin 1960 (the texts cited in the body are adapted from this version, which is itself based on Bartholomae's *Wörterbuch*).

66. H. S. Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi* (2 vols. Wiesbaden, 1964, 1974) II, p. 231; compare *zēn-dān*, "place for keeping arms, armory, arsenal" (used also as prison), where the second element is a derivative of *dāna-*, discussed in Section I.

67. To be divided into *he-ti-*, where *-ti-* is a primary suffix (though it functions as a secondary suffix as well); compare Indic *sthi-ti-s-*, Latin *sta-ti-m*, and Greek *sta-si-s* (with the change of *-ti-to-si-*).

68. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch*, col. 1680.

<i>harmya-</i> , "big house"	: <i>zairimya-</i>
<i>hasla-</i> , "hand"	: <i>zasta-</i>
<i>holar-</i> , "priest"	: <i>zaotar-</i>
<i>hiranya-</i> , "gold"	: <i>zaranya-</i>

The reason for this dialectal variation need not be explained here.

The IE base of *zaina-* and *heti-* is *g'hei-*, the palatalized sonant aspirate becoming *z* in Iranian and *h* in Indic;⁶⁹ *-na-* presupposes IE-*no-* (cf. Section I above) and *-ti-*, IE *-ti-*, both being productive suffixes. We shall discuss one more loanword which too attests the proportion here described.

V. *zawtrā*, "cake for idolatrous worship"

According to lexicographers *zawtrā* signifies the cake made of fine flour mixed with oil and honey, and meant to be offered in idolatrous worship.⁷⁰ Jer 7:18 narrates how women kneed the dough to prepare *kawwānīm*, "cakes," for *malkat hashshāmayim*, "the queen of heaven."⁷¹ The word denoting cakes is a modified form of Accadian *kawānu* (also *kamānu*), an expression that occurs in the Epic of Gilgamesh,⁷² and means "sweetened cake, often baked with honey or figs,"⁷³ which was used for cultic purposes. The queen of heaven (cf. Jer 44:17-19, 25), in Accadian *bēlīt shamē*, "the lady of heaven," and *sharrat shamē*, "queen of

69. Pokorny, *Wörterbuch I*, pp. 424-25. Indic *hims-* (compare *himsā-*, and *a-himsā-*), "to hurt, injure, kill", is a derivative of the IE base cited in the text, formed by means of the nasal infix (cf. too the later form *hinasti*, "injures," etc).

70. Smith, *Dictionary*, p. 114. Smith, *Thesaurus I*, cols. 1163-64.

71. J. Gray, *The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* (4 vols. Nashville, 1962) III, p. 975. An Egyptian inscription dating from the Nineteenth Dynasty (134-1200 B. C.), found at Beth-shan in Palestine, calls Anath, the Canaanite goddess of fertility, "queen of heaven and mistress of the gods" (*ibid*). The Aramaic payri from Hermopolis in Egypt (sixth century B. C.) mentions the "house of the queen of heaven;" cf. J. T. Milik, "Les papyrus araméens d'Hermoupolis et les cultes syro-phéniciens en Egypt perse," *Biblica* 48 (1967) pp. 546-621 (discussions on pp. 560-64; text on p. 583).

72. Von Soden, *Wörterbuch I*, p. 430. The Epic narrates how the hero's *kamānu* turned white (XI: 216, 226).

73. W. L. Holladay, *Jeremiah* (Hermeneia - A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Philadelphia, 1986) I, p. 254.

heaven," is Ishtar (Venus), the goddess of love as well as of warfare.⁷⁴

From Jer 44: 19 it is clear that the cakes bore a figure of the goddess: the text uses the special infinitive construct *leha'aṣṣibah*, "to fashion her" (hapax legomenon), i.e. to make an image of her.⁷⁵ The excavations at Mari have brought to light a mould for making images of the goddess;⁷⁶ Jer 44:19 preserves, then, the reminiscence of a very old custom in the ancient Semitic world.

The Peshitta has in Jer 7:18 *zawtrē*, followed by *lepulhan shemayyā*, "for the worship of heaven;" the phrase here probably represents a Hegrew *Vorlage* with the reading *limle'ket hashshamayim*, where the first word has been understood by the Syriac translator as worship.⁷⁷ Another passage where the Peshitta has the same form is Jer 51:44, *'appēq zwtwrwhy men pūmēh*, "I will take the cakes out of his mouth," i.e. the cakes he has eaten, after having offered them to the queen of heaven. The Hebrew original has *bel*, "thing swallowed," which is a hapax legomenon.⁷⁸

The Syriac term is a variant of Avestan *zaothra-* (neuter), *zaothrā-* (feminine), "liquid/drink offering, libation;"⁷⁹ compare the compounds *zaothrō-bara-* and *zaothrō-barana-*, "offering libation,"⁸⁰ and also *zaothrā-*, "the office of zaotar" (priest).⁸¹ The

74. She is known as the "queen of attack and hand-to-hand fighting," and she is said to break the enemies, bows and dissolve their battle array; there is too the list of her lovers. Cf. T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness. A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven, 1976) pp. 201, 238.

75. The verbal root, i.e. *'āṣab*, "to shape, intertwine," is a most rare one, and its derivative *'āṣāb*, "idol, image" (1 Sam 31:9. 2 Sam 5:21 etc.) is an expression of contempt.

76. M. H. Pope, *Song of Songs* (The Anchor Bible, New York, 1977) p1. I (opposite p. 360); cf. also p. 379.

77. W. McKane, *Jeremiah* (The International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh, 1986) I, p. 170.

78. From the base *bāla'*, "to swallow, devour;" compare Ethiopic *bal'a* "to eat" (Luke, "Word-Studies," pp. 40-41).

79. Bartholomae, *Wörterbuch*, cols. 1163-64.

80. To be specially noted is the element *bara-*, occurring too in *dāta-bara-* (Section IV).

81. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, col. 1165.

offering in question here was held in the highest esteem, so much so that it came to be divinized:

O Amesha Spentas,⁸² O mazdayasna Daēnā,⁸³
 you good (gods) and good (goddesses),
zaothrāsca, and you Zaothral (Yasna 2:3)

A basically cultic term, *zaothra*- is part of the essential vocabulary of the Avesta; compare:

This *zaothra*, which consists of haōma, milk and hadhān-
 aēpatā juice (Yasna 68:1)⁸⁴

We venerate you, O Ahurānī, (daughter of Ahura, with
 the *zaothra* of good thought,⁸⁵

We venerate ... with the *zaothra* of good speech,

We venerate ... with the *zaothra* of good deed (Yasna 68:2)

Libations were wont to be offered to fire, water, etc.⁸⁶ and as distinct from them there was *myazda*-, "offerings of solid stuff"⁸⁷.

The Indic equivalent of *zaothra*- is *hotra*- (feminine *hotrā*),⁸⁸ "sacrifice, oblation," and also "office of the *holar*" (= *zaotar*-). The *hotar*- was one of the oldest and the most important of

82. The expression means "Bounteous Immortals;" this is the general designation of beneficent divine beings in Zoroastrianism, who, it would seem, are independent entities, and not merely aspects of Ahura Mazda. Their names are Vohu Manah, "Good Mind," Asha Vahishta, "Best Righteousness," Kshatra Vairya, "Desirable Dominion," Spenta Armaiti, "Bounteous Devotion," and Haurvatāt and Ameretāt, "Wholeness and Life." Works that deal with Zoroastrianism (cf. Luke, *op.cit.*, p. 35, n. 24) discuss the problem of the Bounteous Immortals.

83. This is the divine being symbolizing the Zoroastrian religion.

84. The three items mentioned in the text are the ingredients of libation; the special term cited there is the name of a plant which is not yet identified (Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 1758-59).

85. The three factors *humata*-, "good thought," *hūxia*-, "good speech," and *hvarishta*-, "good deed," are the very foundations of Zoroastrian ethics.

86. M. Boybe, *A History of Zoroastrianism* (Handbuch der Orientalistik. I. Abteilung, VII. Band, 1. Abschnitt, Leiben, 1975) I, pp. 153-56.

87. The word corresponds to Indic *miyedha*-, "sacrificial oblation".

88. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch*, cols. 1681-82.

the priests of the Vedic age whose function it was to be at the same time the sacrificer and the singer, though later on his job was to recite the relevant sacred texts.⁸⁹ Associated with the *hotar*- are *homan*- (neuter), "offering, libation," *homa*- (masculine), id., *havis*- (neuter) "oblation", *havana*- (neuter), id., and *hava*- (neuter), "sacrifice" (classical),⁹⁰ expressions which are familiar to all those who have some competence in Vedic studies.

The IE base of the Indo-Iranians forms cited in the present section is *g'heu*-, "to pour out, offer,"⁹¹ which now appears in Indic as *hu* (cf. *ju-hu-te*, *ju-ho-ti*, "pours out, offers"), in Greek as *che* (*F*) *ō* (compare *cheuma* = Indic *homan*-), in Latin as *fū* (compare *fū-tis*, "watering can"), etc. To be specially noted is the proportion *z:h* (cf. Section IV above).

VI. *hanzemānā*', "assembly, congregation"

The word now to be discussed is not part of the vocabulary of the Syriac Bible, but is occasionally used by Syriac writers⁹², and hence an analysis of it is quite in place. It is a modified form of Avestan *hanjamana*-⁹³ (=Indic *samgama*-), 1) coming together, 2) assembly, gathering of ahurian⁹⁴ beings, 3) place of assembly, 4) meeting point, junction.⁹⁵

The following passages from the Avesta will help us to understand the meaning of the word:

The creator Ahura Mazda organized a *hanjamana*- of the celestial gods...

89. Macdonnell-Keith, *Vedic Index* II, p. 508 (cf. too p. 368).

90. These expressions occur frequently in ritual texts.

91. Pokorny, *Wörterbuch* I, pp. 447-48.

92. Smith, *Thesaurus* I, col. 1028.

93. There is too the form *hanjaghmana*-, "gathering place," compare, "As the sea Vouru-kasha is the gathering place of waters..." (Vid. 21:4).

94. The Zoroastrians make a distinction between ahurian and daëvic beings (animals, plants): the former are useful and agreeable, and the latter, harmful and repulsive, a distinction which is extended even to the vocabulary. Discussions in L. H. Gray, "The 'Ahurian' and 'Daevian' Vocabularies in the Avesta," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1927) pp. 427-41.

