

Doctoral Dissertation

**The *Malabar Sermonary*: The Syriac Legacy  
of Francisco Ros SJ (1559-1624)  
in South India**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ARSI Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu

APF Archivum Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide.

IOC Indie Orientali e Cina

SC Scritture riferite nei Congressi

SOCG Scritture Originali riferite nelle Congregazioni Generali

PG Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Greaca*, (Paris: 1857-1866).

PL Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, (Paris: 1844-1855)



## Introduction: Catholic Literature in Syriac from Malabar before and after the Synod of Diamper (1599), and the *Malabar Sermonary*<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Introduction

The Malabar Christians from South India – known as Saint Thomas Christians or Syriac Christians<sup>2</sup> – whose foundation accounts link the origin of their Church to the evangelization of the Apostle Thomas, have been under the jurisdiction of Church of the East, i.e., they were subject to the so-called ‘Nestorian’ Church of Persia,<sup>3</sup> which did not accept the decisions of the Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.) and used Syriac as its language of liturgy and theology. While an early Christian mission to South India, recorded in ballads and oral sources, might have taken place,<sup>4</sup> it seems that the core of the South Indian Christian community consisted of descendants of West Asian Christian merchants from Persia who settled in Malabar and intermarried with women from the local matrilineal castes, and whose traces can be retrieved at least since the ninth century.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, although the evidence concerning the Malabar Christians between the ninth and the late fifteenth centuries is scarce, the few existing information points again to the dependance of the South Indian Church on the Church of the East. For instance, the oldest surviving Syriac manuscript from Malabar is an East Syriac lectionary copied in Šenglē (Kodungalur?) in 1301 A.D., by a certain deacon Zachariah, son of Joseph, in the times of Mar Jacob, the Metropolitan of Malabar and India.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During the writing of the present thesis, I have published parts of my research into two articles. The first article is: “Religious Entanglements and Shared Texts: “The Western (*sic!*) Syriac Revision and Reception of the Malabar Sermonary,” in *Nidān: International Journal for Indian Studies* 5.1 (July 2020): 26-54; another article entitled: “Entangled Literary Genres in Syriac from Malabar in the Aftermath of the Synod of Diamper (1599)” is forthcoming in *Entangled Religions: Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Religious Contact and Transfer*. For this reason, I have included the content of the two articles with corrections and updates throughout my PhD thesis.

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this thesis I am using the terms “Malabar Christians”, “Syriac Christians of Malabar” and “Saint Thomas Christians” interchangeably; again, when I refer to Malabar or Malankara, I envisage the whole territory of the current state of Kerala, where the Saint Thomas Christians live, and not only the Northern part of the state, as it is the case in modern times. Throughout the thesis, I am constantly using the term “Syriac” to designate the Syriac language, rites, and Christians, and I am avoiding the term “Syrian” due to the confusion it creates; I have preserved the term “Syrian” only when referring to famous Church Fathers such as Ephrem, since the name “Ephrem the Syrian” is used by everyone.

<sup>3</sup> I am using here the term “Nestorian” referring to the Church of the East for the sake simplification and in order to avoid terminological confusion later in the thesis, since both Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church belong to the East Syrian branch of Christianity; however, on the problems related to the term “Nestorian”, see Sebastian Brock, “The «Nestorian» Church: A Lamentable Misnomer,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 78:3 (1996): 23-35.

<sup>4</sup> See István Perczel, “Syriac Christianity in India,” in Daniel King (ed.), *The Syriac World*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2018): 655-663.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 663-672.

<sup>6</sup> J. P. M. van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas in South India and Their Syriac Manuscripts*, (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1983): 187-189; Perczel, *Syriac Christianity...*, 675. For a new treatment of this document, see István Perczel with the contribution of Radu Mustăță, “Notes on Syriac Learning in South India in the Middle Ages and Early Modernity,” in Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony, Miriam Hjälm, and Robert Kitchen, *The Third Lung: New Trajectories in Syriac Studies* (Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming).



In 1500, at the time of the first contacts of the of the Portuguese with the Malabar Christians, the South Indian Christian community was again led by bishops sent to the Malabar Coast by the Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East from Iraq.<sup>7</sup>

