

THE ORIGIN OF THE ANAPHORA OF NESTORIUS: GREEK OR SYRIAC?

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The Church of the East uses three anaphoras in its eucharistic liturgy, named respectively those of Addai and Mari, Theodore and Nestorius. The last of these is the longest, and is used on only five occasions in the year: Epiphany, the Friday of John the Baptist, the Memorial of the Greek Doctors, the Wednesday of the Rogation of the Ninevites and Maundy Thursday. What, if any, connection it has with Nestorius himself is uncertain. The purpose of the present article is to explore one aspect of the question of the provenance of this anaphora: was it originally composed in Greek or in Syriac?

The Evidence of the Colophons

The Syriac MS 19 in the John Rylands University Library is an East Syrian priest's manual, containing the text of all three anaphoras. Those of Theodore and Nestorius are prefaced by colophons, purporting to give some information about the origin of these anaphoras. The colophon for the Anaphora of Nestorius reads:

And with the help of our Lord Jesus Christ we begin to write the Hallowing of Mar Nestorius, the Patriarch of Byzantium, which is the city of Constantinople, a confessor, and one persecuted for the truth of the orthodox faith. Mar Aba the great Catholikos of blessed memory, when he went into the Roman Empire, rendered (ܐܘܨܘܢܐ) the Hallowing of Mar Nestorius and all his writings from Greek into Syriac, as Mar John the Catholikos informs us in the *memra* which he composed on the Fathers.¹

The earliest colophon reflecting this tradition of which I am aware is that of Cambridge Add. 2046 B, fo. 123^v. It recurs in a number of other manuscripts. The colophon for the Anaphora of Theodore should also be cited:

With the help of our Lord Jesus Christ we begin to write the Hallowing of Mar Theodore the Interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, Bishop of Mopsuestia, which Mar Aba the Catholikos rendered (ܐܘܨܘܢܐ) and translated (ܐܘܨܘܢܐ) from Greek into

¹ Rylands Syriac MS 19, fo. 42^v.

Syriac when he went up to Constantinople. And he brought it out (ܫܘܪܝܘܢܐ) with him by the help of Mar Thoma of Edessa the teacher.²

On the surface these colophons preserve a simple tradition. The two anaphoras were composed in Greek and used in Constantinople. Mar Aba experienced their use on his visit to Constantinople, and produced a Syriac version so as to introduce them into the eucharistic worship of the East Syrian Church. In the case of the Anaphora of Theodore we are told that he did this with the help of Mar Thoma of Edessa, and in that of the Anaphora of Nestorius that the information is derived from the *memra* on the Fathers composed by Mar John the Catholicos. Unfortunately the matter is not so simple as it appears.

When we examine the evidence of the colophons themselves we find obscurities both in the historical references and in the actual interpretation of the terms used, particularly the verb ܫܘܪܝܘܢܐ. Webb³ points out that Mar Aba was catholicos between 540 and 552 A.D., while Mar Thoma of Edessa died in 533. This would imply that the translations into Syriac were made around 530. Spinks⁴ is even more circumspect: 'A date in the second or third decades of the sixth century perhaps suggests itself'. He goes on to point out that, if Narsai's Homily XVII does contain allusions to these anaphoras, the anaphoras themselves must have been in existence in some form in the fifth century. Unfortunately, as Webb also points out, the identity (and therefore also the date) of Mar John the Catholicos is uncertain, and his *memra* on the Fathers is no longer extant. It is impossible, therefore to assess the historicity of the evidence on which this tradition is based.

Much uncertainty also attaches to the interpretation of the word ܫܘܪܝܘܢܐ, which is used in both colophons. I have already given some preliminary consideration to the possible senses of this word in the colophon to the Anaphora of Theodore in a previous article.⁵ In this colophon the word occurs twice, the first time in close connection with ܫܘܪܝܘܢܐ, which is a natural term for 'translate'. There is no doubt that ܫܘܪܝܘܢܐ also can mean 'render' or 'translate', and this

² Rylands Syriac MS 19, fo. 31^v. The translation of both colophons is mine, although based on the partial translations of J.F. Coakley, 'A catalogue of the Syriac manuscripts in the John Rylands Library', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 75 (1993), 105–207 (140–1). In both cases I have omitted the final statement detailing the occasions when the anaphora is used. I gratefully acknowledge the help of the staff of the John Rylands University Library in granting me access to this manuscript, and supplying a photocopy of the catalogue entry for it.