95. Bartholomae, *Wörterbuch*, cols. 1770-71.

The resplendent Yima organized a *hanjamana-* of the
 excellent mortals...
 To that *hanjamana-* came the creator Ahura Mazda...
 To that *hanjamana-* came the resplendent Yima...
 (Vid. 2:20)

The term has become *anjuman*, "society, council," in New Persian, and since Indo-Iranian *j* is a sound alien to Syriac, *z* came to be adopted in its stead.

The initial element *han-* (actually *ham-*) "together, together with," is the Iranian dialectal variant of Indic *sam-* (IE *som-*),⁹⁶ and to understand the proportion *s* : *h*, it should be borne in mind that IE and Proto-Aryan *s* in several instances becomes *h* in Iranian;⁹⁷ compare:

<i>asura-</i> "lord"	: <i>ahura-</i> ⁹⁸
<i>asmi</i> , "I am"	: <i>ahmi</i>
<i>Sindhu</i> , "river-name"	: <i>Hindu</i>
<i>soma-</i> , "sacred drink"	: <i>haōma-</i>
<i>senā-</i> , "army"	: <i>haēnā-</i>

The change of *s* to *h* resulted according to Meillet,⁹⁹ from the feeble pronunciation of *s* in Iranian.

The element *jamana-* (= Indic *gamana-*, "going, coming, moving") is to be divided into *jam-*, the base, and *-ana-*, the suffix (IE-*eno-*) which is well attested in Indo-Iranian. As for *jam-*, is a derivative of the root *gam-* (= Indic *gam-*), "to come, her hinkommen, sich einstellen,"¹⁰⁰ which occurs in the Avesta both alone and in combination with preverbs such as *pairi-*, *paiti-*, *ham-*, etc.,¹⁰¹ and goes back to IE *g^wem-*, "to go,

96. Pokorny, *op. cit.*, p. 903.

97. For cases of *s* remaining unchanged, compare *masya-* (= Indic *matsya-*), "fish," *staras-* (*stārō*), "stars," *srask-*, "tear" etc.

98. Cf. Luke, "Word-Studies," pp. 33-38.

99. A. Meillet, *Introduction à l'étude comparative des langues indo-européennes* (Alabama Linguistic and Philological Series 3. Alabama, 1964) p. 95.

100. Bartholomae, *op. cit.*, cols. 494-96.

101. With *pairi-*, "herumgehen/kreisen," with *paiti-*, entgegen gehen, sich wenden gegen," with *ham-*, "(mit einander) zusammenkommen/treffen (auch feindlich), sich zusammenfinden" (Bartholomae. *op. cit.*, pp. 496-501).

come;" the original base survives in Gothic *qiman-*, Old High German *queman*, New High German *kommen*, and New English *come*, in Tocharian *kām-/kum-* (A), *kām-/kam-*, in Greek *bainō* from IE *gʷm-ō-*, Latin *venio*, etc.¹⁰²

Our paper has been concerned exclusively with etymology, which is one of the specialized branches of historical (diachronic) linguistics.¹⁰³ Etymological investigations are meant to prepare the ground for exegesis, namely, of the Scriptures, the liturgical texts, and the writings of the great scholars of antiquity as an aid to interpretation, they are, then, of the highest moment.¹⁰⁴

The various etymological proposals to be found in the dictionaries are, needless to say, not always absolutely certain and there is involved a good bit of guess work. These factors impose a severe limitation on the science of etymology, but in spite of it the science has its own significance. We add here two examples to illustrate the importance of etymology.

Armenian *erku*, "two," is cognate with Homeric and Old Latin *duō* (classical *duo*), Gothic *twa*, Indic *dvā* and so on.¹⁰⁵ It

102. Pokorny, *op. cit.*, pp. 463-65. IE had a series of labiovelars (i. e. *kʷ*, *gʷ*, *gʷh*), which have developed in different ways in the historical languages: in Indo-Iranian the labial element came to be lost (hence *gam-*), whereas it is preserved in Latin (compare *quinque*, "five," *-que*, "and"), in Gothic (hence *qiman* = *quiman*), etc. Succinct discussions in O. Szemerényi, *Einführung in die vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft* (2nd ed. Darmstadt, 1980) pp. 55-60. Cf. too Meillet, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-89.
103. R. Schmitt, *Etymologie. Wege der Forschung* 373. Darmstadt 1977 (collection of studies by Thurneysen, Kluge, Lommel and others).
104. For the theoretical basis of etymological investigations, cf. J. Lohmann, "Der Sinn der indogermanischen Etymologie," *Kratylos* 11 (1966) pp. 79-98 ("... die Geschichte dieser Verbegrifflichung der Welt im einzelnen zu beschreiben...;" cf. p. 98).
105. Meillet, *Etudes de linguistique et de philologie arméniennes* (Bibliothèque arménienne de la fondation Calouste

is the task of the science of etymology to explain, in the light of comparative and historical grammar, the strange correlation between the Armenian form and its counterpart in the other IE languages.

Italian and Spanish attest *burro*, a word which in the former means "butter" and in the latter, "donkey!" Why this difference? Because the term presupposes two different roots: the base of the Italian form is Latin *butyrum*, "butter," and that of the Spanish one, Greek *purrhos*, "red, the reddish" animal. The two examples have, it is hoped, clarified the part etymological analysis has to play in the study of words.

ܒܪܪܐ
burra

ܒܪܪܐ
burra

ܒܪܪܐ
burra

Gulbekian. Louvain, 1977) pp. 132-33, 209, 294. R. Solta, *Die Stellung des Armenischen im Kreise der indogermanischen Sprachen. Eine Untersuchung der indogermanischen Bestandteile des armenischen Wortschatzes* (Studien zur armenischen Geschichte 9. Vienna, 1960) pp. 222-23. Szemerényi, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 205.

HAVE PEACE IN YOUR HEART

Someone who has actually tasted truth is not contentions for truth.

Someone who is considered among men to be zealous for truth has not yet learnt what truth is really like: once he has truly learnt it, he will cease from zealousness on its behalf.

The gift of God and of knowledge of him is not a cause for turmoil and clamour; rather this gift is entirely filled with a peace in which the Spirit, love and humility reside.

The following is a sign of the coming of the Spirit: the person whom the Spirit has overshadowed is made perfect in these very virtues.

God is reality. The person whose mind has become aware of God does not even possess a tongue with which to speak, but God resides in his heart in great serenity. He experiences no stirring of zeal or argumentativeness, nor is he stirred by anger. He cannot even be aroused concerning the faith.

(St Isaac of Syria)

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A. Deprez*

L'origine Et La Signification Du Mot Amad

Parmi les quelques 25 noms qui ont servi aux chrétiens des 4 premiers siècles à désigner le baptême, deux se sont vus reconnaître une valeur suréminente et sont devenus les termes techniques de l'Eglise pour sa liturgie. Ces deux mots officiels sont:

- BAPTIZEIN pour la partie gréco-latine de l'empire Romano-Byzantin.
- AMAD pour sa partie sémite et orientale.

L'adoption du premier mot ne présentait aucune difficulté, puisqu'il figure en propre dans le Nouveau Testament écrit dès l'origine en grec, ses titres d'origine apostolique s'avérant de ce fait incontestables.

L'adoption du mot AMAD ne paraît pas avoir suscité non plus la moindre difficulté. Kargement atteste des la vieille version syriaque de la Bible, puis repris par la peshitta, le mot fut si universellement admis par les chrétiens syriens, puis orientaux, arabes et persans qu'il se perpétua jusqu'à nos jours, dans tous les rituels liturgiques, les décrets canoniques, ou les sermons, et se maintint inchangé en dépit des schismes et des divisions.

La seule question relative au terme AMAD – et soulevée d'ailleurs récemment au XIXème siècle – concerne l'origine apostolique du mot. Fut-il employé dès le premier siècle et par

* Rev. Marc Deprez from France is an associate member of the St. John Centre of Tehran; He is a linguistic scholar.

les apotres eux-mêmes ? La présomption serait alors que le mot est d'origine hébraïque. Ou bien, n'a-t-il été utilisé qu'a partir du 2ème ou 3ème siècle, et pour la première fois par exemple dans les milieux araméens d'Edesse ? La présomption serait dans ce cas que le mot est syriaque.

Ce débat quant a la date d'apparition et quant a l'origine du mot traduit en réalité un écart d'appréciation sur la signification réelle du terme, car s'il s'avère que le mot est d'origine hébraïque, Amad connote l'image de la colonne dressée ou fixée fermement sur ses bases et servant de support a un édifice. Si, au contraire, l'origine du mot est postérieure – et donc syriaque – l'image évoquée est l'eau, et le bain ou la plongée dans l'eau exactement comme le mot grec baptizein.

Etant donné l'autorité incontestable du mot grec et de la version grecque du Nouveau Testament, la question peut paraître tranchée d'avance. *La colonne ou l'eau, ce n'est pas du tout la même image*. Comme le Grec, lui, fait référence a l'eau, et exclusivement a l'eau, il devrait s'ensuivre que le mot AMAD ne peut être que d'origine syriaque et il paraîtrait difficile dans ce cas de remonter jusqu'a la génération apostolique pour tracer l'origine du mot. Ils ont donc été peu nombreux, ceux qui ont formellement contesté l'origine syriaque du mot. Il en existe cependant.

Voyons les *deux Thèses en présence* et prenons l'exacte mesure des arguments échangés.

I. La These De L'origine Syriaque Du Mot Amad

A) Elle se fonde sur un fait massif, qui – a lui seul – constitue une preuve impressionnante et quasiment dirimante. *La peshitta traduit invariablement le mot grec BAPTIZEIN* (ou ses dérivés) *par AMAD* (ou ses dérivés) et ceci dans les 95 cas où l'occurrence se produit. Il est, *dès lors, certain que le mot AMAD évoque l'eau et la plongée*. Et ceci, notons le bien, non seulement parce que le vocable grec, qu'il transpose en syriaque, le suggérerait étymologiquement, mais aussi parce que le contexte immédiat indique clairement dans le Nouveau Testament que JEAN MA'MUDONO (en Syriaque = baptiste) "baptise dans l'eau" (Jean I 26 et 34) et qu'il ne le fait que là où il y a de l'eau, soit au Jourdain (Jean I 28), soit "à Aenon, près de Salim,

car les eaux abondaient et les gens se présentaient et se faisaient baptiser" (Jean III 23). Ne voudrait-on qu'une preuve – mais péremptoire – de la connexion que l'église a établie entre le mot AMAD et la notion d'eau, elle serait donnée par la traduction targoumisante qui fait de la piscine de Bethesda (Jean V 2 et suiv.) un baptistère: MAMUDITA, un des mots dérivés de AMAD.

