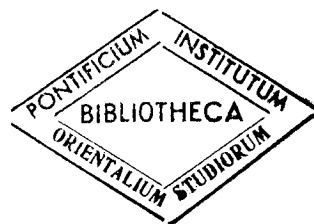


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Sarhad Jammo

The Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari: A Study of Structure and Historical Background

INTRODUCTION

Benefiting from the results of a long list of researchers, starting with I. Rahmani in 1899,¹ different scholars have undertaken many attempts to study the text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari (A&M) in order to reconstruct a putative original version, especially through comparison with the Maronite Anaphora of Peter III. Among those who have presented their conclusions on the reconstruction attempt, the latest and those deserving special mention are: Sanchez Caro, Jean Magne, and A. Gelston.²

While the envisioned Urtext remains as elusive as ever, major gaps still persist regarding the reasons presented to explain the actual tortuous text. Therefore the subject still calls for fresh contributions. Our aim in this article is:

a) to search for the reasons that motivated the formulation of the actual text of A&M, searching thus for an explanation, based on historical data, of the deviations and discontinuities that we encounter in its texture; furthermore:

b) to identify and define the variant strata of development of the anaphoral text.

In my article "The Quddasha of the Apostles Addai and Mari,"³ I have explained why the Eucharistic Institution narrative could not belong to the original text of our Anaphora. This "gemma orientales"⁴ belonged to a primordial era when the euchology of the Church had

¹ I. Rahmani, *Testamentum D.N.J.-C.*, Mainz 1899, p. 192; *Les liturgies orientales et occidentales*, Beyrouth 1929.

² J. M. Sanchez Caro, "La anafora de Addai y la anafora maronita Sarar, intento de reconstrucción de la fuente primitiva comun," OCP 43 (1977) 41-49; J. Magne, "L'anaphore nestorienne dite d'Addée et Mari et l'anaphore maronite dite de Pierre III, Étude comparative," OCP 53 (1987) 107-158; A. Gelston, *The Euchristic Prayer of Addai and Mari*, Oxford 1992, pp. 118-123.

³ Published by the Pro Oriente Foundation in their series *Syriac Dialogue*, vol 1, Vienna 1994, pp.168-182.

⁴ C. Giraudo, *Eucaristia per la Chiesa*, Rome 1989, p. 463.

JTS
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not yet inserted the Institution Narrative in the text of the Eucharistic Prayer. The era of A&M is close to the era of the eucharist of chapter 10 of the *Didache* and to the paleoanaphora of the *Apostolic Constitutions* VII, 25,⁵ as well as to the eucharistic syntaxis of Justin.⁶

RESEARCH

Building upon that conclusion, our point of departure in this research is a comparison of structure between the Mesopotamian A&M⁷ and the basically similar tenure of the Maronite anaphora of Peter III,⁸ of which we give here the texts, marking similarities with boldface and indicating later additions with italics.

The Anaphora of A&M

Peter III or Sharrar

Section I

Section I

a) Worthy of **glory** from every mouth and thanksgiving from every tongue is **the adorable and glorious Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who created the world in his grace and its inhabitants in his compassion, has redeemed mankind in his mercy, and has effected great grace toward mortals.**

a) **Glory** to you,

the adorable and glorious Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, who created the worlds by his grace and its inhabitants by his mercy, and has effected redemption toward mortals by his grace.

b) Your majesty, **O Lord, a thousand thousand heavenly beings worship and myriad myriads of angels, hosts of spiritual beings, ministers of fire and spirit with cherubim and holy seraphim, glorify your name, crying out and glorifying:**

b) Your majesty, **O Lord, a thousand thousand heavenly angels worship and myriad myriads hosts ministers of fire and spirit glorify in fear. With the cherubim and seraphim, who from one to another bless and sanctify and cry out and say:**

⁵ Metzger III, 52-55.

⁶ Justin, *Apologia* I, 65, and 67, 3-5.

⁷ W. Macomber, "The Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari," OCP 32 (1966) 335-71.

⁸ Edit J. M. Sauget, in *Anaphorae Syriacae*, II/3, Rome 1973, pp. 275-329.

So that may we also, O Lord, through your grace and your compassion be made worthy to say with them three times:

c) **Holy, Holy, Holy, God almighty. Heaven and earth are full of His glories.**

c) **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

cc) **Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna to the Son of David.**

cc) **Hosanna to the Son of David...**

Blessed is he who has come and will come in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Section II

Section II

And with these heavenly powers

d) **We give thanks to you, O Lord, even we your lowly, weak and wretched servants, because you have effected in us a great grace which cannot be repaid, in that you put on our humanity so as to quicken us by your divinity. And lifted up our poor estate and righted our fall. You raised up our mortality and you forgave our debts. You justified our sinfulness and enlightened our understanding, and you, our Lord and God, vanquished our enemies and made triumphant the lowliness of our weak nature through the abounding compassion of your grace.**

d) **We give thanks to you, O Lord, we your sinful servants because you have effected in us your grace which cannot be repaid. You put on our humanity so as to quicken us by your divinity. You lifted up our poverty and righted our dejection and quickened our mortality, and you justified our sinfulness and you forgave our debts. And you enlightened our understanding and vanquished our enemies and made triumphant our lowliness**

e) **And For all your help and graces toward us, we raise to you glory, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and for ever and ever. Amen.**

e) **And For all your graces toward us, let us offer to you glory and honor in your holy Church before your propitiatory altar, now....**

Section III

Section III

f) **You, Lord, through your unspeakable mercies make a gracious remembrance of all the up-**

f) **You, O Lord, in your many mercies make a gracious remembrance for all the upright and just**

right and just fathers who have pleased you, in the commemoration of the body and blood of your Christ,

g) which we offer to you upon the pure and holy altar as you have taught us:

fathers in the commemoration of your body and your blood

g) which we offer to you upon your living and holy altar, as you, our hope, have taught us in your holy and living gospel

and have said: I am the bread of life which came down from heaven so that mortals may have life in me.

We make, O Lord, the memorial of your passion as you have taught us:

in that night when you were delivered up to the crucifiers, you took bread...
<the Narrative>

h) And grant us your tranquility and your peace all the days of the world, that all the inhabitants of the earth may know you, that you alone are the true God and Father, and that you have sent our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, and he, our Lord and our God, taught us through his life-giving gospel all the purity and holiness.

i) of

the prophets, apostles, martyrs and confessors, bishops and priests and deacons, and of all the children of the holy catholic Church, who have been marked with the mark of holy baptism.

h) We remember you, only-begotten of the Father... make us ... that we may stand before you in purity and serve you in holiness... Yes, we beg you, only-begotten of the Father, through him peace has been proclaimed to us, Child of the Most High by whom the things above were reconciled with the things below, the good shepherd...

i) We offer before you, O Lord, this oblation in memory of all the upright and just fathers, prophets and apostles, martyrs and confessors,

[and of all our patriarchs, the Pope...]
bishops and chorepiscopoi and perideutai, priests and deacons and deaconesses, young men celibates and virgins, and all the children of the holy Church who are marked with the mark of saving baptism, and whom you have made participate in your holy body.

d) <Intercessions in Antiochian manner>

j) And we also, O Lord, your lowly, weak, and wretched servants who are gathered together and stand before you at this time, have received by tradition the example (Tupsa) which is from you, while rejoicing, glorifying and magnifying, commemorating and praising and performing this great and dreadful mystery of the passion and death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

k) May he come, O Lord, your Holy Spirit and rest upon this oblation of your servants and bless it and hallow it, that it may be to us O Lord for the pardon of debts, the forgiveness of sins, and a great hope of resurrection from the dead and a new life in the kingdom of heaven with all who have been pleasing before you.

l) And for all your wonderful economy for us, we give you thanks and glorify you unceasingly in your Church, redeemed by the precious blood of your Christ, with open mouths and uncovered faces, as we offer up praise, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

k) And may he come, O Lord, your living and Holy Spirit and dwell and rest upon this oblation of your servants, And may it be for those who partake for the pardon of debts and the forgiveness of sins and for a blessed resurrection from the dead and a new life in the kingdom of heaven, forever.

l) And for your glorious economy toward us we give you thanks, we your sinful servants redeemed by your innocent blood, with open mouth which give thanks in your holy Church before your propitiatory altar, now...