However, in the sixteenth century the Malabar Church got connected and gradually increased its interaction with the Catholic world. First, the Portuguese present on the coastal regions of India included the Malabar Christians in their monopolistic trade system and attempted to gradually impose Roman Catholicism on them. Then, in 1553, as a result of its internal tensions and rivalries, the Church of the East witnessed the creation of its ‘Uniate’ counterpart, the Chaldean Catholic Church and, subsequently, both the East Syriac and the Chaldean Patriarchs sent Metropolitan bishops in Malabar to take over the leadership of the South Indian Christian community. In this context, the Syriac literary heritage of the Malabar Christians was transformed throughout the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries from a collection of standard Syriac texts belonging to the theological and liturgical legacy of the Church of the East, to a new Catholic literary culture in Syriac, presenting an original synthesis of Syriac sources from Iraq, and of Latin and vernacular sources from Europe. As such, this new Catholic culture in Syriac, addressing the audience of the Malabar Christians, became an emblematic expression of the complex interaction between the Indian Christian community, its Iraqi East Syriac prelates (both ‘Nestorian’ and, since 1553, Chaldean), and the Catholic missionaries present on the coastal regions of India, alongside with the consolidation of the Portuguese empire in Asia. Being a work of erudition and a reflection of the cross-cultural interaction between the South Indian Christians, keen to preserve their Syriac rites and jurisdiction,<sup>8</sup> and the missionary enterprise of the Catholic Church in the age of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), this new Catholic Syriac literature from Malabar also outlines the challenges of the early modern global Catholicism in a missionary context.

As shown by pioneering studies of István Perczel, this Syriac culture illustrates how Catholic missionaries, especially the Jesuits, adjusted Catholic doctrine to a Christian community which was perfectly integrated into the social and cultural structures of the local society from Malabar, while preserving the Syriac rites and language in worship as an essential part of its Christian identity.<sup>9</sup> In a seminal study from 2005, Ines Županov has shown how in the second half of the sixteenth century the encounter of the Jesuit missionaries with the Saint Thomas Christians made the former

<sup>7</sup> Perczel, *ibid.*, 675-678.

<sup>8</sup> See Perczel, “Some New Documents on the Struggle of the Saint Thomas Christians to Maintain the Chaldean Rite and Jurisdiction”, in P. Bruns and H. O. Lutte (eds.), *Sonderdruck aus Orientalia Christiana. Festschrift für Hubert Kaufhold zum 70. Geburtstag*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013): 415-436.

<sup>9</sup> Id., “Classical Syriac as Modern Lingua Franca in South India Between 1600 and 2006,” *ARAM*, 21 (2009): 289-321; id., “Accommodationist Strategies at the Malabar Coast: Competition or Complementarity?,” in Ines Županov and P.-A. Fabre (eds.), *The Rites Controversies in the Early Modern World*, (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018): 191-232.



distinguish between “civility” and “religion”<sup>10</sup> and re-elaborate their missionary strategies in the context of “a late sixteenth century Palaeochristian Revival movement”<sup>11</sup> which favored “a creative re-interpretation of Christianity in order to accommodate it to non-Christian peoples and cultures.”<sup>12</sup> According to Županov,

“The controversial and notorious method of conversion called ‘accommodation’ – employed in the Jesuit overseas missions among the “heathens”, has been first thought out and tested in their mission among the St. Thomas Christians in the late sixteenth century. It was by looking at the antique Christians, a strange kind of Christians who closely resembled their Hindu and Muslim neighbors in India (in customs, rituals, skin color, etc.), that the Portuguese and especially the Jesuit missionaries developed the idea that Christianity could accommodate non-European “social customs” without getting intrinsically corrupt as a religion.”<sup>13</sup>

In the light of newly discovered manuscript material in Syriac and Malayalam from the local archives in Kerala, István Perczel has developed further Županov’s hypothesis, by emphasizing the role played by the Syriac bishops from Iraq and the centrality of the Syriac language in the process of *accommodatio* among the Saint Thomas Christians at that time. In this context, Perczel redefined *accommodatio* as an entangled joint enterprise involving the Syriac Christians from Malabar, their bishops from Iraq and the European missionaries.<sup>14</sup> While for the European missionaries *accommodatio* meant distinguishing and negotiating the borders between social and religious practice, the priority of the Syriac Christians from Malabar was to safeguard the community’s Syriac identity, whose focal point was its Eastern Syriac rites and liturgy.<sup>15</sup> Perczel illustrates how Syriac language and literacy was adopted by the Catholic missionaries (especially by the Jesuits), to make their missionary strategy efficient.<sup>16</sup> As an expression of this missionary principle, a new Catholic missionary literature in Syriac was created.<sup>17</sup> This newly emerging canon of Catholic literature in Syriac from Malabar adjusted the Catholic dogma, theological discourse and European erudition to the East Syriac tradition of liturgy and theology, which reached the Malabar Coast through the repeated contacts of the Malabar Christians with the Middle East.<sup>18</sup> The study of this type of missionary literary culture in Syriac from Malabar is in an incipient stage and deserves further study.

