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## **EUCCHARISTIC CHRIST IN THE SYRIAC TRADITION** **The Anaphora of Addai and Mari in his liturgical and dogmatic context**

Among the most ancient liturgical texts from the oriental tradition, the Anaphora of Apostles Addai and Mari represent the oldest Eucharistic prayer in the Syriac Church<sup>1</sup>. Its text is still popular today with the oriental Liturgies, being less influenced by the Hellenistic theological tradition and culture, being therefore “a representative expression of Judeo-Christianity from the first Christian centuries”<sup>2</sup>. The time and place of its writing are also very old. The fact is that, in the context of some commune biblical elements, it connects the Semitic theological tradition with the liturgical actuality of the Church in the context of his biblical foundation.

The Easter meal from the Jewish tradition represents, in all its elements, the most relevant connection between the Old Testament’s tradition and the Eucharistic prayers from the early Christianity. Of the influence of its anamnesis and Eucharistic character, the modern liturgists approach this connection of “the cup of blessing” or “the last cup” from the Jewish Easter feast<sup>3</sup>. The liturgical reevaluation of this

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<sup>1</sup> The anaphora is “the prayer during which the liturgical sacrifice is accomplished, meaning the consecration and the transformation of the Gifts; is the center and core of the Christian Liturgy”. His etymology comes from the Greek verb ἀναφέρω that means “to highten”, “to rise”. In consequence, the substantive ἀναφορά means: rising, elevation and also gift or oblation (cf. lat. *oblatio* or *illatio*), defining in a specific way the practice of sacrificial act by “rising or rocking the sacrificial gift, showing that it is given to God” (cf. Exodus 29, 24; Lev. 7, 30 etc.). Among the father PhD Ene Braniște, in the Orthodox Liturgy the anaphora prayer contains “all the complex of rites and prayers read by the priest (most in secret) that, in the Liturgy of saint John Chrysostom, can be found between the words: « It is meet and right to worship the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit ... »and «and give us with a mouth and with a hart to sing...»”. After the text content, in both old and new anaphoras, we can find the next sequences: 1. the prayer of praise and thanksgiving, 2. the Anamnesis, 3. the Epiclesis and 4. the Prayers of mediation for the entire Church. The Antiochene tradition offers a more complex splitting: 1. The thanksgiving, 2. Sanctus, 3. Post-Sanctus, 4. The institution, 5. The Anamnesis, 6. The offering, 7. Epiclesis, 8. The Thanksgiving prayers, 9. Doxology and 10. The Amen of the people. See: E. BRANIȘTE, *Liturgica Specială pentru facultățile de teologie*, București 2005<sup>4</sup>, p. 220–221; E. MAZZA, *The Celebration of the Eucharist. The Origine of the Rite and the Development of Its Interpretation*, Collegeville 1999, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> A. GELSON, *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1992, p. VI.

<sup>3</sup> The Thanksgiving Prayer (*Birkath ha-mazon*), uttered at the last cup, at the end of the Jewish Easter meal, is more appropriate by the liturgical tradition of the Christian anaphora. In the earlier text of *Birkath ha-mazon*, from the teen century B.C., the thanksgiving prayer is divided on four sequences. In each of them appears the theme of anamnesis, rediscovered in the words of our Lord: “do so in My remember...!” (GELSON, *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari*, p. 7).

thanksgiving and blessing a prayer confirms that “the oldest Christian testimonies as well as the Jewish prototypes emphasizes the dominant position of the *evloghia*, of the *anaphora*, and of the great Eucharistic prayer, as it was called later the central prayer of the Holy Eucharist”<sup>4</sup>.

Returning to the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, the liturgists largely confirm its appearance and its use in the Christian Church since the third century. From this point of view is the first Eucharistic prayer formulated in the Syriac language. On the other hand, through his specific, stylistic (generated by the redundancy of its vocabulary or by its phraseological parallelism) and theological, the liturgical text of the two Apostles represent a link between the Christian Church and the Jewish tradition. More than that, its theology becomes a source of inspiration in the subsequent patristic literature. For example, in the case of the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, the influence of the Syriac Anaphora it was felt in the structure of its Christological doctrine that was placed afterwards in the liturgical writings of the author<sup>5</sup>.

## 1. Textual commentary

The beauty and the richness of meanings contained in the Eucharistic text of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari was surprised by the liturgists on many sequences, with accent on: the character of praise and thanksgiving, the anamnetic dimension, the moment of Epiclesis and the intercession prayer. In our study we will try to discover and analyze the dogmatic and liturgical dimension of the text, using the English translation of A. Gelson, from his work: *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari*.