B) Il y a un autre argument péremptoire qui vient conforter la thèse de l'origine syriaque du verbe AMAD. *Au début de l'ère chrétienne, ce verbe était tombé en désuétude comme frappé d'archaïsme et le sens traditionnel qu'il avait eu, autrefois, dans le vieil hébreu sacerdotal ("se lever, être debout") était à présent rendu dans les divers dialectes araméens populaires et parlés par le verbe QOUM.*

Murdock – un des partisans pourtant de la thèse hébraïque – reconnaît volontiers le fait: "Prenons, dit-il l'exemple du Pentateuque. Le verbe AMAD revient 81 fois dans les texte hébreu de la Bible. Mais dans le targoum d' ONKELOS de ce texte, on ne trouve jamais la traduction amad pour ce verbe. Dans 72 cas, il est traduit par QOUM, et dans 9 autres cas par une paraphrase. De même la PESCHITTA syriaque, pour ce même pentateuque ne traduit jamais le verbe par amad mais le rend par QOUM dans 75 cas et le paraphrase ou l'omet dans les 6 autres cas. Enfin, dans la version SAMARITAINE, le verbe est bien rendu 2 fois par Amad, mais dans les 75 autres cas, on retrouve "QOUM."

La preuve que le mot araméen qoum était 'ugé valide – et le seul valide – pour désigner le baptême quand on voulait exprimer l'idée que ce sacrement provoquait le relèvement, le redressement ou la résurrection de l'homme, se trouve dans le fait que c'est lui qui fut dans la pratique utilisé préférentiellement au verbe amad. Quand par exemple Aphraate, au IV^{ème} siècle, utilise dans ses "démonstrations d'un sage persan" l'expression syriaque B'NAI QUYAMA (mot a mot: les fils de la résurrection) pour désigner des baptisés ayant fait vœu de célibat, il n'utilise pas le mot amad, bien qu'il s'agisse de baptisés, mais QOUM ce qui lui permet de jouer sur le sens polyvalent du mot (statio, statutum, pactus ou foedus) et d'user

par ailleurs d'une expression qui bénéficie de l'autorité apostolique ("les fils de la résurrection" de Luc XX 36 se traduisent en Syriaque B'NAI QYOMTO ou' B'NAI QYOMO), preuve s'il en est que le discrédit du mot *amad*, pour cet usage particulier en tout cas, remonte bien au I^{er} siècle et a la génération apostolique.

C) Faisons brièvement la contre-épreuve, et *consultons le dictionnaire PAYNE-SMITH*. Ainsi qu'on pourra le constater en consultant l'extrait approprié de ce dictionnaire ci-joint : les deux noms qui appartiennent à la famille du mot *Amad* sont :

– *MAMUDITA* signifiant : piscine, ablution, baptême, baptistère,

et

– *AMOUDO* signifiant : colonne, tribune ou lieu élevé, colonne vertébrale.

Mais la racine verbale *AMAD* elle-même ne connote que les seuls sens évoqués par *MAMUDITA*, c'est-à-dire :

1. il descendit – il plongea
2. il pénétra (par exemple se dit d'une flèche)
3. il descendit dans l'eau, se lava, fit ses ablutions
4. il fut baptisé.

Aucun de ces sens n'évoque, en quoi que ce soit, *AMOUDO*, c'est-à-dire l'idée de se "tenir debout" "être droit" "soutenir", qui invariablement est rendue par *QOM*. Autrement dit le substantif *AMOUDO* N'A PAS DE RACINE VERBALE CORRESPONDANTE. A aucun moment donc, *AMAD* ne peut être traduit dans un texte syriaque, par "être debout", "être ferme", "être droit" etc...

La conclusion s'impose. *AMAD* est un VERBE SPECIALISE, PROPRE A LA LANGUE SYRIAQUE ET QUI DENOTE de manière précise répétée et convergente une TYPOLOGIE BAPTISMALE DONT L'EVOcation EST L'EAU (comme dans le cas du verbe grec BAPTIZEIN). Les Syriens se sont servis d'une racine verbale hébraïque tombée en désuétude et qui était donc libre pour un usage nouveau spécifiquement chrétien. S'il a pu laisser un vague souvenir de sa signification passée à cause du

nom voisin amoudo (= colonne) encore employé, cela n'a jamais altéré le sens fondamental et nouveau du mot, spécialisé désormais pour désigner le baptême. Rien ne l'exprime mieux que le dicton arabe suivant que, de nos jours, on utilise. Le mot amoud n'y figure dans le sens apparent de colonne que pour mieux illustrer l'image d'une abondance d'eau :

*"bayn al maouloud, wal ma'moud
betqaf al mai amoud"*

Entre Noël (m. a m. : le nouveau-né) et l'épiphanie (m. a m. : le baptisé)

se tient l'eau (comme une) colonne (c'est-à-dire : il pleut beaucoup).

II. La These De L' Origine Hebraique Du Mot Amad

Au XIXème siècle, deux sémitisants ont soulevé la question de l'éventuelle origine hébraïque du mot AMAD avec la conséquence que sa signification profonde aurait été non plus a proprement parler baptiser (au sens étymologique grec du terme impliquant nécessairement l'eau) mais :

- soit : confirmer : Augusti * (1836)
- soit : professer sa foi : Murdock* (1850)

Des deux études, c'est celle de Murdock qui est la plus remarquable et la plus fouillée.

Depuis lors, la question n'a pas été traitée au fond; mais elle a été abordée incidemment par plusieurs auteurs, en référence :

- avec le rituel du baptême Mandéen : Reitzenstein * (1929), Edsmann * (1940), Segelberg * (1958), Widengren * (1968)
- avec la liturgie des stations, propre a la Synagogue et a l'Eglise Primitive : Bonsirven * (1925)
- avec le nom du sacrement de confirmation : Saber * (1974)
- enfin avec l'institution du qyama : Murray * (1974)

Je renvoie en annexe de la présente note (pour Augusti et Murdock), ou a différents essais séparés mais rédigés dans le cadre de la présente étude (pour les autres auteurs), l'examen approfondi des thèmes ainsi évoqués.

A la seule exception de Murdock qui a fondé au départ son étude sur des arguments linguistiques, tous les autres auteurs cités ont abordé la question de l'origine hébraïque du mot AMAD, a partir de rapprochements de sens ou de significations possibles avec des institutions ou des liturgies supposées apparentées. Ils étaient donc nécessairement prudents, et d'ailleurs vulnérables dans la mesure où il était très généralement admis que la plupart des livres du Nouveau Testament ont été écrits originellement en grec et non dans une langue sémite. Tout au plus un certain nombre d'auteurs avaient-ils admis une rédaction originelle araméenne (mais limitée à quelques livres du Nouveau Testament : Mathieu et Jean en particulier). *L'élément nouveau depuis 1950, est qu'on a découvert les manuscrits de la mer morte* qui sont presque tous hébreux et qui prouvent de façon incontestable *qu'au temps de Jésus l'hébreu était encore une langue vivante. Une nouvelle doctrine est en train de s'accrediter : un des évangiles au moins (Mathieu) aurait été rédigé dès le départ en Hébreu.* Les autres évangélistes (Luc en particulier) auraient utilisé des documents d'origine hébraïque. La chose n'a, en soi, rien de surprenant, puisque les commentaires rabbiniques étaient à l'époque normalement rédigés en hébreu. (voir en annexe bibliographique, la référence des auteurs qui, en France, défendent cette position).

1. Du coup, *la question est de savoir quel nom hébreu fut à l'origine de ce qui devint le mot grec Baptizein.* Le Père Carmignac, que j'ai interrogé de son vivant, était persuadé que c'était le mot *TEBILA* (=immersion) qui sert à désigner chez les Juifs le baptême des "prosélytes". La tébila a, sans doute, été institutionnalisée au I^{er} siècle de notre ère, et *la question est ouverte de savoir si c'est avant ou après l'établissement du baptême chrétien* (voir en annexe bibliographique les 4 articles de référence qui traitent explicitement de cette question). L'opinion prévalente actuellement est que *la tébila est plutôt postérieure* et que donc le mot et la pratique de conversion juive, loin d'influer sur le choix des termes hébreux (amad) et grecs (baptizcin) par la première génération chrétienne, sont plutôt une réponse juive à ce choix.

Les choses ont pu se passer comme le résume une *CHRONIQUE SAMARITAINE* dont les sources d'information remonteraient au 2^{ème} siècle (HISTOIRE DE JOSUE A NABUCHODONOSOR):

“Ce Jean était connu sous le nom de YOHANA AMUDANI (Jean le baptiste), car les “judaïstes avaient d’abord dit de lui: “c’est un juste” et ils avaient cru en sa justice et ils s’étaient fait baptiser par lui. Par la suite, ils réalisèrent qu’il était attaché à Jésus le Nazaréen, le fils de Marie. Quand ils lui dirent de ne pas le baptiser, lui ne suivit pas leur avis. Il passa outre et installa au Jourdain à hauteur de Jéricho il le baptisa. Quand les Judaïstes constatèrent qu’il avait baptisé Jésus le Nazaréen, ils interdirent à quiconque de se faire baptiser par Jean, alors que précédemment c’était eux qui avaient dit que tous ceux qui se feraient baptiser dans les eaux de Jéricho seraient nettoyés de toute impureté, de toute abomination et de tout péché. Depuis ce temps là, la communauté du Nazaréen pratique le baptême suivant cette institution, tandis que les judaïstes l’ont continuellement rejeté et ceci à partir de l’époque du baptême de Jésus par Jean. A la place du baptême, ils instituèrent l’IMMERSION en substitution à l’eau du Jourdain.

Ce texte est particulièrement intéressant en ce qu’il situe l’un par rapport à l’autre:

- L’immersion juive (la Tébila),
- le baptême de Jean, dont on peut penser qu’il fut désigné par un nom (AMAD) qui évoquait le surnom attribué au départ à son fondateur (AMUDANI).
- le baptême des chrétiens, qui reprit la dénomination du baptême de Jean pour des raisons que l’on examinera tout à l’heure.