³ D. Webb, 'The Anaphora of Theodore the Interpreter', *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 104 (1990), 3–22 (6).

⁴ B.D. Spinks, 'Eucharistic offering in the East Syrian anaphoras', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 50 (1984), 347–71 (355), reprinted in B.D. Spinks, *Worship: prayers from the East* (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1993), 65–88 (71).

⁵ 'Theodore of Mopsuestia: the Anaphora and *Mystagogical Catechesis* 16', *Studia Patristica*, 26 (1993), 21–34 (21–2).

is perhaps the most natural understanding of it in the colophon to the Anaphora of Nestorius, where it occurs in close connection with the phrase 'from Greek into Syriac'. If we interpret it in the same sense in its first occurrence in the colophon to the Anaphora of Theodore, it is virtually a synonym of ܘܡܝܢܘܢܝܢ. It is less easy to see the meaning of the phrase 'with him' if ܘܡܝܢܘܢܝܢ is understood in this same sense 'render' or 'translate' in its second occurrence in the colophon to the Anaphora of Theodore. In my previous study I suggested that the word 'is used the first time in the sense of bringing out or promulgating the anaphora, and the second time in the more literal sense of bringing it back home with him from Constantinople'. I also mentioned the possibility that it might indicate that Mar Aba himself 'produced' the anaphora, as had been suggested by Botte and Spinks. Undoubtedly the simplest interpretation is that Mar Aba brought the Anaphora of Theodore back with him from Constantinople and translated it into Syriac, but this leaves unresolved the problem of the possible earlier reference to it by Narsai. In the case of the colophon to the Anaphora of Nestorius, as we have seen, the most natural interpretation is that it refers to the translation of the anaphora and Nestorius's other writings from Greek into Syriac.

The Conclusions of Recent Studies

In the light of the evidence of the colophons it is hardly surprising that most scholars have concluded that these two anaphoras were indeed originally composed in Greek, and only later translated into Syriac when they were imported for use in the East Syrian Church. Spinks⁶ affirms that the Anaphora of Nestorius 'is certainly a translation from Greek'. It is striking, then, to find that the recent detailed studies of Vadakkal on the Anaphora of Theodore and Naduthadam on that of Nestorius⁷ have both reached the firm conclusion that the respective anaphoras were not translated from Greek but composed originally in Syriac.

Vadakkal⁸ summarizes the reasons why he finds the prevalent general understanding of the Anaphora of Theodore as a translation from Greek to Syriac to be untenable:

Firstly, the AT presents the genuine Syriac style without the uneasiness and general vagueness of a translation. Secondly, the constant use of 'and' (ܘ) without splitting

⁶ B.D. Spinks, 'The East Syrian Anaphora of Theodore: reflections upon its sources and theology', *Ephemerides Liturgicae*, 103 (1989), 441-55 (447), reprinted in his *Prayers from the East*, 47-64 (53).

⁷ J. Vadakkal, *The East Syrian Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies India Publications, 1989); S. Naduthadam, 'L'Anaphore de Mar Nestorius' (Institut Catholique de Paris, doctoral thesis, 1992, as yet unpublished). I gratefully acknowledge the help of Dr P. de Clerck in obtaining a photocopy of part of this thesis.

⁸ Vadakkal, *Theodore*, 248.

different ideas into different sentences, the omission of the verb 'to be' in some cases and the verbal changes from third person to second person – a feature common to semitic languages – indicate its East Syrian origin. Thirdly, the close similarity of the Phil 2, 5–7 used in the third g'hāntā with the Pschitta version also marks its Syriac composition rather than a Greek translation.

Vadakkel in fact believes that Mar Aba is the most probable author of the Anaphora of Theodore.⁹

Naduthadam similarly favours the view that the Anaphora of Nestorius was originally composed in Syriac:¹⁰ 'Il n'y a pas de preuve suffisante pour dire que c'est une traduction du grec. Jusqu'à présent, aucun texte originel n'a été retrouvé. De plus le texte ne se montre pas sous les traits d'une traduction'. He draws attention to the close affinities of this anaphora with the other East Syrian anaphoras. He comes to the conclusion:¹¹ 'Tout cela nous permettrait de dire que Mar Nest. est une composition syrienne orientale'. He then draws attention to the possible allusions to the anaphora by Narsai, and to the presence of Antiochene and Byzantine elements in the anaphora. On the other hand the anaphora has been revised to include later elements. His final conclusion about the authorship of the anaphora is stated thus:¹² 'C'est ici que nous pourrions indiquer le travail de Mar Aba. Ce serait lui qui l'aurait révisée. L'anaphore actuelle serait donc une composition de Mar Aba'.