- I.
  - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, new and all times and forever end ever<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> K.K. FELMY, *De la Cina cea de Taină la Dumnezeiasca Liturghie a Bisericii Ortodoxe. Un comentariu istoric*, Sibiu 2008<sup>2</sup>, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. GELSON, *op. cit.*, p. 11. In his forward of his anaphora, Hippolytus treats in a descriptive way the oikonomia of salvation, placing the entire succession of events in a Christological way: from creation to passions, Resurrection and the descending in heal of our Savior. For the *evloghia* of his anaphora, Hippolytus uses like manner of work the text of Pasqual Homilies, combining the concept of penitence to the Jewish term “pasha” – with the meaning of passion of sufferance. Cf. MAZZA, *op. cit.*, p. 50–51.

<sup>6</sup> Here the priest, facing the faithful, blesses between the holy doors with the Holy Cross, “from which, says father Dumitru Stăniloae, Christ has brought us and brings us, from mercy, peace and salvation and all the gift, like one who was sacrificed and who stays is the sacrifice condition for us, giving us the power to bring our sacrifice represented by gifts”. On the other hand, through this words we can see the unity of work between the Persons of the Holy Trinity, because with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ come over us the love of God the Father, that make us “sons through by sharing His own Son and the descending over us all of the Holy Spirit, with the power to strengthen the community of Church, to bring their gifts

- Amen.
- Let your hearts be on high.
- To thee, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel, the glorious King.
- The offering is being offered to God the Lord of all.
- It is meet and right.

This is the first part of the text that indicates the dialogue between the priest and the people. Here we discover some elements that are in connection with the byzantine tradition. The interesting part is the Semitic element, easily observed in the tone of prayer by the Jewish *Birkath ha-mazon*. We find here the invocation of “the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel, the glorious King”, which is due to the oblation because He is “saint and right”. Therefore, at the beginning of the approaching by Christ, the believer must think spiritually and let his heart to be “on high”, bringing to God his “gratitude, worship, confessing or demand”. First of all, Saint Nicolas Cabasila says that should be the worship (or doxology).

It is right — says St. Nicolas — that when is approaching by his master, the wisd servants must not remember firstly their things, but only those that are of their master. This is the real worship. For he who demands, demands just for him to multiply what is his; the one who confess reveals his desire to escape from evil; and that who brings gratitude knows enjoys his own goods. But the one who worship God, forgetting his own, glorify the Master, for His power and glory<sup>7</sup>.

In this first part in the Syriac anaphora, the doxology of the priest is completed at last with the exhortation “let your hearts be on high”. In this way, the believers “answering that their hearts are in the place where it is their treasure, where is Christ, sitting on the right side of His Father”<sup>8</sup>, “the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel, the glorious King”.

## II.

Worthy of praise from every mouth and thanksgiving from every tongue is the adorable name glorious name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, who created the world in its grace and its inhabitants in his loving-kindness, and redeemed the sons of men in its mercy, and dealt very graciously with mortals<sup>9</sup>.

Further on, the author calls the name of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, glorifying the work of their hands, the love and the mercy for the human race. The Syriac word *lamadh* — worthy best expresses the theological idea of Addai and Mari, namely that only “God or the name of God is worthy of glory”. That is in fact an original aspect, specific of this liturgical text. In this way, the correspondence with the Latin term *dignum – vere dignum* – really worthy — is totally excluded because, historically speaking,

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through himself”. See: D. STĂNILOAE, *Spiritualitate și comuniune în Liturgia Ortodoxă*, București 2004<sup>2</sup>, p. 421–422.

<sup>7</sup> N. CABASILA, *Tâlcuirea Dumnezeieștii Liturghii*, București 1997, p. 295.

<sup>8</sup> *Idem*, p. 62.

<sup>9</sup> The image of descending in heal becomes very usual in the Christology of Saint Ephrem the Syrus, being the principal subject of the *Carmina Nissibena*.

has a secondary development is the anaphora. We can find it at Serapion, but not in Hippolytus work, where the dialogical relation is made by the third urge, where people say: Thank to the Lord... We thank You...<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore, by these words, we express our gratitude to the Lord for our salvation, fulfilled through the Incarnation of the Word, through His work in the world, through His sacrifice and through His descending in hell.