2. La question, dès lors, ne fait que rebondir: Pourquoi Jean fut-il appelé AMUDANI. Le texte samaritain nous donne deux précisions utiles. Il dit que le surnom avait été donné par les “Judaïstes”, c’est-à-dire – suivant les précisions qu’il donne ailleurs – par les pharisiens. Il dit en outre que c’est parce que Jean était reconnu “comme un juste” que ce surnom lui fut attribué. Quel peut bien être le rapport entre la justice – en hébreu SEDEK – de Jean, et son surnom AMUDANI (dérivé de l’hébreu AMAD)? Partons de AMAD.

Étant donné que Jean est de famille sacerdotale par son père et par sa mère, qu’il peut remonter jusqu’au premier grand prêtre Aaron (Luc I.) et qu’il est habité par la spiritualité

typiquement sacerdotale d'Isaïe (annonçant un grand exode purificateur et final à travers le désert, analogue à celui qui eut lieu sous Moïse: exode lors duquel seraient ramenés tous les exilés de la diaspora – et avec eux les nations en offrande – dans Jérusalem rebâtie en gloire, sous la conduite d'un messie serviteur de Dieu aidé par la communauté d'Israël – financée du désert – enfin épousée dans la Ville Sainte) *le plus simple est de supposer que le mot AMAD est repris du' vieux vocabulaire sacerdotal Israélite.* Il exprime l'idée typiquement sacerdotale qu'un homme justifié est un homme redressé, et que la justification est possible dans des grandes circonstances, comme celles de l'exode.

Quand on ouvre un dictionnaire d'Hébreu ancien (voir en annexe) on voit que le verbe ANAD (= se tenir debout ou servir dans le temple) et le nom AMOUD (= colonne ou pilier qui soutient une maison) se corroborent l'un l'autre. James Murdock * a fait en 1850 une impressionnante recherche philologique dans les dictionnaires d'Hébreu ancien (Gesenius), d'Hébreu talmudique et rabbinique (Buxtorf), d'Arabe (Freytag), d'Ethiopien (Castell) de Chaldéen (Castell et Schindler):

“Il résulte indubitablement de l'ensemble massif de ces références que le sens premier du verbe AMAD était: se tenir debout (to stand), se lever (to stand up), consolider et résister (to stand firm), stabiliser (to stand still)”. Doù l'idée dérivée d'exercer avec fidélité et assurance le service liturgique du Temple.

Y-a-t-il dans la tradition juive des récits qui permettent de penser que le mot *amad* – entendu en cette acception de sens – *ait pu servir à qualifier une vocation sacerdotale?* Il y en a. En voici trois:

– MIDRASH RABBA sur exode II 6, qui rapporte l'épisode du *buisson ardent* en le targoumisant: “Moïse dit: me voici, je suis prêt pour le sacerdoco et la royauté. Dieu lui dit. *TU TE TIENS A L'ENDROIT DU PILIER DU MONDE.* Ne t'approche pas d'ici. Retire tes souliers.”

– Yashar Wa Yera 45, qui rapporte l'épisode de l'élection d'Isaac – figure sacerdotale par excellence choisie pour le sacrifice crucial qu'Abraham va devoir opérer. “Le 3ème jour de son voyage, Abraham regarda en l'air et vit l'endroit au loin que

Dieu lui avait indiqué. Il apparut *sur la montagne (du Moriah, la future Jérusalem) une COLONNE DE FEU qui reliait la terre au ciel, une nuée épaisse dans laquelle on voyait la gloire de Dieu.* Abraham dit à Isaac ; Mon fils, aperçois-tu sur cette montagne que l'on voit là-bas ce que j'y aperçois ? Isaac répondit à son Père : *Oui, j'aperçois une colonne de feu et une nuée et la gloire de Dieu est visible au-dessus de la nuée. Abraham sut alors qu' Isaac était agréé comme offrande devant le Seigneur*".

- Targum Néophiti sur Nombres XX 29 et XXI 1 qui attribue à Moïse l'origine du titre de COLONNE décernée lors de son décès au premier grand prêtre Aaron : "Moïse pleurait et disait : malheur à moi, à cause de toi Aaron, mon frère, COLONNE de la prière des enfants d'Israël, toi qui faisais l'expiation pour eux une fois par an .. Le Cananéen, roi d'Arad, apprit qu' Aaron était mort, l'homme pieux par le mérite de qui les nuées de la gloire protégeaient Israël et que s'était élevée la colonne de nuée.

Jean pourrait donc avoir été appelé AMUDANI, c'est-à-dire L'HOMME A LA COLONNE pour signifier qu'on croyait communément qu'il serait le prêtre-prophète attendu, l'ELIE qui donnerait le départ du GRAND RETOUR (= TESHUBA), d'où le surnom de TISHBITE donné à Elie), le Moïse du nouvel exode annoncé, celui en faveur de qui la colonne de feu qui accompagna jadis les Pères au désert réapparaîtrait. Les temps annoncés par le prophète Daniel dans la dispora Mésopotamienne pour l'échéance messianique étaient tout proches * et les circonstances extraordinaires qui avaient entouré la naissance de Jean Baptiste et que le peuple se remémorait volontiers dans la Judée toute entière (Luc I 65-66) montraient à l'évidence que ce Jean était marqué par une grande vocation. Ce prophète aurait le charisme d'Elie (Luc - chapitre I). Bref, comme le dit excellemment l'Evangile de (Luc III 15) : "Le peuple était dans l'attente et tous se demandaient en leur cœur au sujet de Jean s'il n'était pas le Christ".

Les pharisiens pourraient bien avoir été effectivement les promoteurs les plus zélés de ce mouvement populaire comme le suggère notre chronique samaritaine: Ils souhaitaient ardemment un ressourcement de la classe sacerdotale pour faire face à l'irruption des temps nouveaux et voyaient d'un bon oeil ce Jean, qui dans

l'esprit du vrai Kippour, voulait une purification du peuple (d'où le baptême) – comme un préalable à la solennelle célébration de la fête finale des tabernacles qui scellerait dans Jérusalem glorieuse la vocation éminente d'Israël – mais qui voulait que cette purification se fasse *dans la justice*. Les Pharisiens avaient élaboré dans le même temps et de leur côté une doctrine des oeuvres de justice – en liaison justement avec Kippour – suivant les 3 rubriques qui deviendront classiques: l'aumône, la prière et les pèlerinages. J'ai montré dans un essai séparé – intitulé COLONNE DE JUSTICE – que les pharisiens ont pu effectivement croire que Jean était l'homme de la situation. L'historien Josèphe, pharisien lui-même et qui avait aussi subi pendant 3 ans de sa vie l'attrait de la spiritualité du désert, souligne le trait de la personnalité de Jean qui paraissait le plus digne d'attention pour un pharisien. Jean se démarquait des autres baptistes qui pensaient pouvoir s'en tirer avec des lustrations ou un retrait du monde, et il osait rappeler à chacun les règles de justice au quotidien ainsi que les obligations du devoir d'état: "car, nous dit Josephe, c'est à cette condition que Dieu considèrerait le baptême comme agréable, s'il servait non point à se faire pardonner certaines fautes, mais à purifier le corps après qu'on eut PREALABLEMENT PURIFIE L'AME PAR LA JUSTICE" (Ant: juives XVIII 117).

Dès lors, *pour distinguer le baptême de Jean de celui des autres baptistes – notamment de celui des Sabéens ou mandéens (appelé Masbuta)*, il fallait un nom propre et particulier. Le plus simple est d'admettre qu'on ait désigné ce baptême du surnom attribué à son auteur. Jean était appelé AMUDANI (version samaritaine), MA'MUDONO (version syriaque), on appellerait donc le baptême de Jean MA'MUDITA (version syriaque dans laquelle le nom nous est resté).

3. Etant supposé admis que tel fut effectivement le nom original de ce baptême, *il ne s'ensuit pas automatiquement que ce nom ait dû servir pour désigner aussi le baptême de ceux que notre chronique samaritaine appelle les Nazaréens*, c'est à dire les disciples de Jésus. En effet, *ce qui, au dire même de Jean Baptiste, paraissait caractéristique de Jésus, c'était le baptême de feu et d'esprit et non le baptême d'eau*. Aussi bien, St-EPHREM dit-il que "Jésus mit fin au baptême du Jourdain bien que Jean continuât à baptiser après lui (sermon de domino nostro, 52) et dans le

commentaire du diatesseron IV 1: "qu' il mit fin par son baptême à celui de Jean, car il baptisa de nouveau ceux quiavaient été baptisés par Jean". Cela *n'impliquait-il pas un autre nom* pour distinguer et identifier ce baptême chrétien? Par exemple le mot sceau (sphragis en grec, rouchmo en syriaque), ou illumination (photismos en grec, et nawhere en syriaque).

Ils ne manquèrent pas ceux qui dans les 4 premiers siècles crurent pouvoir être chrétiens et se dispenser du baptême d'eau puisqu'aussi bien, suivant eux, c'était le baptême de feu et d'esprit qui comptait (Marcionistes, Seleucites, Manichéens, Messaliens, etc...). J'en ai rappelé l'existence et l'importance dans un essai intitulé: "Mamudita et ruchmo".

L'église ne suivit jamais ces opinions dissidentes car les mêmes raisons qui, à ses yeux, justifiaient que l'Ancien Testament restât dans le canon des Ecrites Saintes, valaient aussi pour maintenir la validité du baptême d'eau de Jean.

Mais dira-t-on: on pouvait, en conservant ce baptême, en changer à tout le moins le nom, pour *signifier la nouveauté du baptême chrétien. Les noms possibles ne manquaient pas.* La preuve en est que les pharisiens ont trouvé le mot de tébila (= immersion). Si on exclut ce mot et celui de Masbuta (= plongée), également pris (par les Sabéens), il restait encore d'autres termes utilisables, empruntés à 2 familles de radicaux possibles (Assig = laver, Ras = doucher).

Mais non, la *primitive église a voulu maintenir inchangé le nom, AMAD*, par lequel on désignait le baptême de Jean. On peut sans peine deviner pourquoi: le mot *suggérait en effet la colonne de nuée qui accompagnait Moïse et les hébreux dans le désert de l'exode.* Or, le Christ étant le Nouveau Moïse, ou mieux encore la colonne de feu elle-même, *MAMUDITA convenait admirablement* pour désigner le baptême chrétien. J'ai montré dans deux essais séparés "la colonne de feu" et "la colonne de gloire" que la typologie du baptême chrétien dans l'église primitive a été effectivement influencée par ces deux thèmes.

Comment en définitive trancher la question ouverte?

- Car il est d'une part incontestable que AMAD équivaut

point par point au verbe grec baptizein, ce qui semble accréditer l'origine syriaque plutôt qu'hébraï que du mot et sa connexion étroite et organique avec l'image de l'eau.