COMMENTARY

A) Basic Question

The first question that we pose in this our study is: which one of the two texts is the original, or if neither is, what and where is the common original core of both.

In order to answer the posed question, we first take note with I. Rahmani — an observation which is still valid at the present time — that no trace can be found of a putative original Urtext for A&M sig-

nificantly different from the text in our possession.⁹ Then we realize with B. Spinks that:

Every paragraph in the Mar Esha'ya text [of A&M] has a parallel with the Maronite anaphora with the sole exception of the Anamnesis. If... the text of Sharrar must be taken seriously, then why is the Anamnesis missing? Its absence suggests the possibility that the Anamnesis is a later East Syrian addition to the original form of the anaphora.¹⁰

As far as the Anamnesis of A&M is concerned, we will deal with it later, indicating as well its parallel, or rather its substitute, in Peter III. The fact remains that, this Anamnesis aside, every paragraph in A&M has a parallel in Peter III, but not *vice-versa*, i.e. not every paragraph in Peter III has a parallel in A&M. That should mean that the "Maronite" reviser had the text of A&M, basically as we find it in Mar 'Eshaya's Hudhra, in front of him, to be able to produce a parallel to every paragraph in it while redacting Peter III. This very fact eliminates the need for a phantom common core for both. A&M is the Ur-text of Peter III.

This conclusion does not eliminate the possibility of a later Mesopotamian retouching of the A&M prior version, i.e. the version used by the reviser who produced Peter III. In fact, we will identify one instance, at the beginning of Section I (paragraph a) where we think that the actual parallel text of Peter III preserves better the original text of A&M.

B) *General Observation in regard to the Reconstruction Attempts*

While we must be appreciative of the respected scholars for the wealth of information and insights they have provided us in their analysis of our anaphora, we have to recognize that those who attempted to reconstruct a phantom original text of A&M presume that either: a) our anaphora had been produced as one piece, composed in its entirety at one time (like Sanchez Caro or A. Gelston. Macomber is not consistent: he thinks it has been produced at once but allows an exception in regard to the Epiclesis), or b) it is a collection of preformulated hymns to Christ (J. Magne). Their approach led them to produce different hypothetical models, reflecting a great body of knowledge, but yielding objectively inconclusive results.

⁹ I. Rahmani, *Les Liturgies* (note 1 above), pp. 338 & 352.

¹⁰ B. Spinks, "The Original Form of the Anaphora of the Apostles," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 91 (1977) 160.

Concerning the first group of authors (Sanchez Caro, A. Gelston and W. Macomber) a differentiation should be made. Taking the conclusion of Botte that paragraph (J) is an anamnesis of sorts¹¹ induced some scholars like Macomber¹² to consider the possibility of a missing Institution Narrative in A&M, and therefore to consider Peter III as being, in that regard, of equal historic value or even as preserving better the original version. Thus, we can find several reconstructed models, like the one formulated by Sanchez Caro, which include in their structure the narrative of the Last Supper.

This kind of approach does not pay sufficient attention to the fact that the anaphora of A&M is a formulary that accompanied the development and growth of the Church of Mesopotamia. That Church, though it maintained a mutually recognized communion with the "Western Fathers" — clearly until the Synod of Mar Dadysho' (A.D. 424) —, remained somehow distant from them because of its existence in a different empire and culture. To the best of our knowledge, A&M was the only anaphora in general and continuous use by that Church of the East from time immemorial until the time of Mar Isaac the Catholicos and his synod of A.D. 410.

While all other Churches in East and West composed through the third, fourth, and fifth centuries, new anaphoras reflecting contemporary developments in theology and liturgy, the Church of the East had only one original and commonly used anaphora to cope with those developments: the anaphora of A&M. That is why I suggest that scholarly research on this topic should aim not at the reconstruction of a phantom original text of this eucharistic prayer, different from the one we possess, but at the discovery of *different strata* of liturgical development within the very text itself.

SEARCHING FOR THE FIRST STRATUM

A) *The Birkat Ha-Mazon and the Eucharistic Prayer*

Since 1968, my professor of blessed memory L. Ligier had advised scholars in search of the origin of the eucharistic prayer:

¹¹ B. Botte, "Problèmes de l'anaphore syrienne des apôtres Addai et Mari," OS 65 (1965) 100-104.

¹² W. Macomber, "The Maronite and Chaldean Versions of the Anaphora of the Apostles," OCP 37 (1971) 77-79.

To clear the passage from the Supper to the eucharistic prayer of the Canon, one must certainly begin from the Birkat Ha-Mazon, and solely from it. But on two conditions: most of all we must consider this prayer in its entirety, then, we have to consider the Birkat Ha-Mazon in its paschal context.¹³

Furthermore, the connection between the Birkat Ha-Mazon and the earliest surviving formula of eucharistic prayer, chapter 10 of the Didache, is generally acknowledged by scholars. I concur with E. Mazza, in his conclusion that:

Following the studies of L. Finkelstein, of M. Dibelius, and of K. Hruby, the connection between the Birkat Ha-Mazon and the Didache 10 no longer requires demonstration.¹⁴

But before dealing with relationship between the Birkat Ha-Mazon and the Anaphora of A&M, I have to make some remarks about how the Jewish teachers and later the Christian formularies have dealt with the Birkat Ha-Mazon regarding its structure, content, and style.

According to the Babylonian Talmud:

Our Teachers taught: the order of the blessing of food is the following: the first blessing is the one that is for "the One who nourishes", the second one the blessing for the land, the third is "for the One who will build Jerusalem"...

Our Teachers taught: From where it results that the blessing for the food is contained in the Law? From where it says: "When you have eaten your fill, you shall bless" (Deut. 8, 10).¹⁵

The connection between the three concepts contained in the three blessings is evident. In fact, after a meal, it is fitting to give thanks to the creator and provider of nourishment. That is the first blessing.

Then, connecting the food to its origin, i.e. to the fertile land that produces it, is nothing else than expanding the awareness of the di-

¹³ L. Ligier, "De la Cène du Seigneur à l'Eucharistie," *Assemblées du Seigneur*, série 2, vol 1, Paris 1968, pp. 31-32.