### III.

They majesty, o my Lord, a thousand thousand heavenly being and myriad myriads of angels adore and host of spiritual beings, the ministers of fire and of spirit<sup>11</sup>, glorifying thy name with the cherubim and the holy seraphim, ceaselessly crying out and glorify and calling to one another and saying: (the response) Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty: the heavens and the earth are full of his glory. (Hosana in the highest! Hosana to the Son of David! Blessed is he who has come and comes in the name of the Lord. Hosana in the highest!)<sup>12</sup>.

In this part of the Eucharistic prayer we find the gratitude of the angelic creatures that without ceasing flies around the Heavenly throne and glorify the greatness of God. Here are mentioned the words of prophet Isaiah<sup>13</sup>, who received the divine revelation of God, like the One who is Holy and worthy of honour. In this way, the *evloghia* of the heavenly power previews the Incarnation of Christ and His coming in this world. More than that, the cherubim are represented here like “the ministers of fire and of spirit”, thus showing their total and personal implication in the act of the Holy Eucharist.

Analyzing the words “Singing the victory hymn, proclaiming, crying out, and saying”, from the Anaphora of Saint John Chrysostom, father Dumitru Stăniloae describes, starting from the meaning of the liturgical text, the mystical and symbolical reality of the presence of the Incarnated Son of God in the Holy Eucharist:

Saying this words, the priest takes the asterisk from the disc and makes with her the song of the cross above the holy gifts, kisses it and meet it on the hay part of the Holy Anthimis. In the bread it is prefigured new more fully the Son of God the one who was incarnated and sacrificed, that One Who is worthy of all praise. Coming in the act of prefiguration or of His offering like sacrifice to Father, for the partaking of those who participate in the Holy Liturgy, the cosmos can no longer cover the great glory and the

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. GELSON, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>11</sup> We can see here the presence of the most usual symbolisms from the Syriac theology, adjusted after the Old Testament tradition. See also S. BROCK, *Fire from heaven. Studies in Syriac Theology and Liturgy*, Ashgate, Variorum collected studies series, Great Britain 2006, p. 229–243.

<sup>12</sup> The relation with the Jewish tradition is evident in this context, being generally set on the Old Testament references. First, the text of Isaiah 6, 3 is very important in this context. The words: “Hosana, blessed is he who has come and comes in the name of the Lord” come from the Prophet Iezechiel 3, 12: “Blessed be the glory of God in the place where He dwells!” These two texts were placed together in the Jewish tradition, in the text of the Morning Prayer, *Shema*. From the fact that they have been used together in the text of anaphora, we understand that the Syriac tradition has a deep Jewish constitution, using frequently the old prayers, granted to the Christian ethos. Cf. GELSON, *op. cit.*, p. 85–86.

<sup>13</sup> Is. 6, 3.

large humility of the Incarnated Son of God, who is the slain Lamb from heaven. He directly comes among us. Therefore, in the Eucharist it is removed the distance between the seeing Agneț and the Lamb from the heavenly altar. If the angels with astonishment sing glorified Them, the priest says with great voice: “Singing the victory hymn, proclaiming, crying out, and saying”<sup>14</sup>.

#### IV.

And with these heavenly hosts we give thee thanks, O my Lord, we also they unworthy, frail, and miserable servants, because thou hast dealt very graciously with us in a way which cannot be repaid, in that thou didst assume our humanity that thou mightiest restore us to life by thy divinity, and didst exalt our low estate, and raise up our fallen state, and resurrected our mortality, and forgive our sins, and acquit our sinfulness, and enlighten our understanding, and, our Lord and God, overcome our adversaries, and give victory to the unworthiness of our frail nature of our overflowing mercies of thy grace. And for all thy benefits and graces towards us we offer thee glory and glory and thanksgiving and adoration now and at all times and forever and ever. Amen.

In the same context of thanksgiving we can place the words from above, part in the Eucharistic prayer. In a Christological approach, the text underlines the gratitude that we must bring to God for the salvation of our souls. Therefore, we see that God in His infinite mercy and love for the human race becomes man for that man to become god. This profound and dogmatic aspect is revealed through the expression “and raise us our fallen state” — an idea developed by Saint Athanasius the Great. Analysing the theology of this Saint Father in the context of the Christological controversies from his time, the Metropolitan Irineu Popa says that

the same eternal Son of God was incarnated for us and for our salvation, He made Himself the Son of Man, so that the sons of man become the sons of God. Born out of the Father’s essence in a mystical, incomprehensible and eternal way, the Logos “in the later days”, He come in our body, on the earth from the Holy Virgin, the *Theotokos*, so that the human race be born from the second time from above, meaning from God<sup>15</sup>.