- Mais d'autre part, les raisons de faire remonter le mot jusqu'à une origine apostolique et d'en faire un dérivé du vieux vocabulaire sacerdotal hébraïque apparaissent elles aussi fortes, le sens de colonne et de serment (ou profession de foi) fait devant la croix colonne étant dans ce cas bien tentant.

La contradiction peut en l'occurrence être levée si l'on admet que le mot *AMAD* recouvre un concept-duo. Dès l'origine, c'est-à-dire depuis l'exode des hébreux à leur sortie d'Egypte, le mot pourrait avoir associé deux notions qui nous apparaissent antinomiques mais que l'expérience avait révélé être organiquement liées:

- celle de la *MER* liquide, synonyme d'insécurité et d'engloutissement dans laquelle il faudra pourtant se frayer un chemin,
- celle de *COLONNE DE FEU* qui, au contraire, guida de façon sûre et prouvée à travers cette même mer.

1. N'est-ce pas au fond ce que *St-Paul* veut nous faire comprendre quand, mentionnant à la fois la colonne et la mer, et sans dissocier le concept-duo, il donne comme exemple révélateur de notre propre baptême le fait que dans le passé "nos pères ont tous été baptisés dans la nuée (donc la colonne) et dans la mer". (I Cor X2)?

2. N'est-ce pas aussi le même concept-duo que les Juifs auraient gardé en mémoire, quand, par exemple, le Midrash Rabba sur l'Ecclésiaste III 11 §3 déclare qu'il ne faut pas transmettre le NOM de Yahvé à n'importe qui (car même parmi les prêtres il y a des pêcheurs) et que dans ces conditions "*LE NOM ne peut être transmis qu'à ceux qui sont DEBOUT en un endroit impeccable et SUR L'EAU*"?

3. Ce concept-duo est également bien apparent dans l'évangile qui rapporte l'épisode de la guérison à la piscine de Bethesda. Cette piscine n'est désignée en syriaque du nom de baptistère, (voir ci-dessus) que parce que le grabataire a pu, en s'y plongeant,

obtenir la guérison et le pouvoir de se tenir à nouveau droit e redressé.

4. *L'icône liturgique de ce concept-duo est dans la liturgie latine d'aujourd'hui le cierge pascal.* Lors de la vigile, ce cierge pascal est célébré dans l'exultet comme étant la réplique de la colonne de feu qui précéda les hébreux. Or il est plongé 3 fois dans l'eau de la vasque baptismale d'après un usage qui est attesté en occident depuis le IV^{ème} siècle (actes de Saint-Maternien évêque de Reims) mais qui est vraisemblablement plus ancien. C'est d'ailleurs à cet usage liturgique que St-Ephrem en orient fait lui aussi probablement allusion dans son commentaire du diatesseron IV 12: "Le rédempteur fut tenté trois fois a la ressemblance des trois immersions par lesquelles il avait été baptisé".

Le Christ-colonne de feu qui assure la traversée pascalle de la mer rouge - a été considéré comme un élément tellement important de la typologie baptismale de l'église primitive* que par exemple le baptistère de Saint Jean de Latran (terminé de construire avant 335 et donc le plus ancien qui soit conservé à Rome) comportait au beau milieu de la vasque baptismale une colonne élevée de porphyre rouge, au sommet de laquelle brûlait un parfum qui éclairait en repandant une admirable odeur.

En définitive, je me rallierais donc bien volontiers à l'opinion du Père Murray* telle qu'il l'exprimait au terme d'une étude sur le baptême dans l'ancienne église syrienne publiée en 1974*. "Il est possible, écrivait-il, que pour les Judéo-chrétiens de la primitive église qui connaissaient l'hébreu, il y ait eu une HEURUSE RENCONTRE de sens EVTRE le mot HEBREU AMAD (=tenir) et le SYRIAQUE AMAD (= plonger sous l'eau), si bien que l'expression qu'ils employaient permettait de jouer sur les deux significations: "être baptisé" et "s'engager pour le Christ."

J'aurais pourtant moins de prudence que lui. Car il voyait cette rencontre comme fortuite et en tout cas comme éphémère, n'ayant de raison d'être que dans les parties de la chrétienté parlant encore Hébreu. Il me semble, quant à moi, que si Amad recouvre originellement un concept-duo, les deux sens du mot-eau et colonne - sont des composantes organiques indissociables.

S'il en est bien ainsi, me dira-t-on, il faut nécessairement qu'on retrouve la dualité de sens dans l'église universelle. C'est tout à fait exact. La traduction de AMAD est:

- en grec : *stasis* et ses composés (*apo-stasis*,
apo-kata-stasis, *ana-stasis ex-stasis*,
meta-statis etc)
- en latin : *statio* ou *stantia* et ses composés
(*sub-stantia*, *con-stantia*, *in-stantia*, etc.)

La connotation de ces mots, grec ou latin, avec le baptême est parfois tellement évidente qu'elle n'a pas besoin de démonstration. Par exemple l'*apo-stasis* est la situation (de destabilisation) dans laquelle tombe celui qui renie les engagements souscrits au baptême. De même l'usage de l'église latine des 4 premiers siècles d'appeler les martyrs, "*stantes*" (par ex. St-Cyprien), ne s'explique bien que si ce mot est dérivé de *amad* par voie de traduction, désignant ceux qui ont supporté debout l'épreuve du baptême du sang. On ne peut manquer de faire le rapprochement avec les 3 hébreux condamnés en Babylonie à la fournaise et que le midrash juif appelle les 3 colonnes (Tehillim I 15), tant il est vrai que c'est bien le même concept dual (solidité manifestée à l'occasion d'une épreuve de dissolution) qui est à la base de ces deux expressions désignant les martyrs soit en hébreu, soit en latin.

Il serait passionnant de vérifier que tous les autres noms dérivés (de *amad*, *stasis* ou *stantia*) s'enrichissent de cette double valence de sens, qui donne comme visuellement au baptême chrétien toute sa solide puissance de résurrection et tout son dynamisme inébranlable de vie.

Les mots marqués d'un astérisque renvoient à des ouvrages mentionnés dans la bibliographie jointe.

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SEERI - Chronicle

1991 November 25-27

The Syro-Malankara Bishops met in SEERI for revising the liturgical texts.

1991 November 29

Prof. Dr. I. H. Dalmais o. p. (Paris, France) visited again SEERI with a french group of 11 persons hailing from the different regions of France.

1991 December 30

A french group of 22 persons, led by V. Rev. Fr. Rossignol, and Begueri again visited SEERI and encouraged its educational and ecumenical activities.

1992 January 3

Another french group for missionary co-operation (co-operations Missionaries) led by Sr. A. Duffaure, visited SEERI and appreciated its efforts to serve the authentic cause of the Churches of Syriac tradition in India.

1992 January 4

Rev. Fr. Hans John (Luzern, Switzerland) and Dr. Gregor reached SEERI in view of spending a few weeks in Kerala to see the Church life here and to know the culture of India.

1992 January 9

Prof. Dr. John Madey (Johan Adam Moehler Institut, Paderborn, Germany) reached SEERI for giving lectures in

SEERI and at the Paurasthya Vidyapitham, Vadavathoor, Kottayam.

1992 January 10

Prof. Dr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg o. p. (Nijmegen, Holland) reached SEERI for a short stay of two days.

1992 January 11

The 14th meeting of the Advisory Committee of SEERI was held from 9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. It was attended also by our guests: Prof. Dr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg o. p., Prof. Dr. John Madey, Rev. Fr. Hans John and Dr. Gregor, They gave their valuable suggestions for rendering SEERI's services more effectively.

1992 January 12

Prof. Dr. David Bundy (Christian University, Indianapolis, U. S. A.) reached SEERI for a short stay of 6 days.

1992 January 13

The "Jacquin group" of 16 persons from France visited SEERI under the guidance of Prof. Dr. I. H. Dalmais o. p. (Paris). They wished all success for SEERI's activities.

1992 January 17

A "One day Seminar" was held from 2.45 to 5.00 p. m. Prof. Dr. David Bundy read a paper on "George Warda (13. cent.) and Syriac Spirituality." Prof. Dr. John Madey dealt with "Some glimpses into the essential features of oriental liturgies. This seminar was presided over and inaugurated by Rev. Dr. M. V. Abraham, the Principal of the Mar Thoma Seminary, Kottayam.

1992 January 27

Mis Exc. Dr. Klaus Dicke, the Weihbischof of Koln Archdiocese and his secretary Pfr. Manfred Melser visited SEERI and whole heartedly supported this institute and its ecumenical activities.

1992 February 3-28

One Month course on oriental liturgy started on this day. Most Rev. Geevarghese Mar Timotheos, bishop of Tiruvalla, presided over the inaugural function. Prof. Dr. John Madey

inaugurated it and gave the first lecture. The classes was taken by 12 Professors from the different Churches of Syriac tradition. 48 students, including both sisters and a few fathers, attended this course.

1992 February 3-16

Rev. Fr. Andrew Morbey from the Orthodox Church of America, reached SEERI and followed an intensive course of Syriac language. During his stay in Kottayam he also visited the main Church Centres of Kerala.

1992 February 8

The fifth meeting of the Indo-German Society, Kottayam was held in SEERI from 3.30 to 6.00 p.m. At this meeting Prof. Dr. John Madey spoke on the school system in Germany with particular reference to final examinations.

1992 February 17

Rev. Dayroyo Malko Malko and Said Geevarghese from Tur Abdin visited SEERI and expressed great appreciation for SEERI and its objectives.

1992 February 28

The one month course in Liturgy was concluding and certificates were given to those who successfully followed this course.

1992 March 1-3

The director of SEERI participated in a seminar in Cochin on effective methods of teaching a language. It was organized by the Alliance Francaise and the "Attache Cultural" of the French Embassy in India.

1992 March 14

Dr. Ulrike Nieten from the Freie Universitat, Berlin, Germany visited SEERI expressed the hope of revisiting SEERI and offering an intensive course in Hebrew next year.

1992 March 30 10. - 12.30. a.m.

Syriac Examination of Rev. Fr. T. Mathews Emanuel (Andhra Pradesh) in partial fulfilment of the requirements for M. Th. degree of the Mar Thoma Seminary (Serampore University).

1992 April 4

After following syriac classes twice a week from January 1992, Bro. Stephen Plathottathil O.I.C. joined the intensive course in Syriac (advanced level) from April 4th to May 22nd 1992.