¹⁴ E. Mazza, *L'anafora eucaristica*, Roma 1992, pp. 24-25; L. Finkelstein, "The Birkat ha-mazon," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 19 (1928-1929) 211-262; M. Dibelius, "Die Mahl-Gebete der Didache," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37 (1938) 32-41; K. Hruby, "La Birkat ha-mazon, La prière d'action de grace après le repas," *Mélanges Liturgiques, Offerts au R.P. Dom Bernard Botte*, Louvain 1972, pp. 205-222, also "L'action de grace dans la liturgie juive," *Lex Orandi* 46 (1970) 23-51.

¹⁵ S. Cavalletti, *Il Trattato delle Benedizioni del Talmud babilonese*, Torino 1968, pp. 321-322.

vine favor, and, in continuity with the first concept, requiring the corresponding duty of gratitude. Moreover, giving thanks for the land brings with it all the memories of the circumstances that surrounded conquering it: first the exodus from slavery in Egypt to freedom, and from Moses to the Law. Land and Redemption in this case are interwoven concepts. That is the second blessing. Then, because of the close connection between the themes of these two blessings, which we see in the very style of their redaction, we may consider them as a single block of glorification-thanksgiving.

The third blessing or supplication connects the past to the present and future. It moves from the whole world to a particular land, then to a particular nation, praying for the preservation of that nation and the unity of its people, as well as for the protection of its pivotal institutions.

The earliest surviving formularies of the Christian eucharist, *Didache* 10, the Mystical Eucharist of the *Apostolic Constitutions* VII, 25, and the Anaphora of A&M, all follow the Birkat Ha-Mazon in structuring their text in three sections. For the Church of the East, the Catholicos Isho'yahb I (ca. 587), in his response to the bishop of Darai, describes a common feature of the Mesopotamian anaphora:

(The priest) at the end of each of the consecutive sections (*Yubal Pasoqe*), duly glorifying with his tongue, draws with his hand over the divine mysteries — according to the norm — the sign of the lordly cross. When he finishes the *three sections (Tlatheyhon Pasoqe)*, he draws near to sign.¹⁶

But, we should emphasize, in none of these formularies is thanksgiving for the food the content of the first section. Instead, thanksgiving for creation and redemption is the topic of the first section in all of them. It is worthwhile noting how the passage from the theme of nourishment to the theme of creation is formulated in the second paragraph of Didache 10: "You, Lord Almighty, have created every thing by Your Name, both food and beverage..." This is quite similar to the opening sentence of the first section in A&M: "Glory to You, the adorable Name ... who created the world by his grace..."

It seems to me that Christians celebrating the Lord's Supper could not begin their eucharist with a thanksgiving for the food, because:

a) the community dinner preceding the eucharist had been quickly eliminated in the early years,

¹⁶ J.-B. Chabot, *Synodicon Orientale*, Paris 1902, Aramaic text, p. 169.

b) the spiritual bread and wine they were sharing were not part of the plan of creation but a climax of the redemptive economy.

B) *The Connection between A&M and Birkat Ha-Mazon*

The connection between the Birkat Ha-Mazon and the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari has been recognized since it was brought to light remarkably by L. Bouyer,¹⁷ but no further follow-up research has been made to show the successive strata in its development to the actual state.

In our attempt to establish the points of contact with the Birkat-Ha-Mazon, our first step is to extract from the actual text of our anaphora three segments that in my opinion did not pertain to the initial early stratum of the text, i.e.: the Sanctus, the Epiclesis, and the expanded references to the Last Supper. I fully concur with R. Taft that: "... there is more or less consensus that the most primitive original eucharistic prayers were short, self-contained benedictions, without Sanctus, institution narrative, or epiclesis, comparable to the Jewish Birkat ha-mazon, *Didache* 10, and the papyrus Strasburg 254..."¹⁸

If A&M belongs to the same era and its patterns, by excising the three segments we should be able to extract a remnant formula parallel to Birkat Ha-Mazon in its structure and basic themes, and similar to *Didache* 10 and to the Mystic Eucharist of the *Apostolic Constitutions* VII, 25. The three segments extracted comprise:

- a) the Sanctus, its introduction, and the adjustments made for its insertion in the anaphora in the first section,
- b) the paragraph containing the Epiclesis in the third section, and
- c) the expansion of the references to the Last Supper in the third section, explicitly connecting the act of the Church to that Supper. Here are the texts for comparison:

¹⁷ L. Bouyer, *Eucharist*, University of Notre Dame Press 1968, p. 147.

¹⁸ R. Taft, S.J., "The Interpolation of the Sanctus into the Anaphora," OCP 57 (1991) 290. In regard to A&M, the first two elements were recognized as a posterior addition since 1929 by a remarkably well written article of E. C. Ratcliff, "The Original Form of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari: A Suggestion," JTS 30 (1929) 32.

Birkat Ha-Mazon

1) **Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the universe**, for you nourish us and **the whole world with goodness, grace, kindness, and mercy**

Blessed are you, Lord, for you nourish the universe

2) **We give you thanks, Lord our God,**

for you have given us for our inheritance a desirable land, good and wide, the covenant and the law, life and food

For all these things we give you thanks and bless your name for ever and beyond.

3) **Have mercy, Lord our God, on us your people Israel**, and your city Jerusalem, on your sanctuary and your dwelling place on Zion the habitation of your glory, and the great and holy house over which your name is invoked. Restore the kingdom of the house of David to its place in our days, and speedily build Jerusalem.

The Anaphora A&M

1) **Glory to you the adorable and glorious Name** (of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit) **who created the world in his grace and its inhabitants in his compassion**, has redeemed men in his mercy and has effected great grace toward mortals.

2) **We give you thanks, Lord,** we your lowly, weak, and wretched servants, because you have brought about in us a great grace which cannot be repaid. For you put on our humanity to give us life through your divinity, you extolled our lowly state, you raised our fall, you restored our immortality, you forgave our debts, you justified our sinfulness, you enlightened our intelligence. You, our Lord and God, conquered our enemies, and made triumphant our weak nature through the abundant mercy of your grace.

And for all your help and graces toward us, we raise to you praise, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

3) **Lord, through your many mercies which cannot be told, do make**, in the commemoration of your Christ, **a gracious remembrance for all the pious and righteous fathers** who were pleasing in your sight, the prophets, the apostles, the martyrs and confessors, the bishops, the priests and deacons, and all the sons who have been sealed with the living seal of holy baptism.

Blessed are you Lord for you build Jerusalem. Amen.

And for all your wonderful plan for us, **we give you thanks and glorify you unceasingly in your Church,** redeemed by the precious blood of your Christ, with open mouths and uncovered faces, as we offer up praise, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Section I: As Christians, the Mesopotamian faithful, as we clarified above, had to begin their eucharist with the themes of creation and redemption, which became the topic of the first section.

Section II: This section maintained, as in the Birkat Ha-Mazon, its focus on the redemptive economy, but with clear Christological content.

Section III: Following the structural pattern of the Birkat Ha-Mazon, the third section is formulated in the manner of a supplication, but its real content is a commemoration. A&M produces here a very fitting, particular, even unique way to make the memorial of the Lord weaving it into the section of "commemorations" in the structure of the Anaphora, instead of placing it in the section of Theological Celebration, thus establishing a new pattern of commemoration of the Lord according to the following structure: Lord God, as we do the memorial of your Christ, remember us, your Church. The Lord Christ, in fact, requested his disciples toward the end of his blessing to: "Do this in memory of me."