If these conclusions are well founded, it seems improbable that these anaphoras are merely translations into Syriac of texts which already existed in their final form in Greek. Mar Aba's role seems to have been much more than that of a mere translator. It is possible that the truth behind the colophons is that some of the content of these anaphoras was derived from Greek sources, which Mar Aba may well have experienced during his visit to Constantinople. He was perhaps responsible for integrating these elements of Greek origin together with other elements of East Syrian origin into the final form of these anaphoras. This would account for their fundamentally East Syrian characteristics. This was essentially the view of Webb.¹³

Before we proceed further, however, it is worth pausing to evaluate the nature and relative strength of the arguments adduced in favour of the original composition of these anaphoras in Syriac. Not very much weight can be placed on Naduthadam's first argument, the fact that no Greek text of the Anaphora of Nestorius

⁹ Ibid., 249.

¹⁰ Naduthadam, 'Nestorius', 361.

¹¹ Ibid., 363.

¹² Ibid., 364.

¹³ D. Webb, 'Le sens de l'Anaphore de Nestorius', *Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae, Subsidia*, 27 (1982), 349–72 (362).

has been found. While the existence of a Greet text would naturally do much to substantiate the hypothesis of original composition in Greek, its absence hardly establishes the contrary. It might be purely a matter of chance. More probably, if these anaphoras were associated with the names of Theodore and Nestorius, it is readily understandable that they would find acceptance and use only in the Christian community which revered their memory, that is, the Church of the East. This would also readily explain the failure of any Greek originals to survive.

Naduthadam's second argument is similar to Vadakkal's first, that neither anaphora bears the obvious marks of being a translation. This is closely connected with Vadakkal's second argument, which draws attention to some of the stylistic features of the Anaphora of Theodore which suggest its original composition in Syriac. This argument carries considerable weight, but is not ultimately conclusive. The rejoinder could be made that the better the quality of the translation the less apparent would be the fact that it was a translation at all. If the colophons are to be trusted, the translation was being made into Mar Aba's own language. Moreover there already existed within the East Syrian Church traditional liturgical and theological terminology that was ultimately derived from Greek expressions but had been fully assimilated within Syriac. Once again it would be easier to prove that the texts were translated from Greek if a clear example could be found either of a mistranslation or of an expression that was natural in Greek but not in Syriac. The very quality of the translation, however, might make it impossible to prove the reverse.

Naduthadam's main argument consists of the affinities which exist between the Anaphora of Nestorius and the other East Syrian anaphoras, although he readily concedes the presence of Antiochene and Byzantine elements as well. Two of the most important details he adduces are the shape and structure of the anaphora, and certain specific components: the opening dialogue, Sanctus and Epiclesis. This is an important area of research, into which we cannot go further here. It is, however, worth pointing out that, if the Anaphora of Nestorius were an original Greek composition, its acceptance for use in the East Syrian Church would probably require adaptation in precisely these details. Congregational participation would necessitate it at least in the case of the opening dialogue and Sanctus. What Naduthadam has succeeded in demonstrating is that the actual Anaphora of Nestorius is a genuine East Syrian anaphora, and not merely a translation of a Greek text. That does not, however, preclude the possibility that much of its content may be derived from a Greek source. It simply underlines the role of Mar Aba as that of editor rather than purely translator, if we follow the tradition enshrined in the colophons.

It is Vadakkal's third and last argument that indicates a possible

way forward. He points to the use of Philippians 2:5–7 in the Anaphora of Theodore, and shows its close similarity with the Peshitta version. This raises the whole question of biblical citations and allusions in the anaphoras. Here we have another possible criterion by which to assess the question whether these anaphoras are translations from the Greek. Once again it would prove easier to demonstrate that they were originally composed in Greek than the contrary case. One would need only to find a few examples where clear references are made to biblical passages in cases where the Peshitta is significantly different from the Greek text. If the citations in the anaphora agreed with the Greek text against the Peshitta, this would create a strong presumption that they were actually composed in Greek, and that the translator either failed to recognize the biblical source or felt constrained to remain faithful to the Greek form of the text. If, on the other hand, the biblical citations or allusions agreed with the Peshitta against the Greek text, this would create some presumption in favour of original composition in Syriac. The argument would, however, be less conclusive, since a translator might have felt it appropriate to assimilate such biblical material to the form familiar in the Bible of his own worshipping community.