1992 April 6 – May 22

The Syriac intensive course of seven weeks lasted from April 6th to May 22nd 1992. The courses were taken by the Director of SEERI and Rev. Bro. Stephen Plathottam O.I.C. Altogether 5 students, including a sister of the D.M. congregation from Marthandom, Tamilnadu, attended this course and were awarded certificates.

1992 April 7

Rev. Fr. Marc Cholin and his friend from Grenoble, France visited SEERI and discussed the computer programmes for Syriac which are to be developed in France.

1992 April 21

Dayaroyo Abdal-Mšiha of Medyād, Turkey visited SEERI and wished all success to this institute of great ecumenical vision and vocation.

1992 May

This month was set apart for personal research and for translating a few homilies of Jacob of Sarug into English.

1992 June 1

– Rev. Dr. George Vavanikunnel, former Director of the (Missionary Orientation Centre) Manganam, Kottayam began staying in SEERI for revising Syriac Grammar and for further readings in the field of Oriental Liturgies.

– Rev. Srs. Seraphia, Ancilitt and Merilitt, all belonging to the community of the “Sisters of the Imitation of Christ”, took charge of SEERI to cater to the various needs of the house and its guests. Rev. Sr. Marietta S.I.C. will be joining SEERI’s staff later on.

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Book Reviews

Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: Latin-English Edition
Translation prepared under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America. Washington, D.C. 20064: Canon Law Society of America, 1992, 785 pages, flexible binding ISBN 0-9436-52-2, case binding ISBN 0-943616-53-0, n.p.

This is the edition which was waited for since the promulgation of the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* [CCEO]. Therefore we welcome this volume containing both the Latin text the copyright of which is held by the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See, Vatican City, and the English translation due to the Canon Law Society of America. The English translation has received the approval of the Office of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See on March 9, 1991, and of all the Eastern Catholic bishops in the United States of America. It goes without saying that we recommend this work to all concerned by office and particularly also to those who are interested in the canonical norms ruling the 21 Catholic Churches *sui iuris* of eastern apostolic tradition which are in ecclesial communion with the Petrine Church of Rome. In the introductory part, we find a foreword to the translation, the Apostolic Constitution *Sacri Canones*, the preface to the Latin edition, an outline of the Code by Canons. The text is followed by a glossary and tables of corresponding canons: CCEO-CIC-CICO; CIC-CCEO-CICO; CICO-CCEO-CIC. In this regard, it seems to be more extensive than Prof. Dr C. G. Fürst's *Conones-Synopse* reviewed separately.

John Madey

Carl Gerold Forst: *Canones-Synopse zum Codex Iuris Canonici und zum Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium.* Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1992, 214 pages, ppb. DM 38.00.

We welcome the publication of this synopsis of the canons ruling the life of the Roman Catholic Church as published in the *Codex Iuris Canonici* of 1983 and of those concerning the Churches of oriental apostolic background which are in full ecclesial communion with the Church of Rome, promulgated in 1991, by equally by Pope John Paul II, in the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*. The editor, LL.D. [Dr. jur.], is a layman, has been, since many years, ordinary professor of Canon Law with particular consideration of the history of law at the Roman Catholic Faculty of Theology of the State Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg (Germany); he was a consultant of the Pontifical Commission for the Codification of Eastern Canon Law (his collaboration in this body was particularly emphasized in the Pope's speech during the Synod of Bishops on October 25, 1990, when the oriental Code was presented to the 28th General Congregation; see *Nuntia* no. 31 p. 13 and 20); after the promulgation of the *Codex Canonum*, he was appointed consultant of the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts. The book has an Introduction in German, Latin, English, French, Italian, and Spanish. In its first part, the Code for the Roman Catholic Church is compared with the pertinent canons of the Oriental Code (*Versio a Codice Iuris Canonici ad Codicem Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*), in its second part, the opposite way of procedure is used (*Versio a Codice Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium ad Codicem Iuris Canonici*). It should be noted that this work does not contain the text of the two codes, but gives only the pertinent references. So the student of canon law is getting a precious working Instrument enabling him to compare both the legislations, what they have in common and where they differ. It should be in the hands of every professor of canon law and related theological disciplines. As the Churches of western and eastern traditions are nowadays coexisting in many continents, countries and places, episcopal tribunals and chanceries as well as pastoral clergy are lively recommended to make use of Dr Fürst's publication.

John Madey

Memorandum der Ungeborenen. EOS Verlag, Erzabtei, w-8917 St. Ottilien (Germany), 8 pages, ppb. DM 0.50

This pamphlet, *A Memorandum of the Unborn*, edited under the responsibility of Rev. Dr. Bernhard Sirch OSB, director of publications of the Benedictine Archabbey of St. Ottilien (Bavaria), is a moving appeal, from the point of the unborn children, against abortion and for a return to authentic, God-given human values, as we find them expressed in Psalm 139:13. 14. – Further informations may be obtained by: Aktion Für das Leben, Prannerstr. 9, W-8000 München 2, Germany, an organization working since 1973 with the recommendation by the local archbishops, Cardinals Julius Döpfner, Joseph Ratzinger, and Friedrich Wetter (since 1982).

John Madey

Joseph Chammas: *Die Melkitische Kirche.* Edited by Archbishop LUTFI LAHAM, Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem. Köln 1990: Luthe-Verlag, 132 pages, DM 29.80

Fr. Joseph Chammas, a hieromonk of the Basilian Order of Holy Saviour's Monastery near Saida (Lebanon), was the author of a three-volume history of the Melkite Church tracing its origin in the apostolic community of Jerusalem and Antioch. The last volume appeared as early as in 1960; at the same time, the author published a summary in French which has been the basis of this German version (An English version is being prepared). The editor of this book who is serving now as Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem, is a confrère of the author. He completed Fr. Chammas' work by adding a chapter: "The Melkite Church, 1960-1960", statistics, main structures of the Melkite Church, and an epilogue. The Melkites are those Christians of the Patriarchates of Alexandria, of Antioch and of Jerusalem who embraced the teachings and the formulae of the council of Chalcedon. Their common history ended in 1724 when two hierarchies, one in communion with Rome, the other in communion with Constantinople and the Eastern Orthodox Churches, came into being. Since then only, the term *Melkite* has been mostly used for those who are in ecclesial communion with Rome. The official title of their Church has become *Melkite Greek-Catholic Church*. Both, Catholics and Orthodox belong to the ancient community of the *Rum* (in Greek: Romaioi, "Romans" in the understanding of "Greek" or "siding with the emperor,

malko'', hence *Melkites*). –With the help of this book, the reader gets a clear idea what the Melkite Church is, which vicissitudes she had to experience in her long history, who were her outstanding saints and patriarchs, and which is her ecumenical role today.

John Madey

Die Synodalität der Kirche und das Heilige und Große Konzil (= no. 2, 1991 of *ORTHODOXES FORUM*), W- 8917 St. Ottilien (Germany). EOS Verlag, 232 pages, DM 22.00

Orthodoxes Forum has been the review edited by the Institute of Orthodox Theology of the University of Munich since five years. This is the fourth issue dedicated to a particular topic: the synodality of the Church and the Holy and Great Council, i. e. that council which the Eastern Orthodox Churches have been planning since 1968. This topic seems to be of relevance also for those Eastern Churches which are in communion with Rome, as after the publication of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, they are to formulate their own particular canon law. There are eight studies dealing with the principles of synodality according to the New Testament (*K. Nikolakopoulos*), the synodal constitution and the ecumenical councils of the Church (*Th. Nikolaou*), the authority of ecumenical councils (*E. Timiadis*), Church synods (*J.S. Romanidis*), the seven ecumenical and the later occidental synods: the different degree of their staying in ancient church tradition (*H. J. Schulz* Roman Catholic), councils and conciliarity in Lutheran tradition (*G. Kretschmar*, Lutheran), which authority ecumenical councils have got for Lutherans (*T. Paul*, Lutheran), and the holy and great synod (*D. Papandreou*). Added are six documents related to the holy and great synod from 1968 to 1990 and two documents concerning the orthodox point of view vis-à-vis the Seventh Plenary Assembly of the WCC at Canberra in 1991. As usual, this issue also is concluded by book reviews, a chronicle etc.

John Madey

Was ist Erlösung? Anfragen an Drewemanns Theorie des Christentums (= *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift*, vol. 43. fasc. 1, 1992). St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 158 pages, DE 14.00

This special issue of the distinguished German theological review of the Catholic faculty of theology at the University of

Munich is concentrating on one of the main topics in E. Drewermann's thought, namely redemption. As Drewermann's teaching is contrary to essential points of the teaching of the Catholic Church (and many non-Catholic theologians are claiming that it is contrary to whatever is specifically Christian), tending to religious syncretism, the archbishop Paderborn had to withdraw the *missio Canonica*, i. e. the right to teach in the name of the bishop and the Catholic Church, to him, then to forbid him preaching in Sunday services, and at last to suspend him from exercising his priestly ministry. The issue under review appeared between the first two measures and the last one. Some theologians attempted to come into dialogue with E. Drewermann (which, however, turned to be a failure). *J. Splett* deals with the issue "Redemption from what?" *J. Werblich* is concentrating on the topic "Revelation of God in the »Language of the soul«: Eugen Drewermann's challenge of traditional fundamental theology." The famous biblical scholar *R. Schnackenburg* gives NT guidelines and perspectives in his contribution "Jesus the Saviour", while *G. L. Müller* presents "New approaches to the comprehension of redemption: Questions to Eugen Drewermann." In the part that follows, important documents with regard to the *Cases Drewermann* preceding the withdrawal of the *missio canonica* are reproduced in full length. As this case is certainly of wide ecumenical relevance, this issue of the MThZ may certainly be helpful for further theological discussion.