Furthermore, the points of contact between A&M and the Birkat go even beyond the structure and text of the three sections, to the post-supper *Finale* of Easter meal, when before singing the Hallel (Ps 113) some other psalmic verses were recited to accompany what was called the Cup of Elijah.¹⁹

Here are the texts for comparison:

Easter Meal	The Anaphora A&M
The Last Chalice, of Elijah (psalm 79, 6-7; 69, 25; Lam 3,66)	
Pour out your wrath on nations that reject you, on kingdoms that	And grant us your tranquillity and your peace all the days of the

do not call your name. For they have devoured Jacob, laid waste his home.

Pour out your wrath upon them, let the fury of your anger overtake them. Pursue them in wrath and destroy them from under your heavens.

world, that all the inhabitants of the earth may know you, that you alone are the true God and Father, and that you have sent our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, and he, our Lord and our God, taught us through his life-giving gospel all the purity and holiness.

A careful reading of both columns in the above exposed tables, should suffice to show that both the basic structure *and the Finale* of the Judaic passover have a parallel in the Mesopotamian anaphora; a parallel which at the same time surpasses its original with great Christian spirituality. Instead of invoking the wrath of God on the gentiles who did not recognize him and have battled his people, A&M invokes peace for the Church in her earthly journey, and the conversion of all men to God and his Christ.

C) Comparison with *Didache*

Based on the comparison and analysis presented, I think it is valid to conclude the original euchological structure of A&M follows basically the pattern of the Birkat Ha-Mazon in its Passover environment. This basic original structure of A&M could be considered as a first stratum in the *Formgeschichte* of its final text in the manuscripts, close in style, content, and therefore in date of composition, to the eucharist of the *Didache* 10, with one advantage for A&M: the paragraph invoking peace for the Church and conversion for the world brings the Mesopotamian eucharist closer to the Jewish Passover meal, and consequently closer to the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples. For easier verification, compare the following columns:

Didache	A&M
Almighty Lord, you created all things for your Name's sake...	Glory to you, the adorable Name (of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit) who created the world in his grace and its inhabitants in his compassion, has redeemed mankind in his mercy, and has effected great grace toward mortals.

¹⁹ See C. Giraud, *Eucaristia* (note 4 above), p.159.

We thank you, holy Father, for your holy name which you have made to dwell in our hearts...

Lord, remember your Church...

We give thanks to you, Lord...
Make, Lord, a gracious remembrance for all the fathers ...

While recognizing the different development of the original content of the Birkat Ha-Mazon in each of the two formularies presented, we can verify, at the same time, a sufficient similarity of structure and initial content between them, allowing us to conclude that A&M in its first and early stratum still preserves the basic pattern of eucharistic prayer similar to that of the *Didache*, and consequently close to its apostolic era. But, while the early known formularies of eucharistic prayer, the *Didache*, the paleoanaphora of the *Apostolic Constitutions* VII, 25 and the anaphora of the *Apostolic Tradition* 4,²⁰ are but historic literary monuments of Christian euchology, A&M continued to be the vital liturgical expression of a living Church, a Church that kept adding to its ancient and venerated anaphora successive strata to update it with the theological and liturgical developments of the Church universal.

After having excised from the total text of A&M those segments that we have shown did not belong to its initial formulation, it would be useful, for the purpose of clarity, to put together the original segments in one formula that constitutes the first stratum of our anaphora:

THE ANAPHORA OF A&M

FIRST STRATUM

Section I

a) **Glory to you**

the adorable and glorious Name (of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit), who created the world in his grace and its inhabitants in his compassion, has redeemed mankind in his mercy and has effected great grace toward mortals.

Section II

d) We give thanks to you, O Lord, we your lowly, weak and wretched servants, because you have effected in us a great grace which cannot be repaid, in that you put on our humanity so as quicken us by your divinity.

²⁰ B. Botte (ed.), *La Tradition apostolique de Saint Hippolyte. Essai de reconstitution* (LQF 39) Münster 1963, 12-17.

And lifted up our poor estate and righted our fall. You raised up our mortality and you forgave our debts. You justified our sinfulness and enlightened our understanding, and you, our Lord and God, vanquished our enemies and made triumphant the lowliness of our weak nature through the abounding compassion of your grace.

e) And For all your help and graces toward us, we raise to you glory, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and for ever and ever. Amen

Section III

f) Lord, **through your unspeakable mercies do make, in the commemoration of your Christ, a gracious remembrance** of all the upright and just fathers who have pleased you, the prophets, apostles, martyrs and confessors, bishops and priests and deacons, and of all the children of the holy catholic Church, who have been marked with the mark of holy baptism.

h) And **grant us your tranquillity and your peace** all the days of the world, that all the inhabitants of the earth **may know you**, that you alone are the true God and Father, and that you have sent our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, and he, our Lord and our God, taught us through his life-giving gospel all the purity and holiness.

I) And for all your wonderful economy for us, we give you thanks and glorify you unceasingly in your Church, redeemed by the precious blood of your Christ, with open mouths and uncovered faces, as we offer up praise, honor, thanksgiving and adoration to your holy and life-giving name, now and for ever and ever. Amen

The Addressee of the Anaphora

One of the major intrigues scholars faced in understanding and explaining the known text of A&M was the unstable and incoherent address of the anaphora, both in its entirety as well as in its individual sections, especially the third one. But, as we can see, the text is quite coherent and continuous when restored to its initial stratum. The address in this first stratum does not present a difficulty but a particularity: the first section is addressed to the divine Name, which was later expanded to mean the Trinity, the second section is addressed to Christ, the third section returns in its address back to the Father. It is unusual, but it is clear.

The passage from the Father, Lord of the Universe, to Christ the Savior, is a Mesopotamian euchological pattern eloquently reflected in the most archaic hymn of the Assyro-Chaldean liturgy, to be found at the present time at the beginning of every liturgical service:

Lakhu Mara d-kulla Mawdenan, w-lakh ysho' Mshyha mshabhynan...
 (To you Lord of the Universe, we give thanks. To you Jesus Christ, we

give glory, because you are the one who will raise our bodies and save our souls).

Conclusion

Without changing anything in the text of the Anaphora A&M, and without adding anything to it, but only

- a) by using the methodology of comparison with Peter III,
- b) by putting aside what is known to be later successive developments in the structure of the anaphoras in all Churches,

the resulting text is a wonderful piece of euchology, a eucharist structured following the Birkat Ha-Mazon in its Passover context, and close to the eucharist of *Didache* 10.

Now we must bring back the three excisions, explain the circumstances of their introduction into the anaphora, and the impact they have had on its texture.

THE SECOND STRATUM

The addition and modification in the First Section's

A) *The Addition of Isaian Qaddysh*

Recent scholars, starting from A. Baumstark,²¹ have concluded that the Jewish use of the Isaiah 6:3 Qedusha in Yoser and in the 3rd Tefilla of the Eighteen Benedictions of the Jewish morning prayer, effected the introduction of it in the Christian eucharist, first among the Churches close to the Jewish congregations, then expanding to the rest of Christianity. As far as the time of introduction of Qaddysh into the general structure of the anaphoras, we notice first that it is not found in any known text of the eucharistic prayer up to the *Apostolic Tradition* anaphora (3/4th c.). That could be considered a *terminus a quo*. And since it is found in the anaphora of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, VIII, 12:27²² (ca. 380) in a version that reproduces the *Tefilla Qyddusha*, we can consider that date as a *terminus ad quem* for its introduction in the Syrian region.²³

²¹ A. Baumstark, "Trishagion und Qeduscha," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 3 (1923), pp. 18-32.