In reviewing the arguments of Vadakkal and Naduthadam it has been pointed out in each case that it would be methodologically easier to demonstrate the hypothesis of a Greek original than the opposite hypothesis that the two anaphoras were originally composed in Syriac. This is not a criticism of the arguments of Vadakkal and Naduthadam, but merely a recognition that it is inherently more difficult to prove the correctness of their hypothesis than to disprove it. The actual evidence requires careful evaluation, and we have always to be aware that it can often be interpreted in more than one way. The absence of strong evidence in favour of translation from Greek must add support to the hypothesis of original composition in Syriac. It is the last argument reviewed above, that concerning the biblical allusions within the text of the anaphoras, that promises to lead to more positive conclusions than the others.

The Evidence of the Biblical Citations

At this point we need to take note of an important recent study by Yousif,¹⁴ in which he adduces further evidence in support of Vadakkal's thesis that the Anaphora of Theodore is genuinely East Syrian. In a brief examination of Greek loan-words he has no difficulty in explaining them as either technical terms (such as the adjective 'catholic' and the names of some dignitaries, e.g.

¹⁴ P. Yousif, 'The Anaphora of Mar Theodore: East Syrian; further evidences', *Studia Anselmiana*, 110, *Analecra Liturgica*, 17 (1993), 571–91.

‘episkopos’) or words which are already syriacized and used in the Syriac Bible. A further section adduces examples of Syriac style in the wording of the anaphora.

Then follows an important section,¹⁵ in which Yousif examines the biblical citations in the anaphora. He prefaces this study by demonstrating how the Peshiṭta translation of the Letter to the Hebrews follows the Greek text of the quotations from the Psalms, and does not conform these quotations to the text of the Peshiṭta Psalter. He argues that, if the anaphora were translated from a Greek text, the biblical citations in it would similarly agree with the Greek text of the citations in the original anaphora and not be conformed to the Syriac Bible. This does not necessarily follow, *pace* Yousif, since a particular translator might be sensitive to the biblical citations, and feel it desirable to conform their text to that of the Bible familiar to his own worshipping community, particularly in a text being adapted for use in worship within that community. It is, nevertheless, a reasonable working hypothesis, and it is largely borne out by the results of Yousif’s examination of the biblical citations.

The examination is restricted to the more important and more literal citations, excluding those in common with the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, where assimilation to the form of citation in that anaphora might be expected. In general the citations are found to agree with the Peshiṭta, but in most cases there is no significant difference between the Syriac and Greek texts. Yousif explicates the difference between the Greek and Syriac texts of Philippians 2:6–7, already adduced by Vadakkal. In the remaining citations he detects two where the Peshiṭta diverges from the Greek text. In Romans 4:25 the final phrase ‘for our justification’ is rendered in the Peshiṭta by a clause: ‘in order that he might justify us’. In Hebrews 7:25 the Greek verb ‘to save’ is rendered characteristically in the Peshiṭta by ‘to give life’. In both of these passages the anaphora follows the Syriac rather than the Greek text. No instance, on the other hand, is found of the anaphora agreeing with the Greek text of a biblical citation in a passage where it differs from the Peshiṭta.

The most remarkable passage in Yousif’s analysis is one where the anaphora differs from an agreed reading of the Greek and Syriac texts. This occurs within the Institution Narrative, in the citation of 1 Corinthians 11:25, where the biblical text reads ‘whenever you drink’, but the anaphora replaces the word ‘drink’ by ‘gather’. Yousif points out that, apart from this one modification, the anaphora follows the text of the Peshiṭta, but he makes no further comment on this singular reading. It is true that liturgical tradition tends to modify and amplify the text of the Institution Narrative, which is often in any case a conflation of more than one of the

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 576–81.

Institution Narratives in the New Testament.¹⁶ This particular reading, however, is attested in neither the biblical nor the rest of the liturgical tradition; in particular it is not found in the Anaphora of Nestorius. Where it is found is, significantly, within early Syriac tradition, in Aphrahat's Demonstration 12 *On the Pascha*¹⁷ and Ephrem's Sermon 4 *On Holy Week*.¹⁸ This reading, therefore, serves to strengthen still further the hypothesis that the anaphora was originally composed in Syriac.