John Madey

Albert Rauch/Paul Imhos SJ [Editors]: *Das Dienstamt der Einheit in der Kirche: Primat-Patriarchat – Papsttum*. W-8917 St. Ottilien: EOS Verlag [= Koinonia: Schriftenreihe des Ostkirchlichen Instituts Regensburg]. 1991, 505 pages, hard-bound DM 38.00

This volume contains the papers read during an ecumenical symposium organized in July 1989 by the Regensburg Eastern Churches Institute which is sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Germany. Representatives of the Oriental Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant and Roman [Latin] Catholic Churches took part in it. Included in the volume is also a sermon held by Pope Shenouda III in Cairo 1974 on "Christian Unity". It is not astonishing that, in certain papers, there are repetitions of what others said, or that opinions are expressed which members of

different church traditions see in another way. The book is divided into three parts: I. *Historical aspects of Petrine ministry*. The first two contributions render faithfully the Syrian Orthodox [Jacobite] tradition: "The holy Apostle Peter in Antioch and his successors" (Monk-Archdeacon Hanna Aydin) and "The position of the Patriarch of Antioch as successor of St. Peter in the Indian Syrian Orthodox tradition" (Seminary principal J. Addai). The late Msgr. K. Gamber dealt with "the bishop of Rome in early documents of the Latin liturgy", H.-J. Schulz asks the question: "The surviving Petrine ministry in the Church: exclusive primacy of the Pope or sacramentally conditioned principle of unity in the frame of ecclesial koinonia?" The same theologians also spoke on "The development of ecclesiastical regional structures according to the most ancient orders of episcopal consecration". Finally St. O. Horn treated "The position of the bishop of Rome at the council of Chalcedon". In part II *The Ministry of Unity in the Churches of the East*, there are nine contributions. "Has secular power to care for Church unity?" asks E. Chr. Suttner. "The development of the Ethiopian Church: The ministry of unity of the Metropolitan in Ethiopia and of the Patriarch of Ethiopia in history and now" was the topic presented by B. M. Mersha. Other speakers of this section were M. Ghattas ("The Patriarch of Alexandria and his ministry of unity in the Coptic Church), E. D. Theodorou ("Papal Primacy from the view of Orthodox tradition"), A. Krastev ("The ministry of unity in the Bulgarian Church"), Bishop Anatoly ("The Metropolitan of the Rus' and the Patriarch of Moscow in their service for the unity of the Church"), Metropolitan Ireney ("The reciprocal relations between Church and State in the period of the erection of the patriarchate in Russia"), D. Kalezic ("Theological Schools of the Patriarchate of Moscow"), I. Pavlov ("The Restoration of the pan-Russian patriarchate at the council of Moscow, 1917-1918"). This massive appearance of papers of Russian theologians seems to reflect some predilection of the editor (s) for this church. In part III *The Ministry of Unity with regard to the Universality of the Church*, one of the editors, R. C. Msgr. A. Rauch, dealt with the topic "Orthodox ecclesiology in dispute with Papacy", M. Tutschin spoke on "The Unity of the Church of Christ and the problem of *Unio*", L. Bernhard osb treated the topic "Supreme uniform church administration and the unity of the Church", his confrère F. R. Gahbauer osb "The patriarchal structure at the

Second Vatican Council", Th. Nikolaou explained "The episcopal ministry as the ministry of unity in the Church" from the Orthodox point of view. Last, but not least is the contribution of H. Döring on "The Ministry of the Bishop of Rome in recent ecumenical literature". A work for study and reflection which is, in fact, recommendable.

John Madey

Laurence Daniel Huculak osbm: *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom in the Kievan Metropolitan Province during the period of Union with Rome (1536-1839)* [= Analecta OSBM, series II, sectio I, vol. 47]. Rome: PP. Basiliani (Via S. Giosafat, 8 - Aventino), 420 pages, n. p.

Very often oriental liturgies are reproached of being, since centuries, not open for any further development. Therefore the author, Canadian-born Fr. Laurence Daniel Huculak, a hieromonk of the Ukrainian Order of St. Basil the Great, is to be congratulated for this doctoral dissertation, a work in which he refutes that wrong assertion. I admit to have read it like a detective story. Part One is a retrospect into the history of the Kievan Metropolis which included, at that time, Ukrainian and Bielorrussian [White-Ruthenian] territories and eparchies, with special regard to liturgy. The author is well aware of the political and social situation prevailing in those regions. While chapter One deals with the period between the Union of Brest and the Synod of Zamostya (1720), chapter Two concentrates on the historical and liturgical developments in the 18th century and chapter Three on Archbishop Heraclius Lisovskyi's liturgical reform after the partitions of Poland and before the suppression of the Ukrainian-Bielorrussian Church in those regions which had come under Russian Czarist rule. It is during this time that latinization crept into the liturgy used by the eastern Catholics, both from within and from without. In the Basilian Order, so-called private or low Masses became more and more common, often fostered by Polish members of the monasteries who were born Roman Catholics. As these liturgies were celebrated without any solemnity, many of the rubrics prescribed for the Byzantine divine service were simply omitted; the way for further adoption of Latin practices was thus opened: removal of the iconostasis, western side altars, etc. It is a tragedy that, in some oriental Churches, the monasteries have become the

point of departure for many liturgical abuses instead of being the guarantors of the authentic prayer of the given Church. In the early 18th century, the Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop Stanislaw Siestrzencewicz was appointed by emperess Catherine II Metropolitan of Mahylau in Bielorrussia; he tried to bring all the Catholics under his jurisdiction and got even prepared a particular Roman Missal for the oriental priests. – In part II, the author describes the development of the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom systematically, from the spiritual preparation of the celebrant to the post-communion and dismissal of the faithful. He compares the different editions of the liturgy, both among the Orthodox and the Catholics, where he discerns several traditions: the early Slavic tradition, the Balaban and Mamonyc texts, the Mohylan tradition, the Nikonian tradition, the Pre-Zochovskyj Catholic sources, and the Zochovskyi tradition. In his conclusion, he rightly emphasises that “A liturgical reform requires two important elements. First, it must be technically correct: the theological purpose of the liturgy must be clear, the translation of the texts must be accurate, and the rubrics and explanations must be precise. In addition, the particular liturgical history of the given Church must be known. The second important element in any liturgical reform is pastoral concern in the implementation of the reform. The people for whom the reform and the liturgy are primarily meant must be prepared for it.” There are four appendices, a general index and an index of Sluzebnyky concluding this valuable work which merits to have a large readership, particularly in the oriental Churches of the Byzantine and other liturgical traditions, both Catholic and Orthodox. This is valid especially in India where the largest ecclesial body, the Church of the Thomas Christians of Syro-oriental tradition [Syro-Malabar Church] was for a long time under a foreign hierarchy of another individual [Roman Catholic] Church and has lost her identity to a large extent. Only thus deviations of the past can be avoided instead of being repeated.

John Madey

Hubert Kaufhold, *Syrische Handschriften juristischen Inhalts in südindischen, Bibliotheken*. Wien 1989, 56. p. 7 24 × 15 CM. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse. Sitzungsberichte, 535 Band. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für antike

Rechtsgeschichte, Nr 5. Herausgegeben von Walter Selb. Prijs: ös 168,- DM 24,-.

Die Publikation Dr. phil. Hubert Kaufholds, Honorarprofessor an der juristischen Fakultät der Universität München, ist eine willkommene Ergänzung meines *The Christians of St Thomas in South India and their Syriac Manuscripts*, Bangalore (India) 560 029, 1983 (Dharmaram College, xvii + 301 pp.). The scope of my book was to give for the first time lists and (mostly short) descriptions of all the Syriac Manuscripts copied in South India which I could find in the libraries of Kèrala (South India) and Europe (Rome, Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, Amsterdam, Leiden), as a contribution to the history of the Christian Church in India. Many of the mss. are liturgical ones; before the publication of printed liturgical texts (missal, "breviary", etc.) each priest had to copy them himself. Because of the hot and damp climate of the country most of the older mss. have perished and the recent liturgical ones have no special value. Quite a lot of them are in the possession of private persons.

Kaufholds study has another scope than mine: he went to Kèrala to look for juridical mss, which he describes. Of nearly all Syriac books found in Kèrala there are copies in libraries of the Middle East and Europe, but there are some exceptions. Kaufhof describes all of them but particularly those who were not yet found outside South India. The latter make his study important. In the most valuable library of the Konath family at Pampàkuda he found some texts not mentioned in my book, and other ones in the library of the autocephalous Jacobite bishop of Thozhyoor (see Kaufhold, p. 24 "Zusammenfassung"). Kaufhold notes that ms Pampàkuda 32 (my book p. 162-163) contains a collection of canons of un unknown type. It is clear that it is a Jacobite ms, copied in the Near East and used in the Syrian Orthodox community of Kèrala (my book, p. 163). It seems doubtful to me whether the collection can be attributed to a special "type". For practical reasons copysit may have found it useful to unite the texts in one volume. Only when the same collection is found in other manuscripts; one can speak of a collection of a special "type". But Kaufhold did not give evidence of this.

The author was happy enough to find in the (new) library of the Syrian Orthodox seminary at Kóttayam (in a new building,

joined to the "Old Seminary"), about 50 mss., whereas on 20.12.1974 I found only a dozen of them, besides many modern books, mostly protestant ones.

The most important Kérala Library of Syriac mss. is the one of the Konath family of several generations at Pampákuda, a hamlet between the ricefields and difficult to reach. I had to walk quite a distance to visit it. It lies somewhere between Cochin (now called Kochi) and Kóttayam. The owner, now deceased, did not allow me to study them in his library in his absence. This made a serious and somewhat prolonged study almost impossible for me. I could only have a quick glance at them and try to find a colophon at the end (colophons, of their equivalents, are not always found at the end). Later I was helped by an old handwritten list of the owner, given to me by the late Fr R. Hambye S. J. After the death of his father, the priest and *malpan* (teacher) Abraham Konath, his son is now in charge of the library: he studied in Europe (Louvain) and is open minded.

On the first page of the cover of the booklet Kaufhold reproduces a page in Garshuni, Malayálam in Syriac script, to which some Malayálam characters are added. This kind of writing occurs only in a minority of mss. of Kerala and for this reason it is not typical for the Syriac script.

I congratulate Prof. Kaufhold with his study, it is a valuable addition to our knowledge of Indian Syriac mss. and I express the hope that it is not the latest one. After Vatican II the knowledge of Syriac is seriously in danger in South India, where as a liturgical language it has been replaced by Malayálam, at least in the Catholic communities. But if the latter wish (as they do) to retain their identity, a through knowledge of their tradition is indispensable.

Nijmegen, 30 IV 1992

J.P.M. van der Ploeg o. p.

Pauline Donceel-Voûte. Les pavements des églises byzantines de Syrie et du Liban. Décor, archéologie et liturgie. 1988 Louvain-la-Neuve, Collège Erasme. 585 pp., 31½×24 cm. (Many plates and illustrations in the text).

This is another volume splendidly edited by the department of archeology and history of art of the university of Louvain-la-

Neuve in Belgium. It is accompanied by a separate map of plans and designs (Part II).