²² Metzger III, 192-93.

²³ Apost Const. VII, 35: 3-5, Metzger II, 76-77.

The Mesopotamian Church, one of the Christian communities closest to Jewish congregations, would have easily found how fitting it is to insert this heavenly hymn into its eucharist, especially given the fact that it belonged to the morning prayer. Transferring it from morning prayer to morning eucharist should have been a smooth passage at the place dedicated to the glorification of God in the Anaphora. An introduction was composed for its insertion ("*Your Majesty...*") in the same literary style, following the same initial address in second person ("*Glory to You, the Name...*") without modifying at all the original primitive text.

Nevertheless, we can still detect in the texture of this introduction some indication pointing to the relative novelty of the Qaddysh segment. In fact,

- 1) while the addressee in the primitive segment of the Anaphora (a) is the divine "Name," we observe that the addressee in the introduction to the Qaddysh (b) is "My Lord" in both A&M and Peter III,
- 2) the grammatical style of the discourse switches from the third person ("the Name who created the world by his grace... by his compassion... etc.) to the second person: ("Your Majesty... Your Name.../ Your grace... Your compassion").

As to the date when of the Qaddysh was introduced into the Mesopotamian anaphora, it should precede the year 340, which marked the beginning of forty years of brutal persecution, which forced the severing of ecclesial relations between the Persian East and the Roman West.

B) *The modification of the Opening Sentence*

The modification of the Opening Sentence from "Glory to you, the Name..." to "Worthy of glory from every mouth, and of thanksgiving from every tongue, the Name...", evidently should have a reason. It could not have been motivated by addition of the veterotestamentarian Qaddysh to the first stratum of the anaphora, since this hymn, according to its origination in Isaiah 6:3 and as formulated in its introduction, is to be chanted by the heavenly beings.

The modification was in fact motivated by the later new addition of a neotestamentarian "Hosanna and Benedictus" (adopting Ps. 118, 25-26 and Ez. 3, 12), imitating the liturgy of St. James in Jerusalem, a hymn which requires by its meaning to be sung by a journeying Church. This new addition required a new adjustment of the first sec-

tion that would put the enriched and expanded Qaddysh in a new proper context.

That the Isaian Qaddysh was already part of A&M when it passed to the Fathers of the Maronite Church is indicated by the fact that Peter III has it with its introduction basically as it is in A&M. That the Hosanna-Benedictus pericope is a later new addition is indicated by the fact that each of the two anaphoras patch a new context for it in different, awkward, and clearly artificial ways:

- a) Peter III, interrupts the Isaian text itself, by adding a phrase (“**so that** (sic) we may become worthy to say with them...”) at the end of the introductory sentence of the Isaian text (“crying out and saying:”) which had formed a cohesive pericope with the rest of the angelic hymn, a cohesiveness that was disrupted by the new patching phrase.
- b) A&M by framing it with two sentences, one at the very beginning of the section (**Worthy of glory from every mouth and of thanksgiving from every tongue**, the adorable...), and the other at the end of the hymn at the place that marks the beginning of the second anaphoral section (“**With these heavenly hosts, even we, give you thanks**”). This is a clear indication of the patching effort.

This analysis that sees two strata in the text of Qaddysh in both anaphoras of A&M and Peter III could be confirmed first by the tenure of the anaphora in the *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII, which does have the veterotestamentarian Trisagion but without the neotestamentarian Hosanna-Benedictus pericope:

Holy, Holy, Holy, God Almighty, heaven and earth are full of his glory; you are blessed forever. Amen.²⁴

Also by Narsai († 502) in his Exposition of the mysteries as he describes in his Memra 17 this section of the celebration paraphrasing it as follows:

The priest continues (saying): “All (heavenly beings) cry out together and say the one to another,” the people then respond: Holy the God that dwells in the light. **Holy, Holy, Holy the Lord, cry out the people, Heaven and the whole earth are full of his glories... The whole**

Church shout up with those (words) then they revert to silence, while the priest follows up conversing with God.²⁵

Similarly, in his treatise N. 21 on the Mysteries of the Church, Narsai paraphrases the acts of the liturgy with no word at all about either Hosanna or Benedictus.

(The Priest) resembles the spiritual beings by his words when he intercedes and when in holy manner teaches the people to say: **Holy. He recites to men the voice of heavenly beings, so that they shout: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord... As he makes (the people) hear it, he is passionate like Isaiah**, remembering how much the lowliness of man has been exalted...²⁶

Origin of the Addition Hosanna-Benedictus

If the Hosanna-Benedictus pericope is a later addition to the Isaian Qaddysh, when and why would it have been introduced in to A&M? It should be after the time of Narsai († 502), certainly. It was Mar Aba, who was sent in 530 by the hierarchy of his Church of the East to update his Church’s liturgy, in harmony with the liturgical developments in “western” Christianity, who visited the Byzantine Metropoles and edited two additional anaphoras, the one in honor of Theodore the Interpreter, the other in honor of the Patriarch Nestorius. They have both the Sanctus with the addition of Hosanna-Benedictus, in the manner of the Liturgy of St. James. Expectedly, the Qaddysh of the liturgy of A&M was aligned with them and provided a patchwork textual frame, possibly by Mar Aba himself.

The failure to draw the right conclusion from the comparison between A&M and Peter III in regard to the Incipit of our Anaphora, and also not to take into sufficient consideration the distinction between the two segments of the Sanctus (a: Qaddysh, b: Hosanna-Benedictus), and the different moments of their insertion into this anaphora, has misled some scholars like Gelston — building here on Macomber’s analysis — to a different conclusion:

The most significant point indeed to emerge from a comparison of Section C (Qaddysh... Hosanna... Benedictus...) with its counterpart in *Sharrar* is the fact that both anaphoras contain the *Sanctus*, which creates

²⁴ Metzger, III, 178-205.

²⁵ A. Mingana, *Narsai Homiliae et Carmina*, Mossoul, 1905, vol 1, pp. 281-282.

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 361-62.

a presumption in favour of its having belonged to the original common core.²⁷

As we have seen

- a) The Common Core theory lacks any concrete basis.
- b) The Isaian Sanctus should have belonged to A&M at the moment of its passage to the Maronite tradition, which did not require any modification of the Incipit of the Anaphora: "Glory to You" as preserved in Sharrar. At the moment of that passage (A.D. 410, as we shall see), the neotestamentarian addition (Hosanna-Benedictus) had not yet made its way into the general structure of the anaphoras, as indicated by the anaphora of the *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII, 12: 27 (A.D. 380) and by Narsai.
- c) After the passage of A&M to the Maronite tradition, the insertion of the Hosanna-Benedictus pericope, independently implemented by both Mesopotamian and Maronite Churches, prompted each of them, on its own, to make the needed adjustment to the original text. That is the reason behind the different patching in the two anaphoras.

The Addition and Modification in the Second Section's

This second anaphoral section has remained basically unchanged since its early formulation, except for the Incipit, the cause and circumstance of which we have just shown.