Yousif concludes from his review of the biblical citations that the composer of the anaphora used the Syriac Bible in his quotations. If this conclusion is correct, it is a strong indication that the anaphora was originally composed in Syriac. Yousif proceeds in the last section of his article to examine East Syrian liturgical parallels with the Anaphora of Theodore, but this takes us beyond the scope of the present article. In a footnote¹⁹ he expresses his hope to make a similar study of the Anaphora of Nestorius. It will be interesting to compare his results with those offered here.

In our examination of the biblical citations and allusions in the Anaphora of Nestorius we may usefully begin by noting a few short phrases of scriptural origin that hardly amount to deliberate citations, and therefore hardly constitute evidence for the biblical text used by the composer of the anaphora. In the pre-Sanctus, for instance, the eucharistic sacrifice of praise is described as 'the spiritual fruit of our lips, a reasonable service'.²⁰ This represents a fusion of phrases from Hebrews 13:15 and Romans 12:1. A similar pastiche is found in the phrase 'the reasonable fruit of our lips'²¹ in the intercession for the departed in the Anaphora of Theodore. A few lines later in the Anaphora of Nestorius the Holy Spirit is described as 'he who proceeds from the Father',²² a phrase which is ultimately derived from John 15:26, but probably more immediately from the Nicene Creed.²³ Two further similar short phrases, both from 1 John 2:28 (though the second recurs in 4:17), may be cited from the intercessions in the Anaphora of Nestorius: 'that we may not be ashamed'²⁴ and 'openness of face'.²⁵ The second is used again in the Epiclesis.²⁶ None of these is a formal biblical citation,

¹⁶ See J. Jeremias, *The eucharistic words of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1966), chapter 3.

¹⁷ *Patrologia Syriaca* (Paris, 1894–1907), i. 517.

¹⁸ T.J. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones* (Mechliniae, 1882), i.425; also in CSCO 412, 32. I owe these references to Aphrahat and Ephrem to B. Botte, 'L'anaphore Chaldéenne des Apôtres', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 15 (1949), 259–76 (273–4).

¹⁹ Yousif, 'Theodore', 581–2 n. 40.

²⁰ J.E.Y. de Kelaita (ed.), *Taksa d-kahne d-'idta d-madnha* (Mosul: Assyrian Press of the Church of the East, 1928), 82.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 73; Vadakkal, *Theodore*, 71.

²² *Taksa*, 83.

²³ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

but they illustrate the extent to which the anaphoras are steeped in biblical phraseology.

Another group of biblical passages may be culled from a comparative study of anaphoral texts. The use of these is so common that they may be regarded as part of the common liturgical stock, and it is unlikely that the composers of anaphoras were consciously deriving them directly from the biblical text. The greeting at the beginning of the opening dialogue comes from 2 Corinthians 13:14. The Sanctus itself is a slightly modified version²⁷ of the seraphic hymn in Isaiah 6:3, while material from the same verse and from Daniel 7:10 is used in the introduction to the Sanctus. The Benedictus which follows it is derived from Matthew 21:9. Another stock phrase is to 'stand and minister before thee', based on Deuteronomy 10:8. It is used in the Anaphora of Nestorius in the introduction to the Epiclesis,²⁸ and in different contexts in the other East Syrian anaphoras.²⁹ Finally some of the phraseology of Isaiah 11:2 is used at the beginning of the Epiclesis itself. The three East Syrian anaphoras are similar but not identical in their use of this material, and, as we have seen, assimilation to the East Syrian tradition would have been expected here even in the case of translation of anaphoras from Greek into Syriac for use within the East Syrian worshipping community. It would be unwise to attempt to draw any conclusions from the text of the biblical material in these passages.

A further passage where biblical material is extensively used in what is essentially a liturgical text is the Institution Narrative. This is more complex than the other liturgical passages we have just reviewed. In the first place there is no Institution Narrative at all in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, and no Institution Narrative of a normal kind in the sixth-century fragment of an East Syrian anaphora edited by Connolly.³⁰ In the second place the Institution Narratives in the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius are quite different from each other in detail. There is no question here, therefore, of assimilation to a common East Syrian liturgical formula. The Anaphora of Nestorius is remarkable in particular for its statements that Jesus himself ate and drank the elements at the Last Supper. Naduthadam³¹ draws attention to the fact that the West Syrian Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles also mentions that Jesus drank of the cup.³² The wording, however, is different ('tasted'

²⁷ For details see my study *The eucharistic prayer of Addai and Mari* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 85–7.

²⁸ *Taksa*, 98.

²⁹ Gelston, *Addai and Mari*, 51; *Taksa*, 72; Vadakkel, *Theodore*, 68.