The remains of a good number of churches of Syria and the Libanon, of the time preceding the occupations of these regions by the Arabs offer a beautiful *ensemble* of ground decoration in the form of mosaics. They are not only of interest because of there, often high, artistic qualities, but also because they revive for us the lay-out, the furnishing, the celebration of the liturgy.

Since 1983 the author is teaching at the university of Paris history of art and old christian archaeology. Before this she was, amongst others, director of the Dutch Historical and Archaeological Institute at Istanbul. With her husband the author visited many times the sites of the monuments she describes, and studied them thoroughly. The monuments revealed to her (as they do to us) a part of the liturgical life in Syria in those ancient times, before the coming of Islam put an end to their rich development. From the ancient remains we see how the altar and the relics were venerated, where the clergy and the faithful were standing or sitting, the way the processions took inside the church, the celebration of parts of the liturgy on the platform in the middle of the church called *bēma* / *bīma*. With Mrs Donceel-Voûte we read the inscriptions accompanying the mosaics and the message they still convey to us. These things and many more are treated in the book with a wealth of data and illustrations, which revive for us a past which has definitely gone in the Middle East with the coming of Islam, and which fills one with nostalgv. But the old Syriac liturgy of Antioch and Mesopotamia is not dead, it survives in the Syriac and Chaldean Churches of today, though much threatened by post-war developments in the Islamic world, and in South-India after Vatican II.

The reader of this rich and superbly published volume, who loves the Christian past of Syria, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Palestine, finds in it many things in which he is interested. The culture of Antioch was originally a Greek one. On the countryside the language was Aramaic and also in the eastern regions of Syria-Mesopotamia. Most of the inscriptions reproduced in the book are Greek ones, of a few the language is Syriac. This means that the Byzantine factor was the strongest in the monuments

studied by the author. The liturgy she studies is mostly of the West-Syrian type, but there are also strong elements of the East-Syrian one. One of these is the place and the function of the liturgical platform in the middle of the church, commonly called *bi(ê)ma*. Its function is at present completely obliterated in the Syrian liturgies, it does not exist anymore, we know it only from literary and some monumental sources. It derives certainly from the platform in the midst of the Jewish synagogues placed in their midst, and from which the Law and the Prophets were read to the community. A beautiful example of this is found in the (now seldom used) synagogue of the "White Jews" at Kochi/Cochin. In the ancient "Church of the East" (called also Persian, Chaldaean or Nestorian) the first part of the Eucharistic liturgy (now clumsily, and protestantizing called in the West "liturgy of the word"), containing before all the lectures of the Old and the New Testament and the homily) took place and evolved on the platform, often connected with the sanctuary by a narrow corridor, through which the clergy passed; it was found by Pauline Doceel in the ruins of various churches of Mesopotamia. The influence of Jewish usages on parts of the liturgy of the Church of the East is undeniable, it was not as pronounced in Antioch and the remains of the church-buildings confirm this. In the latter ambons have been found, but not at the place of the *bêma* of the East.

The author thinks that in some churches the larger part was reserved for the (numerous) members of the clergy, but in this we cannot always follow her. It seems a priori unreasonable that the major part of the Congregation, the ordinary faithful, men and women, had only the smaller part of the building at their disposition. She thinks that their place was often only behind the central *bêma*. This is not in accordance with the anonymous author of the liturgy of the Church of the East (11th cent., see CSCO Vol. 76, translation), who tells us that when the clergy leaves the sanctuary with the liturgical cross, on their way to the *bêma* (and back), the faithful tried to kiss it; if this was permitted to them. It can scarcely be believed that there were seats for all the (individual) faithful. When they had to sit, most of them must have squatted on the floor, as is still the custom e. g. in South-India. I doubt also that in the churches where a central *bêma* was found, the bishop had a special place for himself, not on the *bêma*, but elsewhere (p. 516); this is again not in accordance with the explanation of the liturgy by the Anonymous, mentioned

above and quoted various times by Mrs Donceel. No trace of such a special place has been found. On p. 508 the author says that in Syria no altar has been found which has the form of a Greek *sigma* (C), i. e. half round, but I found a very ancient one in the monastic Greek Catholic church of Ma'alula, to the west of Damascus.

The author also observed that nearly all the churches were oriented toward the east, lower clergy and faithful were standing behind the priest, as is only normal. Only a few churches in the western part of the region were turned toward the West, but this did not hinder the priest and faithful to pray toward the East, according to the ancient Christian custom. The modern custom, introduced in the West, that the priest always faces the people, also when he is praying to God, is an example of Protestantisation: the eucharistic ceremony and spectacle (Mrs Donceel, p. 510) has become a community gathering whose president is constantly addressing his people in order to teach them, as does a protestant parson. From the book of Mrs Donceel one can learn that this was never done in the ancient Church. From the beginning the eucharistic gathering has been a cultic one, the offering of a sacrifice to God, followed at the end by the communion of the faithful. One can learn very much from the magnificent book of the author, to whom we are much indebted for what she offered us. Nijmegen (the Netherlands), 11 May 1992

J. P. M. van der Ploeg

A. Alpago Novello, V. Beridze, J. Lafontaine-Dosogne and others. Art and Architecture in Medieval Georgia. Louvain-la-Neuve, 1980, 521 pp. 31×25 cm. and numerous plates.

When the famous university of Louvain (Belgium) had to be divided in two parts: a Flemish one (speaking Dutch) and a Walloon one (speaking French), the latter part constructed quite new buildings to the South of Brussels, and called itself "Louvain-la-Neuve" (the New Louvain). It continues many traditions of the mother university in an excellent way, amongst others the study on the Christian East. The present volume, one in long series, is a proof of its extraordinary vitality.

Georgia, situated on the northern slopes of the Caucasus mountains, in what was formerly Soviet-Russia, is a country with a very old Christian culture. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union it is again in the news, because it declared its independence from the former Union. Located between Asia and Europe, in an area influenced by Greek Byzantine and Middle Eastern cultures, it claims a different culture from that of other regions. It is situated in an important area, on the cross roads of trade between the West and the East. Due to international trade, riches flowed into it from various sides and it could develop its own culture.

Georgia became a political unit in the 4th century BC. Pharnavaz (302-237) was its first king, followed by a long series of other ones. In the 1st cent. A. D. the Western and Eastern provinces became a protectorate of Rome. Its conversion to the Christian religion occurred almost at the same time as in Rome and Byzantium (in the 4th cent), it became the religion of the state. The Georgian national Church got its own independent hierarchical structure toward the end of the 5th cent. At its head was a patriarch, called Katholikos.

During the 13th cent. Georgia was occupied, as many regions of the East, by the invading Mongolians, who came from far, but regained its independence in the 14th century. In the fifteenth century it was again occupied by the hordes of Timur Lenk. The conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 marked also the definite decline of Georgian power. Later it came under the influence of Moscow, of which it became a protectorate in 1783, by treaty with the tsarina Catherine II. In violation of this treaty the country was annexed in 1801 and became a Russian province. In 1918 it regained its independence but was soon incorporated in the USSR (1921), as an "autonomous" part of it. Stalin was a Georgian.

The present book covers only the "middle ages" of Georgia, from the 4th - 18th cent., divided into four periods: 4th, 7-10th, 10-14th and 14-18th centuries. The bulk of the book consists of illustrations of the landscape, buildings, Churches, their plans and decorations, with short explanations and commentaries. Various indices and an extensive bibliography are found at the end of the book.

The work is presented in a superb way and gives a good idea of the ecclesiastical monuments and Georgian ecclesiastical art in the course of almost 15 centuries. Quite a number of old churches appear to be in good shape exteriorly, but the interiors, as far as shown, are empty, sometimes delapidated. One feels the effect of so many years of atheistic communism. The liturgy of the Georgian Church is now the Byzantine one, its language is Georgian, which does not belong to the Indo-European family. It has its own alphabet. In the beginning its liturgy was the one of Jerusalem, with which Georgia had religious connections. In the Byzantine period (until the conquest of Palestine by the Arabs, 636) Georgian monks were found in the monasteries of that country. The influence of Byzantium can be seen on many photo's of the book, especially in painting. High reliefs, decorating some outer walls, are protruding so much that it would have been easy for the sculptures to detach them from their background. But statues were, of course, not allowed. The churches resemble those of neighbouring Armenia and mostly have a high central dome, out of proportion to the rest of the building. The quality of the wall paintings and icons is not as high as in Byzantium or Russia, but the style is the same, or similar. The influence of Byzantium is felt everywhere.

The admirable and monumental work of Louvain-la-Neuve on Georgian art is not the first work published on it. In the capital of Georgia, Tbilist, there is an Institute of Georgian Art History, which produced various studies on our subject, to which authors as Mrs R. Mepisašvili and Prof. V. Cincadze have contributed very much in a great number of publications. The intention of the present work has been to avoid duplication of the illustration of the works of these authors, with the exception of the essential monuments (p. 7). Early civil architecture being poorly represented, it is not treated. However the forms of architecture native to Georgia have received special attention. The work is dedicated to the former professor G. Garitte, of Louvain, who was a great promotor of Georgian and Armenian studies.

The present volume introduces the reader into a part of the Christian heritage, widely unknown in the West. To end, let us summarize its contents: Preface; Historical Introduction: The Figurative arts; Monumental Painting; The Territory; Popular Architecture; Rock-Cut Architecture; Architecture of the Valleys

of the High Mountains; The Fortifications of Georgia; Religious Architecture; Catalogue of Churches (267-468); A List of the Church Buildings and the Monumental Religious Complexes situated in the Modern Territory of Georgia; Bibliography; Glossary; Catalogue of Churches, Index and Map; General Index.

We congratulate the authors of this book and its printers with the fine work they achieved, but also the Nation and Church of Georgia with becoming better known by it.

J. P. M. van der Ploeg

Nijmegen (The Netherlands)

May 1992

SILENT PRAISE

From henceforth you will gaze at all times upon the spectacle of God's continual loving care for his handiwork.

Your mind will be swallowed up in awestruck wonder, your senses will be silent, and you, O feeble man, will lie prostrate on your face in prayer, your tongue unable to speak, and your heart incapable of praying; for in wonder at these divine acts even prayer becomes inactive.

This is the inactivity which is superior to work, when a person is completely still in his sense and thoughts, and he lies continually prostrate before his Lord.

Even his bones in their silence will offer up praise to God during this apparent inactivity, as the prophet says, 'All my bones shall say, O Lord, who is like you?'

By this gift, so they say, a person is deemed worthy of the love of God and of perfect humility.

(*St Isaac of Syria*)



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