The Additions and Modifications in the Third Section

a) The Epiclesis:

The Epiclesis of A&M is clearly according to the "Maranatha" form (Come O Lord) of 1 Cor 16:22, as well as in the *Didache* 10 in connection with the eucharist. In fact, as the "coming" of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin effected the conception of the Savior, similarly here the Spirit is invoked to "come" do what Christ did at the Last Supper when he "blessed" the bread and wine so that they became for us the food for the new life in the kingdom of heaven. It is also to be noticed that the text of Peter III, especially if we consider the variants in the manuscripts, remains very close to that of Addai and Mari.

²⁷ Gelston, *The Eucharistic Prayer* (note 2 above), p.88.

The introduction of the Isaian Qaddysh into the anaphora of A&M, then the addition of the developed Epiclesis text, may have happened in two different moments of history, but in the context of our present research we can consider them here as belonging to the second stratum (before A.D. 340) in the development of our anaphora.

Putting the validity of our considerations again to the test, let us see if the resulting text of our Second Stratum presents a coherent texture:

SECOND STRATUM OF A&M

Section I

a) Glory to you, the adorable Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who created the world in his grace and its inhabitants in his compassion, has redeemed mankind in his mercy and has effected great grace toward mortals.

b) Your majesty, O Lord, a thousand thousands of heavenly beings worship, and myriad myriads of angels, hosts of spiritual beings, ministers of fire and spirit, with cherubim and holy seraphim, glorify your name, crying out and glorifying:

c) Holy, Holy, Holy, God almighty. Heaven and earth are full of his glories.

II Section

d) We give thanks to you, O Lord, we your lowly, weak and wretched servants, because you have effected in us a great grace which cannot be repaid, in that you put on our humanity so as to quicken us by your divinity, you lifted up our poor estate, you righted our fall, and you raised up our mortality. And you forgave our debts. You justified our sinfulness and you enlightened our understanding and you, our Lord and God have vanquished our enemies and made triumphant the lowliness of our weak nature, through the abounding compassion of your grace.

e) And for all your benefits and graces toward us we offer you glory and honor and thanksgiving and adoration now and all times for ever and ever. Amen.

Section III

f) You, Lord, through your unspeakable mercies make, in the commemoration of your Christ, a gracious remembrance of all the upright and just fathers who have pleased you, the prophets, apostles, martyrs and confessors, bishops and priests and deacons, and of all the children of the holy catholic Church, who have been marked with the mark of holy baptism.

h) And grant us your tranquillity and your peace all the days of the world, that all the inhabitants of the earth may know you, that you alone are the true God and Father, and that you have sent our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, and he, our Lord and our God, taught us through his life-giving gospel all the purity and holiness.

k) And May he come, O Lord, your Holy Spirit and rest upon this oblation of your servants and bless it and hallow it, that it may be to us O Lord for the pardon of debts, the forgiveness of sins, and a great hope of resurrection from the dead and a new life in the kingdom of heaven with all who have been pleasing before you.

l) And for all your wonderful economy for us, we give you thanks and glorify you unceasingly in your church, redeemed by the precious blood of your Christ, with open mouths and uncovered faces, as we offer up praise, honor, thanksgiving and adoration, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

The text presented here as the second stratum is a marvelous euchology. It has maintained its apostolic originality and adapted itself wonderfully to the development of theology. That was, in my estimation, the liturgy that sustained a heroic Church in her faithfulness to Christ during the pains of the 4th century in the Persian Empire.

THE THIRD STRATUM

What I call the third stratum is the accepted and well known text of A&M that we can find in all the ancient manuscript rituals, a text W. Macomber edited critically in 1964.²⁸ This is the end result of the textual development of the principal Mesopotamian eucharistic prayer, a development that was mostly well done, but partially not so well done, as we will see. But we have to distinguish two moments in the development of this stratum: the first is concerned with the formulation of an explicit connection between the eucharistic act of the Church and the Last Supper of the Lord, the second is related to the addition of the Osanna-Benedictus segment to the Sanctus in the first section of the Anaphora, and the textual adjustment that required. We have already reviewed the latter. Now we will focus on the first.

A) *The Connection with the Last Supper*

The third section of A&M in its third stratum version is a most complicated one. It has confused and puzzled the scholars, and rendered futile many attempts to resolve it. The major points that have confused the whole section are two. Both points have one concern: to confirm and expand the connection between the act of the Church

²⁸ See note 6 above.

and the Last Supper, i.e. to show that the Church is doing as Christ ordered her to do: not only "to commemorate" a historic Christ, but also to offer *hic et nunc* his sacrifice. Here is how this concept was inserted into the anaphora:

a) At the beginning of this third section (paragraph f), taking advantage of the pericope that commemorates Christ and his Church, the reviser found a fitting opportunity to expand the commemoration in order to include "the body and blood of your Christ which we offer to you upon your pure and holy altar as you have taught us" (paragraph g). The character of this insertion reveals itself to the analytical eye, because:

1) it is not according to the biblical or liturgical style to "commemorate the body and blood of Christ," but to commemorate in the Eucharist Christ himself, mentioning the events of his saving passion, death, and resurrection;

2) the new insertion interrupts the flow of the commemoration of the Fathers at its beginning. Therefore, we can observe that the reviser, unwilling to waste or destroy any part of the original commemorative pericope, tries to patch the sliced segment and relocates it at the end of the following paragraph, where a composition opportunity presented itself, i.e. after "taught us in his holy gospel all the purity and holiness," thus completing by this recuperation the original diptychs. But, by doing so he confuses the limpid meaning and accuracy of the latter sentence.

b) By composing a new paragraph (paragraph "j" in the table), that dedicates itself to expressing the linkage between the act of the Church and the institution by Christ, styling it as an introduction to the Epiclesis. That is the reason for the absence in this paragraph of any verb in the present tense. In fact, this paragraph is conceived in connection with the subsequent Epiclesis, in the following manner: "As we commemorate you, Lord Jesus, according to your 'typical example,' let your Holy Spirit come ...," eliminating the letter "Waw" from "let come" to form a continuous discourse.

B) *Hasty Composition and Patchwork*

While these additions established the connection with the Last Supper and explicitly expressed the offering act of the Church, the patching procedure and the newly composed text of this particular

anamnesis created serious problems in regard to both the diptychs segment as well as to the quasi-anamnesis.

1) In regard to the diptychs:

The diptychs were cut from the Memorial segment of this section then patched into the following Supplication for Peace, distorting both paragraphs, the one from which they were excised and the one into which they were interpolated. Furthermore, the address of this section lost its original direction and became confused, changing the addressee from the Father ("of your Christ") to the Son ("As you have taught us"), then back to the Father ("You have sent our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son").

Based on these considerations, we may feel ready to attempt the restoration of the original tenure of the diptychs. Thus, by putting the original text back together, we can see clearly a fluent formulation of content:

Lord, in your manifold and ineffable mercies, make, in the commemoration of Your Christ, a gracious remembrance for all the upright and just fathers who did please you, the prophets and apostles, the martyrs and confessors, the bishops, the priests, and the deacons, and of all the children of the holy catholic Church who have been signed with the sign of holy baptism.