³⁰ A translation of the unusual Institution Narrative in this text may be found in my *Addai and Mari*, 75.

³¹ Naduthadam, 'Nestorius', 350.

³² *Anaphorae Syriacae* (Rome: Pontifical Institute of Oriental Studies, 1939–), i. 216:10.

rather than 'drank'); this anaphora makes no mention of Jesus eating the bread; and the two Institution Narratives are far too different for one to be regarded as the direct source of the other. Naduthadam refers to Rahmani³³ for further details of this tradition.

The Anaphora of Nestorius also makes fuller use of the material following the Institution Narrative in 1 Corinthians 11:23–25 than does the Anaphora of Theodore. It incorporates verse 26 immediately after the Narrative, with slight adaptations (adding 'from' before 'this bread' and 'this cup' in assimilation to the Peshitta text of verse 27, and putting the whole into the first person as if it belonged to the dominical words), but otherwise in agreement with the Peshitta text. It makes further use of verse 27 and of verses 29–30 in the prayer for the benefits of communion at the end of the Epiclesis,³⁴ but this is in the manner of paraphrase rather than of citation. The only slight piece of direct evidence for the use of the Syriac Bible in this passage is, therefore, the insertion of the word 'from' twice in the adaptation of 1 Corinthians 11:26.

Turning now to biblical passages that are used in more than one of the East Syrian anaphoras, we note first that there are none exclusively common to the anaphoras of Addai and Mari and of Nestorius. There are, however, several passages used in both the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius. Both, for instance, make use of the citation from Philippians 2:6–7 discussed by Yousif, although the citation in the Anaphora of Nestorius begins at a later point than that in the Anaphora of Theodore, and does not include the passage where the latter modifies the text. The Anaphora of Nestorius does, however, integrate the passage more directly into the prayer by substituting 'equality with thee' for 'equality with God', and also (in some manuscripts) modifies the ܐܫܘܫܘܢܝܢ of the Peshitta and the Anaphora of Theodore into ܠܫܘܫܘܢܝܢ, perhaps for stylistic reasons.³⁵

Neither of the two passages cited in the Anaphora of Theodore, where Yousif found that it agrees with the Peshitta against the Greek text (Romans 4:25 and Hebrews 7:25), is found in the Anaphora of Nestorius. The point noted by Yousif in relation to the citation of Hebrews 7:25, however, the rendering 'live' in place of 'be saved', is found in another passage quoted in both the anaphoras,³⁶ 1 Timothy 2:4. A further modification in the Peshitta of this verse is the replacement of 'come' by 'be turned'. The text of the citation is identical in the two anaphoras, including the syntactical modifications of direct address to God and the replacement of the two infinitives by imperfects (the last point in

³³ I.E. Rahmani, *Les liturgies orientales et occidentales* (Beirut: Imprimerie Patriarcale Syrienne, 1929), 376.

³⁴ *Taksa*, 100.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 86.

³⁶ Nestorius: *Taksa*, 94. Theodore: *Taksa*, 73; Vadakkal, *Theodore*, 69–70.

common again with the Peshitta). This citation, therefore, adds considerably to the cumulative evidence that the composers of both anaphoras were familiar with and consciously made use of the Syriac Bible.

Two further biblical citations are common to the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius. Both make an identical adaptation of material from Hebrews 1:3, 'the brightness that is from thee and the image of thy being',³⁷ where 'that is from thee' replaces 'of the glory' in the Peshitta and Greek of the biblical text, and the whole phrase is addressed to God in the second person. It is interesting to note that in the Barberini text of the Anaphora of Basil³⁸ the same citation is found, but in wording identical with the Greek biblical text except for the change to the second person in the context of the prayer. The other citation is from Psalm 65:12, 'that the crown of the year may be blessed by thy goodness'. This citation, too, is identical in the two anaphoras,³⁹ and differs from the Peshitta text only in the rendering of the verb by a passive rather than by the imperative 'Bless'. Both of these in turn are different from both the Hebrew and Greek texts of this passage. It may be worth adding that there are freer allusions to this passage in the sixth-century fragment edited by Connolly⁴⁰ and in the Greek Anaphora of James.⁴¹ The fact that the last three citations mentioned, those of 1 Timothy 2:4, Hebrews 1:3 and Psalm 65:12, are identical in the two anaphoras may suggest direct borrowing by one from the other. The difference in the citation of Philippians 2:6–7, on the other hand, and the fact that the majority of the biblical citations in each anaphora are not found in the other, suggest that the cause of the identity is to be found rather in a common use of the Syriac Bible as a direct source.