#### V–VI.

Do thou, O my Lord, in manifold and ineffable mercies make a good and gracious remembrance for all the upright and just fathers who were pleasing before thee, in the commemoration of the body and blood of thy Christ which we offer to thee upon the pure and holy altar, as thou as taught us<sup>16</sup>, and make with us thy tranquility and thy pace all the days of the age, Amen.

That all the inhabitants of the world may know thee, that thou alone art God and true Father, and thou didst sent our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son and thy Beloved, and he, our Lord and our God, taught us in his life-Gospel all the purity and holiness of the pro-

<sup>14</sup> STĂNILOAE, *Spiritualitate și comuniune în Liturgia Ortodoxă*, p. 435–436.

<sup>15</sup> I. POPA, *Iisus Hristos este Același, ieri și azi și în veac*, Craiova 2010, p. 200–201.

<sup>16</sup> The expression is a direct reference to the moment of the Last Supper, when our Lord Himself instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, saying to His Holy Apostles: “And when they were taking food, Jesus took bread and, after blessing it, he gave the broken bread to the disciples and said: Take it; this is my body. And he took a cup and, having given praise, he gave it to them, saying: Take of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the testament, which is given for men for the forgiveness of sins” (cf. Mt. 26, 26-28; Lc. 22, 19; Mc. 14, 22-23).

phets and apostles and martyrs and confessors and bishops and priests and deacons, and of all the children of the Holy catholic Church, those who have been signed with the sign of holy Baptism.

This is the anamnetical part of the Anaphora<sup>17</sup>. In this way, before the descent of the Holy Spirit above the honest gifts that “are laid before”, are mentioned the most important acts of our salvation. The accent is met on the moment in which Christ, from the middle of His Apostles, established the Holy and divine Sacrament of His Eucharist. The principal moment of the Last Supper is remembered in the Holy Eucharist, “thus perpetuating the fact that Christ was Incarnated, was sacrificed and He resurrected by death”. This remembrance about the salvation acts is very present in the personal reality of the one who is living the Eucharistic mystery. She is beyond time and space, because she brings Christ (dead, resurrected and ascended to heaven) in a real and permanent way in the Sacrament of its bloodless Sacrifice.

This memory says father PhD Dumitru Popescu, is not in the past, it means in the same time the staying of Christ, sacrificed and resurrected, in union with us. The Incarnation, the Sacrifice and the Resurrection aren't realities that belong to the past because they are present in us through the sacrifice and resurrection state of our Lord that is raised on the throne of his heavenly glory.

In consequence, “the Last Supper shows that God Himself instituted the Holy Eucharist, to come and stay always with us, that our sacrificed and resurrected God to be with us until the end of days”<sup>18</sup>.

Here is the anamnetical section of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari:

VII.

And we also, O my Lord, thy unworthy, frail, and miserable servants, who are gathered and stand before thee, and have received by tradition the example which is for thee, rejoicing and glorifying and exalting and commemorating and celebration this great awesome mystery of the passion and death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the liturgical context, this paragraph had raised many questions about the originality and compatibility of its presence in the text of the Syriac Anaphora of Addai and Mari. These aspects are explicated by the liturgist A. Gelson in his work about *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari*<sup>19</sup>. Beyond this aspect, Gelson

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<sup>17</sup> In the opinion of A. Gelson, this section links the Eucharistic Prayer of the Apostles Addai and Mari from the third maronite anaphora, attributed to Saint Peter and known generally by the name of *Sharar*. That is way in the two texts the prayer “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth ...” (used on the name of *Sanctus*) separate “two paragraph of thanksgiving”. The first of them contain “the assembly of thanksgiving to redemption and could be seen like the heart of the anaphora”. in the second one we can identify the elements drawn from the doctrine of redemption and at the end the doxology also attributed to the *Sharar*'s text. See: GELSON, *op. cit.*, p. 90–94; G.J. CUMING, *The Shape of the Anaphora*, in: “Studia Patristica” 20 (1989), p. 337.

<sup>18</sup> See: D. POPESCU, *Iisus Hristos Pantocrator*, București 2005, p. 327–328.

<sup>19</sup> “This paragraph is often regarded as the most problematical in the whole Anaphora of Addai and Mari. The problems of raises, however, may not appear completely insoluble. The first fact that confronts

notices that, from the structural point of view, in the entire Eucharistic prayer isn't any anamnetical section well definite<sup>20</sup>. Therefore, this paragraph is a preparation for the Epiclesis. In its theological context we find the divine love though our Lord Jesus Christ

goes until the death, showing that He doesn't stop anywhere, but stays incessantly in His love; so establishing in the loving sacrifice the mystery of His offering further like the sacrificed and eternal alive One through His sacrifice. And like an eternal proof, "took bread in His holy and most pure unblemished hands, and when He had given thanks, and had blessed it, and hallowed it, and broken it", he gave it as body to His disciples, as an assurance that He will not be alone in death, that He will not be overcome by death, but He will be victorious through the love to those who want them immortals, through His death passing over in the eternal life, so that will let them pass also<sup>21</sup>.