2) In regard to the quasi-anamnesis:

Understandably, the short addition inserted in the diptychs could not deal adequately with the concern of the reviser. Therefore a new paragraph ("J") was composed, dedicated solely to connecting the act of the Church to the prototype that originated from the Lord. Here again, the weaknesses are evident and serious:

- a) The quasi-anamnesis, styled as a linkage with the Last Supper from one side and with the following Epiclesis from the other, though containing wonderful and genuine eucharistical elements, is not well constructed in itself. After stating the reception "by tradition the example (*tupsa*) which is from you," it continues with a flow of verbs without a clear order; "while rejoicing, glorifying and magnifying, commemorating and praising and performing...." I think that this sentence could have been better arranged.
- b) Furthermore, all the above-mentioned verbs are in the adverbial tense. It looks like the intent of the reviser was to connect the quasi-anamnesis with the following Epiclesis which has the verb

"and let come" in the present tense. That intent required grammatically the elimination of the letter "waw" (= and) from the incipit of the Epiclesis making it "let come," and becoming thus the principal verb of the sentence. In fact, the Mar Isha'ya text, edited by Macomber, has it without the "waw."

- c) But the most serious problem created by the addition of this paragraph is the confusion it produces concerning the one to whom this paragraph itself as well as the whole of this section is addressed. From its incipit the paragraph changes the original addressee from the Father to the Son ("... we... gathered together in your name... have received the example which is from you"), then turns back again to the Father at the end of the paragraph ("performing the mystery of the passion... of our Lord Jesus Christ").

C) *The redaction with the third stratum and its transmission to the Maronites*

The Mesopotamian Fathers, in order to update their anaphora, had considered sufficient the insertion of an explicit linkage with the Last Supper at the beginning of the third section, enforced by the composition of a new paragraph in the sense of an anamnesis. The later Maronites, living in the theological and liturgical atmosphere of Antioch, were understandably concerned by the difference in pattern between A&M, their adopted anaphora, and the rest of the Antiochian anaphoras they used, almost all of them having the Institution Narrative within their text. They felt the need, therefore, to conform the Mesopotamian anaphora to the common pattern of western anaphoras by the insertion of the Institution Narrative.

Nevertheless, both the Mesopotamian and the Maronite Fathers recognized the particularity of the Mesopotamian pattern and knew exactly in what part of their anaphora the linkage with the founding Supper of the Lord should have been made: not in first section, within the theological celebration, according to the Antiochian pattern, but in the third, where the commemorations are made. The Maronite reviser, in fact, carried on at exactly the same spot retouched by the Mesopotamian Fathers, and expanded the same concept expressed by them, that the oblation of the Church is done "as You have taught us," completing it by the insertion of the Institution Narrative. Then the reviser returned to recuperate the sliced segment of the diptychs, introducing it with the sentence: "We offer you, O Lord, this oblation in memory of all the upright and just fathers: the prophets

and apostles, the martyrs and confessors..." etc. Consequently, inserting the Institution Narrative, rendered the so-called anamnesis (paragraph "j") redundant, and it was therefore eliminated. Also the paragraph ("h") invoking peace had to be reformulated. The fact is that the "anamnesis" of A&M is not lacking in Peter III, but has been substituted by the Institution Narrative.

THE SEARCH FOR AN EXPLANATION

The confusion existing in the third section of A&M in its actual status as exposed above, contrasts sharply with the clearly conceived theological structure of the Anaphora. Why and how did that happen? Surely, the Fathers of the Mesopotamian Church knew quite well their own Aramaic language and produced in fact a liturgy that is a treasure of the Church universal. Why, then, is this section of their anaphora so confused? It reflects, indeed, the condition of someone working hastily, under pressure, in response to an urgent request. Can we identify a historic moment when that kind of ecclesial circumstance actually happened?

A Synodal Text in the Historical Context

In the year 313 Constantine, directly after winning under the banner of the cross his battle at the Milvian Bridge, triumphantly entered Rome. Shortly afterwards, gradually but inexorably, the Roman Empire would opt for Christianity first as its favored, then as its official religion. While Christians celebrated their freedom in the West, Christians of the East became the scapegoat for the military misfortunes of the Persian Empire, and were forced to curtail their relations with their brothers in the West. Theological studies and liturgical development came to a halt. Survival in faithfulness to Christ became the imperative of Church shepherds.

Following the martyrdom of three successive chief hierarchs, Mar Shim'on Bar Sabba'e († 341), Mar Shahdost († 343), and Mar Barba' Shmin († 346), the see of Seleucia remained vacant for about forty years (348-388), until the death of Shapur II and the installation of Behram IV. Immediately after, Tomarsa was elected to the see of Seleucia. His major task was the healing of broken hearts and rebuilding of destroyed churches. He was succeeded by Qayyuma, an elderly leader who resigned shortly after his election in favor of an energetic organizer, Mar Isaac.

Yazdegerd and His Era

Yazdegerd was installed on the Sassanid throne in 399 A.D. The advent of his reign was an occasion for good-will exchanges between the two superpowers of the time. Arcadius of Byzantium sent to the newly installed emperor a delegation of well-wishers headed by a bishop from the Mesopotamian frontier: Marutha of Mayferqat, who possessed recognized medical skills in addition to diplomatic manners. These qualities plus his Aramaic culture were all quite useful in fulfilling his embassy with great success, not only with the Shahinshah but also toward the Church of his empire.

Western Support

As soon as religious liberty had been guaranteed to Christianity in the Constantinian era, Christians of the West showed interest and concern for their brothers in the Persian Empire. Eusebius of Caesarea reports in his *Life of Constantine* (IV, 9-13)²⁹ the content of the letter that Emperor Constantine wrote to Shapur regarding the protection of Christians within his empire.

While the schools of Nisibis and Edessa were, at this junction of history, an active and efficient point of encounter and communion between western and eastern Christianity, it was an official synod of the Church of the East that presented a formal setting for the Bishop of Seleucia and Catholicos of the East to undertake the task of the reorganization of ecclesiastic life in the Persian Empire, to be sought in unity and harmony with the Western Church in all matters: theological, liturgical, and administrative. That was the Synod of Mar Isaac in A.D. 410.

The Synod of Mar Isaac

The Occasion

A letter, to the Shahinshah Yazdegerd was entrusted to Mar Marutha, written by the bishops of Syria and Upper Mesopotamia: Porphyrius, Bishop-Catholicos of Antioch, Acacius, Bishop of Aleppo, Peqidha Bishop of Urhay, Eusebius Bishop of Tella, and Acacius Bishop of Amida. Marutha showed the letter to the Bishop of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, the Catholicos Mar Isaac, and "with one accord and one perfect will they translated the letter from the Greek tongue to the Per-

²⁹ PG 20, col. 1157-1161.

sian, and it was read before the victorious and illustrious King of Kings."³⁰

The Subject Matter

From the favorable reaction of the king to the letter we may divine its contents. The Shahinshah reportedly said at the reading of the letter: "East and West are but one authority in the dominion of my kingdom."³¹ The implied meaning is that Christianity in the East, within his empire, should be ruled by the same laws as in the West. Thus the King recognized the validity of ecclesiastic law that was legislated in the Roman Empire in regard to his own Christian subjects. That was doubtless the request of the "Western Fathers."

The aim of Mar Marutha as delegate of the Western Fathers was more explicit: "He concerned himself with the restoration of the churches of Christ the Lord, and was assiduous that the laws, divine ordinances, upright and trustworthy canons which had been established in the West by our honored fathers, the bishops, might also be established in the East, as an edifice of steadfastness and truth for the people of God."³²

A great synod was convoked under the patronage of the King of kings, and consequently, forty bishops gathered together at the cathedral of Seleucia on Jan 6, 410. During the first and following sessions, the acts of the synod included:

- a) Communion of Faith The synod accepted the Nicean profession of faith, including it within the acts of the synod.
- b) Canonical Unity
The code of canons that Marutha brought with him from the west was read, approved by the fathers of the synod, and signed.
- c) Liturgical Unity, expressed in several canons, here is the one that concerns our subject:

Thirteenth Canon: concerning the ordinances and canons which are appropriate to the liturgy, and to the Holy Mysteries, and to the glorious feasts of our Savior.