We turn now to an examination of twenty-one biblical passages used in the Anaphora of Nestorius alone among the East Syrian anaphoras, although some of the passages are used in West Syrian anaphoras. First we may list six straightforward citations, where the text is identical with that of the Peshitta, which itself is an exact rendering of the Greek text. These are: Colossians 2:3,⁴² Galatians 4:4–5, Ephesians 2:15,⁴³ John 13:1, 1 Corinthians 15:20 and Colossians 1:18.⁴⁴ It is worth noting that the last two, which follow

³⁷ Nestorius: *Taksa*, 86 (the first half is omitted in some manuscripts, perhaps as a result of parablepsis). Theodore: *Taksa*, 65; Vadakkal, *Theodore*, 54.

³⁸ F.E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, vol. 1, *Eastern liturgies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), 325:23–5.

³⁹ Nestorius: *Taksa*, 93. Theodore: *Taksa*, 72; Vadakkal, *Theodore*, 69.

⁴⁰ R.H. Connolly, 'Sixth-century fragments of an East-Syrian anaphora', *Oriens Christianus*, NS xii–xiv (1925), 99–128 (114:30–1).

⁴¹ *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 56:8–9. The Syriac Anaphora of James has only the phrase 'the crown of the year'.

⁴² *Taksa*, 82–3.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

one another immediately, are similarly combined in the Barberini text of the Anaphora of Basil, where fuller use is made of Colossians 1:18.⁴⁵ Two further passages are cited in a text identical with the Peshitta, where the latter slightly modifies the syntax of the Greek text: John 1:12⁴⁶ and 1 Corinthians 5:7.⁴⁷

In six other citations minor modifications, mostly of a syntactical nature, are introduced. Here, too, the citations follow essentially the text of the Peshitta, which itself is a faithful rendering of the Greek text. Five of these may simply be listed: 1 Corinthians 15:22,⁴⁸ Romans 2:6⁴⁹, Psalm 68:31,⁵⁰ Colossians 1:12⁵¹ and Ephesians 4:3–4.⁵² The sixth is slightly more interesting, because the syntactical modification introduced here makes the citation closer to the Greek text. The passage is 1 Timothy 3:9,⁵³ and the point of interest is that the Anaphora of Nestorius agrees with the Greek text in using the participle ‘holding’, while the Peshitta uses the imperfect of the verb. This, however, is the only instance where I have found a citation in the anaphora in agreement with the Greek text against the Peshitta, and the difference could easily be explained rather as a syntactical adaptation to the use of the citation within the prayer, where it forms an account of the role of the deacons.

The remaining seven citations are all characterized by more substantial modifications. The phrase ‘condemned sin in his flesh’ is modified to ‘killed sin in his flesh’ against both the Peshitta and Greek readings of Romans 8:3,⁵⁴ whereas the Barberini text of the Anaphora of Basil⁵⁵ retains ‘condemn’. The first part of Ephesians 2:6⁵⁶ is cited in essential agreement with the Peshitta, except for the change from ‘us’ to ‘them’ and the omission of the first ‘with him’. These are insignificant changes, but the citation also inserts an additional verb ‘caused to ascend’ between ‘raised up’ and ‘made to sit’, for which there seems to be no evidence in the tradition of the biblical text. A phrase from Hebrews 1:3⁵⁷ is cited in the form ‘and sat on the right hand of thy majesty’, where, in addition to the introduction of direct address, the preposition is changed from **ܐܘܢ** in the Peshitta to **ܡܘܢ**. The Greek preposition is ἐν, and this is

⁴⁵ *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 327: 12–15.

⁴⁶ *Taksa*, 86–7.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 91. It is worth noting that the Syriac Anaphora of James (*Anaphorae Syriacae*, ii. 148:4) is less verbally close to the Peshitta in its use of this text.

⁵⁰ *Taksa*, 93.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 100.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁵⁵ *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 326:16–17.