In this context are included the one who participates in the Holy Liturgy and they also share the Body and the Blood of Christ in the Holy Sacrament of Saint Eucharist. Therefore, glorifying the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, all of us are in the divine communion with Christ on Earth and in Heaven.

#### VIII.

And let thy Holy Spirit come, O my Lord, and r e s t upon this offering of thy servants and bless it and sanctify it that it may be to us, O my Lord, for the pardon of sins and for the forgiveness of shortcomings, and for the grate hope of the resurrection from dead, and for new life in the kingdom of heaven with all who are been pleasing before thee.

The last part of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari is the Epiclesis. On this aspect we will insist more in our next lines, bringing a few terminological clarification about the liturgical construction "and r e s t upon this offering", in connection with the act of descending of the Holy Spirit above the honest gifts of bread and wine. This aspect is also analyzed by Professor Sebastian Brock, who explains this moment in a symbolic way.

The majority of epiclesis addressed to the Father, who is asked, either to "send" His Holy Spirit, or that His Holy Spirit "may come". The latter, which "may Your Spirit come..." is the form familiar for the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari, and from the other two East Syrian anaphoras. It is also found in a considerable number of West Syrian anaphoras, either alone, or in combination with "send"; in Greek in the Anaphora of Saint Basil the Great, and in a few Coptic and Ethiopic anaphoras. Its roots can be traced back to the phrase *marana tha*, "our Lord, come" in the New Testament<sup>22</sup>.

us is that this Section has no counterpart with *Sharar*. This has naturally led some to question its originality in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari. It certainly excludes the possibility of detecting secondary accretions of the text through the process of comparative analyses. Cf. GELSON, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>20</sup> The liturgical unanimous opinion is that the anaphora prayer starts from the first part of anamnesis, to the end of epiclesis.

<sup>21</sup> STĂNILOAE, *Spiritualitate și comuniune*, p. 441.

<sup>22</sup> Referring to this problem, the English professor says that the phrases can be taken in two words: "1. *maran atha* – 'our Lord is come' or 2. *marana tha* – 'our Lord, come'". Therefore, "since the Palestinian Aramaic of the first century AD seems to have had a 1st plural suffix in – na, rather than – an, this

Further, Sebastian Brock takes in account of specific verbs

with which the wording of many of the epiclesis continues, namely *shra* – “to reside”, *etnih* – “to find rest”, *rahhep* – “to hover”, and *aggen* – “to tabernacle, to overshadowing”. Usually these verbs will occur in combination with one another, and with other verbs such as *quaddesh* – “to sanctify”, *barrek* – “to bless”, and are then followed either by “bad”, “to make, effect” or *hwa* – “to become”<sup>23</sup>.

Starting from this myriad of terms from the Syriac anaphoras, we will try to bring more clarification about the theological dimension and dogmatic specificity of the Epiclesis like mystical moment in the Holy Liturgy. Therefore, about the term *etnih* (to rest, to find rest for himself), mentioned in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, Sebastian Brock says that can be found in the words of the prophet Isaiah:

And there will come a rod out of the broken tree of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots will give fruit. And the spirit of the Lord will be resting on him, the spirit of wisdom and good sense, the spirit of wise guiding and strength, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord<sup>24</sup>.

Starting from this connection, Brock believes that the concept of “rest” (sir. — *nyaha*, gr. — *anapausis*) was very important in the early development of Christianity, being also associated with the text of the Gospel of Saint Matthew, in the chapter 11,28-29:

Come to me, all you who are troubled and weighted down with care, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke on you and become like me, for I am gentle and without pride, and you will have rest for your souls.

Corresponding to the word translated “gentle” here (*praus* in Greek), in the Syriac Gospels there in *niha*, which is from the same root as *nyaha*, “rest”, and one is tempted to suspect that the same word play was also present in the Jewish Aramaic saying of Jesus behind the Greek Mathew. Whether or not that was the case, it is evident from the variety of different sources that the verb *etnih*, “to rest, find rest” was taken up at an early date in Syriac as one of the specialized terms to denote the activity of the Holy Spirit. The use of *etnih* in the context of invocations of the Spirit seems to be a feature distinctive to Syriac liturgical tradition, for no corresponding use of the verb *anapauēin* (to rest) is to be found in the Greek epiclesis<sup>25</sup>.