Also, the western liturgy which 'Is-haq and Marutha the bishops taught us and all of us saw them celebrating here in the church of Seleucia, henceforth we shall celebrate ourselves in like manner. The dea-

³⁰ Synodicon Orientale, p. 19 of the Aramaic text, Ln 2-4.

³¹ Ibid., p. 19, ln. 8-9

³² Ibid., p. 18, ln. 19-22.

cons in every city shall proclaim the proclamation like this, and the Scriptures shall be read thus, and the pure and holy oblation shall be offered upon one altar in all the churches, and the argument of that (*d-haw*) ancient memory shall no longer exist among us. The oblation shall no longer be offered from house to house.³³

1) So after a century of isolation from the Western Fathers in the Roman Empire the Church of the East saw it was time to update her theology, canon-law, and liturgy. She accepted the updating quite willingly. In liturgical matters, to be able to call a liturgy "Western Liturgy," it should have included at least some changes in the customary liturgical usage of the East. We are informed by the Acts of the Synod that the Catholicos Mar Ishaq and the Delegate of the Western Fathers Mar Marutha, after having instructed the bishops about the changes to be introduced into the Eastern liturgy, celebrated that "westernized" liturgy in the Cathedral. Seemingly, the new elements should have been of theological importance to be given so much relevance.

2) From the report of the synod, it is evident that the liturgy celebrated in the Cathedral of Kokhe was a solemn Holy Mass, therefore, the "westernized" liturgy should have included the anaphora among the usages that were brought into line with liturgical developments in the West.

We have to remember here that we are talking about the year 410, and that the Synod of Mar Isaac is the first official encounter between the hierarchy of the Church of the East and a western hierarch after almost a century of isolation. It was also an encounter that had been well prepared from the side of Mar Marutha, a person quite knowledgeable and much concerned about the fate of Christianity across the border from his diocese. Those were the years when the anaphora of the *Apostolic Tradition* had been long ago formulated, when the *Apostolic Constitutions* with their ideal-anaphora were edited, and when the *liturgy of St. James* was composed and became the model eucharistic prayer for Jerusalem and Antioch. In all of these formularies the narrative of the eucharistic institution found a solid

³³ Ibid, p. 27, ln. 3-11 (the underlining is mine). The sentence — close to the end of the previous text — "and the argument of *that* ancient memory shall no longer exist among us" is a literal translation of a text that lacks clarity. It is not indicated to what "ancient memory" the Fathers are referring to. Grammatically, if we consider the dot on top of the Syriac pronoun "Haw" (meaning "that") to be a copist's error and place the dot under the same pronoun, making the text to read "Hu" (meaning "it is" or "this is," the sentence would read as follows: "and the argument that 'this is [a usage of] ancient memory' shall no longer exist among us," then the meaning is clear.

place in the structural heart of every anaphora, establishing a clear connection with the Last Supper and consequently with its scriptural Locus Theologicus.

But A&M was left as it was since the beginning of the third century. Expectedly, Mar Marutha should have brought the attention of Mar Isaac to the matter and the need for adjustment. From the Acts of the Synod, it seems that there was resistance from the part of bishops toward any modification of the text, arguing that what they had was "of ancient memory." Nevertheless, the willingness of the Catholicos to come close to the Western Fathers and what the delegate represented prevailed. Under pressure, hastily as we see the circumstances of the synod, the bishops agreed to use uniformly a modified, or so-called "Western," version of their anaphora, as formulated in those circumstances.

3) Expectedly, Mar Marutha, the delegate of the Western Fathers, had to communicate the result of his embassy to his brother bishops of the frontier. Expectedly as well, he would have showed them a copy of the anaphora in its modified version. It appears that the Fathers of the Maronite Church liked the Eastern anaphora and decided to use it, making it part of their own liturgical patrimony. At a later period, they would adjust it to the pattern that became common in their usage, thus inserting the Narrative. In due time they would insert as well the Osanna-Benedictus with its introduction, and later still they would add the intercessions in line with the rest of their Antiochian Anaphoras.

If Mar Maron, the acclaimed Father of the Maronite Church, is the same historic figure to which John Chrysostome wrote a letter between A.D. 404 and 407,³⁴ and if he is as well the same ascetic monk about whom Teodoret († 458), the disciple of Theodore of Mopsuestia, wrote a short biography in his *Historia Religiosa*,³⁵ then he would fit quite well in the historic period and geographic sphere of Mar Marutha, and so the passage of A&M to the Maronite Church may find in him a suitable explanation.

CONCLUSIONS

1) As far as the structure of A&M is concerned, we have accounted for every section and every paragraph and word of our anaphora, resorting only to what is known from the general history of eucharistic

³⁴ PG 52, 630.

³⁵ PG 82, 1279-1495.

prayer, the particularity of A&M in the context of the history of the Mesopotamian Church. We have dealt with the text of A&M as it is found in the most ancient manuscripts, without need for any putative and non-existent Urtext or Common Core, and without the need to reconstruct any hypothetically missing paragraph or segment foreign to the actual text itself.

2) The summary of our conclusion is this: A&M is a eucharistic prayer that preserves the mark of the apostolic era, and reflects the same basic structure of Birkat Ha-Mazon in its paschal context. It reveals in its consecutive strata the layers of development of eucharistic euchology in the early liturgy. Peter III is A&M itself, adopted in its third stratum version, then modified by the Maronite Fathers to include the narrative of eucharistic institution and other Antiochian features.

3) This conclusion is not only of relevance to the Chaldean liturgy, especially in the prospect of a liturgical reform, but also to the history of the Assyro-Chaldean Church of the East as a whole, where this eucharistic prayer is still very much in use, because it adds a liturgical argument in favor of the apostolicity of the Mesopotamian Church, the Assyro-Chaldean Church of the East. It shows as well the originality of its liturgical usages as being in direct connection with Jerusalem, independently of Antioch. Therefore, the attribution to Addai and Mari, the Apostles of the East, is not to be considered a mere honorary title.

4) The uncovering of the first stratum of this "*gemma orientale*" may be even useful for the exegetical study of the Last Supper biblical narrative, because of its connection with the apostolic era and the Jewish formulas of banquet blessings.

The Quddasha of the Apostles Addai and Mari is a blessing not only to the heirs of that apostolic legacy but to the whole Church universal. Therefore, the recent recognition by the Holy See of the validity of the eucharistic consecration by this venerated anaphora is a tribute to its genuine value since apostolic times.³⁶

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³⁶ Pontificio Consiglio per la Promozione dell'Unità dei Cristiani, "Orientamenti per l'ammissione all'Eucaristia fra la Chiesa Caldea e la Chiesa Assira dell'Oriente," *Osservatore Romano*, 26 ottobre 2001, p. 7. See also C. Giraud, "Addai e Mari, l'anaphora della Chiesa d'Oriente: "ortodossa" anche senza le parole istituzionali," *Rivista Liturgica* 89 (2002) 205-215.