⁵⁶ *Taksa*, 87.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

duly found in the citation of the same passage in the Barberini text of the Anaphora of Basil.⁵⁸

The description of the church in the intercessions⁵⁹ is borrowed from Ephesians 5:27, and follows the Peshitta closely (where it differs from the syntax of the Greek text), except that it omits 'glorious' and inserts 'blemish or' before 'spot or wrinkle'. Two lines further on the dominical saying that 'the gates of hell will not prevail against' the church is quoted from Matthew 16:18. The oldest manuscript of the Anaphora of Nestorius, however, reads 'bars' in place of 'gates', a reading for which Burkitt quotes parallels from Ephrem and the Syriac text of Eusebius.⁶⁰ The Greek Anaphora of James⁶¹ cites the same passage in essential agreement with the Greek text. Two lines further on again the intercession for the bishops cites the last phrase of 2 Timothy 2:15. This is quoted also by several West Syrian anaphoras: Apostolic Constitutions, Greek James, and the Barberini texts of Chrysostom and Basil,⁶² all in essential agreement with the Greek text. The Peshitta replaces 'dividing' with 'proclaiming', and the Anaphora of Nestorius, while introducing further modifications, agrees with the Peshitta in this reading. It is interesting that the Syriac text of the Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles, when it quotes the same phrase,⁶³ agrees with the Greek text against the Peshitta in reading 'dividing'. The other modifications introduced by the Anaphora of Nestorius are the change of the adverb 'rightly' into an adjective qualifying 'word', and the insertion of 'of belief' before 'of truth'. Finally, in the intercession for rulers,⁶⁴ use is made of 1 Timothy 2:2 in a citation which follows the Peshitta closely except for two modifications at the end of the verse. The order of 'fear of God' and 'purity' is reversed, and 'purity' is replaced by 'sobriety' in the rendering of the last word of the verse in the Greek text. The citation is made in the exact wording of the Greek text in several of the West Syrian anaphoras: Apostolic Constitutions, Greek James, and the Barberini text of Basil.⁶⁵

It is not easy to evaluate the modifications noted in the last seven citations. Some are perhaps to be explained as the result of

⁵⁸ *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 327:16–17.

⁵⁹ *Taksa*, 92.

⁶⁰ F.C. Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (Cambridge: University Press, 1904), i. 92–3. See further Robert Murray, *Symbols of church and kingdom* (Cambridge: University Press, 1975), 228–36.

⁶¹ *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 54:18. The Syriac Anaphora of James (152:5) also reads 'gates'.

⁶² *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 21:19, 55:2–3; 332b:8–9; 336a:7–8, 11–13.

⁶³ 220:6. The Syriac Anaphora of James (152:11) also reads 'dividing'.

⁶⁴ *Taksa*, 93.

⁶⁵ *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 23:24–5; 55:18–19; 333:23–5. The wording in the Syriac Anaphora of James (160:1–2) is much less close to the Peshitta, and looks like a direct rendering of the Greek Anaphora of James.

the assimilation of specific citations to other material recalled in the memory of the composer of the anaphora. Some may reflect variants within the textual tradition of the Peshiṭta. The variant in the citation of Matthew 16:18 found in the oldest manuscripts of the anaphora at least points to a link with Syriac tradition, and the citation of 2 Timothy 2:15 strongly suggests its derivation directly from the Peshiṭta version, where it differs significantly from the Greek text.

Reviewing the evidence of the biblical citations in the Anaphora of Nestorius as a whole, it has to be said that such evidence as they provide points to familiarity with the Syriac rather than the Greek Bible on the part of the composer of the anaphora. The only passage (1 Timothy 3:9) where a citation seemed to agree with the Greek text against the Peshiṭta concerned a matter of syntax rather than vocabulary, and proved patient of a different explanation. While, therefore, the evidence is far from conclusive, it may reasonably be claimed that the balance of probability has moved further in favour of the hypothesis that both the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius were originally composed in Syriac.

It may be useful in conclusion to make three general observations about the biblical citations in the Anaphora of Nestorius, including those found also in the Anaphora of Theodore, but not those belonging to the common liturgical stock. Three quarters of the citations are derived from the Pauline corpus (including the Pastoral Epistles), the remainder coming from the Psalms, Matthew, John and Hebrews. One occurs in the pre-Sanctus, twelve in the post-Sanctus, one in the introduction to the Institution Narrative, one in the Anamnesis, nine in the intercessions, and four in the prayers for the benefits of communion at the end of the Epiclesis. We have succeeded in tracing the use of half of the citations in West Syrian anaphoras. More have been found in common with the Barberini text of the Anaphora of Basil than with any other single anaphora, including that of Theodore. This is interesting in view of Basil's known views on the use of scriptural material in the composition of liturgical prayer.⁶⁶ It is interesting to speculate that he might have regarded the composer of the Anaphora of Nestorius as a worthy pupil, at least in this respect.

⁶⁶ See the passages cited in my *Addai and Mari*, 19.