Very important to follow is also the term *aggen*. On the research of the English professor Sebastian Brock of this lode, we discover his abundance of meanings drawn from the Syriac Christology of Saint Ephrem the Syrus. So we find that, in the time of the Holy Father, the day of the celebration of the Feast of Annunciation was 10 Nisan. This hypothesis, supported by Diatesseron, is valued by Saint Ephrem in his Commentary of Exodus:

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means that the second interpretation is the most likely”. See: S. BROCK, *The Bakround to Some Terms in the Syriac Eucharistic Epiclesis*, in: “The Harp” 27 (2004), p. 186, note 2.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p. 185–186.

<sup>24</sup> Is. 11, 1-2.

<sup>25</sup> BROCK, *The Bakround to Some Terms*, p. 188.



The Pasqual Lam is the symbol of our God that comes in the womb in the tenth day of Nissan, because from the teen day of the seventh moon (Trishri), when Zachariah found out about the John's birth, until the first moon (Nissan), until the Annunciation, are six months. Therefore the angel had said: "This is the sixth moon for her, the one who is called sterile". Therefore, in the tenth day of Nissan, when was taken the Pasqual lam, was conceived our Lord and in the fourteenth day, when the lamb has been slain, was crucified the One whose symbol was the lamb (12,2-3).

In this way, the Saint Father establishes the link between the Annunciation and the Last Supper, by default the link between Incarnation and Eucharist. Secondly, the terminological explanation brought by Sebastian Brock in support of this analogy is related to the biblical text from Luke 1,35: "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will come to rest on you, and so that which will come to birth will be named holy, Son of God". The oldest Syriac correspondent of the verb "to shade" was *aggen*, of Aramaic origin, used in the Targum tradition in connection with the Pasqual lam (*pasha*). In Syriac tradition from the fourth century, *aggen* was used with a liturgical meaning to explain the act of descending of the Holy Spirit above saints gifts at moment of Epiclesis. This aspect defines the close connection between Incarnation and Eucharist. In his Christological approach, Saint Ephrem analyses this problem in a personal way:

instead of using the possibilities of the term *aggen*, he uses another word with a rich Aramaic background, namely the term *šhra*, "to dwell, to reside". This is the term that Saint Ephrem always uses when he is referring to the presence of Christ in the womb of the Holy Virgin and also, when he speaks about His presence in the Eucharistic Bread and Wine<sup>26</sup>.

Therefore, very close to the term *aggen* is the verb *šhrā* (σκεινω — in Greek), that means "to dwell". We can find it at John 1,14: "And so the Word became flesh and dwelt among us for a time; and we saw his glory, such glory as it is given to an Only Son by his Father, saw it to be true and full of grace"<sup>27</sup>. The expression "dwelt among us" or by other translation "took a place among us" can be founded especially in a Syriac Mariology like an extension of the Christological concept *lbeš pagrā* ("putting a body") a relation between Christ and the Holy Virgin<sup>28</sup>. In his commentary of Diatessaron, Saint Ephrem makes a contextual analysis

<sup>26</sup> S. BROCK, *The Luminous Eye (Ochiul luminos. Viziunea spirituală a lumii la Sfântul Efreem Sirul)*, translated in Romanian by M. Ilecium and Ioan I Ică jr., Sibiu 1998, p. 120–123.

<sup>27</sup> Here is the Greek version of the from Saint John the Theologian: „Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς πατρὸς, πληρῆς χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας”.

<sup>28</sup> We can justify this by the fact that *lbeš pagrā*, the classical term for Incarnation in the Syriac Christology, is limited to the Person of Christ. In this respect, the English Professor Sebastian Brock says that: "Since, however, *lbeš pagrā* offers no reference to Jesus's Mother, they was ample place for phrase *šhrā b – as well*". At the same time, Sebastian Brock offers some clarification about the Aramaic origin of the verb *šhrā*: "Second, we can observe an analogous phenomenon in the Peshitta Old Testament where

of this term, showing that the Logos received power from His Father for that, through His dwelling in the womb of the Holy Virgin, to heal the entire human race by the “thorns and thistles of the sin”.

What for the angel didn't pronounce the Father's name, but the name of His power and the name of the Holy Spirit, is not for that he saw the Creator's work in which was raised the fallen house and, through the warmth of the Holy Spirit, He sanctified the dirty houses? If the Father entrusted His Son all the judgment, we can understand that He fulfills through Him the creation of man and also their restoration. He was the fire in which was thrown the thorns and thistles<sup>29</sup>. He dwells in the womb and purified it, healing all the sickness and all the sufferance<sup>30</sup>.

Returning to the Epiclesis from the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari, we can say that, in a dogmatic way, this moment is a renewed Pentecost in which the Holy Spirit can be recognized in prayer and can come inside of the faithful hearts<sup>31</sup>. Being worthy to bring sacrifice from “the word which God has given to man”, the believers receive as a gift the Body and the Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. In this way,

though the descending of the Holy Spirit, the bread brought as a gift and as the life of people is transformed in the Body of Christ, who offering himself to the believers, like a higher gift, rise all their life in a state of deification<sup>32</sup>.

XIX.

And for all thy wonderful dispensation which is towards us we give thee thanks and glorify thee without ceasing in thy Church redeeming by the precious blood of thy Christ, with open mouths and unveiled faces offering glory and honor and thanksgiving and adoration to hey living and holy and life/giving name, now and at all times and for ever and ever. Amin.

This last section of the Anaphora of the Saints Addai and Mari contain the final doxology, attributed to God for all His great gifts bestowed upon the believers. Purified by the impurity of sin by the fire of the divine Eucharist, the sons of the Church worship “with open mouths and unveiled faces” the Holy name of God. Christ is the One who unified the old with the new in His divine Sacrifice. He is

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words or phrases with a background in the Jewish Targumim survive in Syriac tradition independently of the actual biblical text (Peshitta). A striking example is provided by Genesis 22,13, where all Peshitta manuscripts speak of the ram which took the place of Isaac as the sacrifice as being ‘caught in a branch’ (*b-sawktā*); yet commentators and homilists, from Ephrem onwards, regular speak, not of ‘branch’, but of a ‘tree’ – a tradition which has clear roots in the Targumim”. See: “The lost old Syriac at Luke 1:35 and the earliest Syriac terms for the incarnation”, in W.L PATERSEN (ed.), *Gospel tradition in the Second Century*, 1989, p. 126; study taken over in S. BROCK, *Fire from heaven. Study in Syriac Theology and Liturgy* 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Here, the Saint Father refers to the text of Genesis 3,18.

<sup>30</sup> *E.Csyr.* 1, 25.

<sup>31</sup> STĂNILOAE, *Spiritualitate șicomuniune*, p. 466.

<sup>32</sup> POPESCU, *Iisus Hristos Pantocrator*, p. 330–331.

“the new Pasqual Lamb”<sup>33</sup>, “that rise the sins of the world” and stays with us until the end of the centuries. In this way, we testify, preach and believe that His presence is real in the Holy Sacraments and, therefore, we have the certainty that He is in our midst with His divine Body and Blood. Therefore, Saint Cyril of Alexandria teaches us to be attentively at “the holy gifts”, that are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Eucharist<sup>34</sup>, that is the real Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the true Son of God. Therefore, we understand that nobody doesn’t have to be close to the Holy Eucharist without the cleansing of sins. In this state the believer should remain until his next meaning with the Eucharistic Christ, staying far from any defilement<sup>35</sup>.

## 2. In conclusion

The Syrian Fathers validate in their majority the Eucharistic value of the Old Testament sacrifice, intimately linked by the inner condition of the one who brings it before God. Therefore, we understand that the offering isn’t ours and that it comes from the gifts of God. Cain’s gift wasn’t refused because it was unclean but because

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<sup>33</sup> This image is founded in one of the hymns of Saint Ephrem, where the Syrian Father uses a whole series of paradoxes to demonstrate that the Eucharistic Christ is the link between the Old Law and the new one. See: “On the Crucification 2”, in: EPHREM, *Selected Poems. Vocalized Syriac text with English translation*, S. Brock, George A. Kiraz (ed.), Birmingham 2006, p. 122–133.

<sup>34</sup> “Once you’ve found out and you’ve been entrusted that the visible bread isn’t bread, even if you feel bread to taste, but the Body of Christ; because the whine which is seen isn’t wine, even the taste says that, but the Blood of Christ; because David spoken in the Psalms about this: ‘The bread reinforced’ and ‘the whine rejoice the man’s hart’ (Ps. 103, 16, 17), when you take the spiritual bread reinforce your hart and rejoice the face of your soul. See: SFÂNTUL CHIRIL AL IERUSALIMULUI, *Cateheza a IV-a mistagogică, Despre Trupul și Sângele Domnului*, in: IDEM, *Cateheze*, București 2003, p. 358.

<sup>35</sup> In a text from *The Book of Gifts*, about “The ninth virtuous gift: the true ascetic life our Lord’s household”, we find a very good example about the way in which we must prepare ourselves for the meeting with the Eucharistic Christ. “The genuine fast of the New Testament, says the anonymous author, requires the chief adornment of good ascetic life: preservation for the pleasing and luxurious things which fatten up the body but impoverish the soul. Someone who fasts from evil follies ought to take precaution against them. In the first place, as by the uprooting of the tree of the passion, and then against their simple urgent demand which is unsuitable for ascetics’ manner of life. Let that person use simple things and manager food, and avoid rich foods from animals and animals products, and ,similarly, bread which is excessively fine, and great variety in foods, even if they are appropriate for ascetics. If he has need of something rich, let him use oil from trees or prepared from vegetables. Also, for his refreshment let him uses to drink something set apart in a small quantity. He is not to any extent to mingle the blood and bring the whole man to ruin. Those who in the Old Testament led a life of abstinence by vows of prophetic choice kept themselves, by way of self-discipline in accordance with the commandment of the law, from wine and strong drink, and from loaves made from fermented wheat and grape stones. They were preserved as ascetics by think which are visible in the body, growth of hair and nails; but they were not persuaded by a commune abstinence which is from hidden passions” (quoted from *The Book of Gifts*, which was compiled by holy MAR ŠUBHALMARAN, D.J. Lane (ed.), “Harpa” 27 (2004), p. 196).

he had a dark heart. Consequently the Church prayers are the living proof of the true relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Here, in the Anaphora, we bring our thanksgiving and we believe that our Savior Jesus Christ is the true Incarnated Son of God. In the liturgical context, this divine prayer can be understood like a continuous bringing of gifts. Nevertheless, they are also gifts that God

doesn't want it because of the sins of the bringers. Such cases are numerous, not only to the oldest one, but also to the one who lives under grace. That is why we most see if sometimes the gifts brought to the altar aren't sanctified, meaning that they aren't received, because some of them can be brought by the Christian sinners and not by the righteous. That God refuses the gifts, if the bringer is a sinner, we can see from the Church's tradition. Those who had made great sins are stopped to bring their gifts, even if they would dare to do so, the Church would reject it with their gifts.

Yet, because the soul of the bringer is most often unknown by the priest who celebrates to the Holy Altar, are received here all the gifts. In this context, Saint Nicolas Cabasila speaks about two fetches:

the first one is when the bringer puts his gift in the hands of the priest and, the second one, is when the Church offers the gifts to God. The first one is indeed useless if the bringer is a sinner, meaning that it cannot bring any fortune because the man is by himself an unbeliever; but the gifts aren't unpleasant before God, because any thing that God has done is good. As for the second bringing, being blessed by the sanctified ministers to the glory of God and of His saints, to the salvation of the entire world or for the right request, nothing prevents it to be well received<sup>36</sup>.

In conclusion the Anaphora of Addai and Mari is the first Eucharistic prayer in the Syriac Church. His content is very precious because in it we can find an important testimony about the real presence of Christ in the life of the Church. Also, the Christological terminology provides a very profound vision about the Person of the Incarnated Son of God, about his Work and about His relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this wonderful prayer carries in it the thanksgiving of the believers for all the good gifts received from God.

**Key words:** Syriac Liturgy, anaphora, dogmatic, Eucharist

### **Eucharystyczny Chrystus w tradycji syryjskiej. Liturgiczny i dogmatyczny kontekst anafory Addaja i Mariego**

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł stanowi analizę tekstu anafory Addaja i Mariego — pierwszego tekstu eucharystycznego tradycji syryjskiej. W tym kontekście, idąc za liturgicznymi i doktrynal-

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<sup>36</sup> N. CABASIŁA, *Târcuirea Dumnezeiștii Liturghii*, București 1997, p. 102–103.

nymi ideami, opisano realną obecność Chrystusa w świętych postaciach eucharystycznych. Dlatego też autor podjął się zadania ukazania piękna syryjskiego tekstu i jego starożytnej tradycji. Bardzo ważną częścią przeprowadzonej analizy są odniesienia do tekstu oraz podobieństwa i różnice zachodzące między tekstem syryjskim oraz bizantyjskimi. Podstawowymi źródłami opracowania są tłumaczenia Ene Braniętego oraz komentarz Nicolasa Cabasilasa *Wyjaśnienie Świętej Liturgii*.

**Słowa kluczowe:** liturgia syryjska, anafora, dogmatyka, Eucharystia.