Thus, in South Indian context, the dialectics between Catholic Christianity as a conversion religion and the multi-confessional entanglements between various Christian traditions, in a relation

<sup>10</sup> Ines G. Županov, “One Civility, But Multiple Religions: Jesuit Missions among St. Thomas Christians in India (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries),” *Journal of Early Modern History*, 9. 3-4 (2005): 324.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 287.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 284.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 324.

<sup>14</sup> Perczel, *Accommodationist Strategies...*, 195-196.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 218-220.

<sup>18</sup> See id., *Accommodationist Strategies...*, and id., “Cosmopolitisme de la Mer d’Arabie: Les chrétiens de Saint Thomas face à l’expansion portugaise en Inde,” in Corinne Lefèvre, I. G. Županov et al. (eds.), *South Asian Cosmopolitanisms: Sources, Languages, Itineraries*, (Paris: Éditions de l’École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2015): 143-169.



described as both “competitive and complementary,”<sup>19</sup> is the general setting from which this new literary canon of Syriac *paideia* emerged and developed. The importance of this kind of material in the field of intellectual history is manifold: its study opens an unexplored chapter in the field of early modern global intellectual history, illustrating – through literary networks – the circulation of knowledge from both Europe and the Middle East to the Malabar Coast.<sup>20</sup> Beside connecting the Iraqi manuscript-based Syriac culture and the European printing culture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is an important witness to the transmission of theological and humanistic knowledge from the European Jesuit teachers to their Indian disciples from Malabar.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, it is the vivid expression of the diversity of Syriac literature in the early modern times.

## 2. Historical context

The political and ecclesiastical setting in which this kind of Syriac literature developed is a complex one and requires an overview of its historical developments from the sixteenth to the at least the second half of the eighteenth century. Throughout the sixteenth, and the first half of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese Crown strengthened its position on the West coast of India<sup>22</sup> by establishing a network of satellite-like settlements and strongholds, and by making alliances with the local rulers and kings, in order to consolidate and ensure its monopolistic trade system.<sup>23</sup> As such this “new world system” controlled by the Portuguese and connecting the Indian Ocean world with that of Europe through the Atlantic Ocean, collided with an “old world system,”<sup>24</sup> which it tried to suppress and replace. The latter was dominated since medieval times by the Arab traders and connected the Mediterranean world with the Indian Ocean through the Red Sea, going further to the East.<sup>25</sup> Due to its strategic position in the context of navigation (by reason of the monsoon winds), and its rich potential for trade with spices and other goods, the Malabar Coast became one of the main focuses of contention and dispute between these two macro-systems of trade.<sup>26</sup>

The Syriac Christians of Saint Thomas<sup>27</sup> from Malabar were among the early allies with whom the Portuguese engaged in their trade enterprise. Two letters dated to 1523 and 1530 and sent from

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> See id., “Alexander of the Port/Kadavil Chandy Kattanar: A Syriac Poet and Disciple of the Jesuits in Seventeenth Century India,” *Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*, 14 (2014): 30-49; id., “What Can a Nineteenth-Century Syriac Manuscript Teach Us about Indian Church History?,” *Parole de l’Orient*, 33 (2008): 245-265.

<sup>21</sup> Id., *Alexander of the Port*....

<sup>22</sup> On the Coromandel Coast it was rather through Portuguese *casados* (i.e., traders working outside the authority of the *Estado da India* and married with local women), and through the ecclesiastical apparatus that the Portuguese Crown exerted and gradually imposed its influence (see Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean*, (Delhi: Primus Book, 2013): 63-82).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> This is the terminology used by Pius Malekandathil (ibid., 88).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 83-109.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> On the various names of the community of the Malabar Christians, see Perczel, *Syriac Christianity*..., 654. According to Perczel, as long as there were no other Christians in India, the Malabar Christians were called simply “Christians” (in



Cochin, by Mar Jacob, the East Syriac Metropolitan of Malabar and India, to King John III of Portugal testify to the fact that the prelate was interested in establishing an alliance, and in engaging the local Christian community in trade transactions with the Portuguese.<sup>28</sup> The Portuguese *Estado da India* attempted to consolidate itself on the coastal regions of India by building a network of fortresses strategically chosen, so as to facilitate trade. However, in the regions which did not fall directly under its control, it made use of the Catholic ecclesiastical apparatus (consisting mainly of Catholic missionaries).<sup>29</sup> In practice, this meant that: (1) on the coastal territories under its direct rule, the Portuguese crown exerted ecclesiastical control on account of a set of privileges granted by the pope to the king of Portugal (by virtue of the so called “royal patronage”, *Padroado real*),<sup>30</sup> (2) while in the hinterland it relied on the activity of various Catholic missionaries (among whom the Jesuits played a prominent role).<sup>31</sup> This distinction is important as, the Syriac Christians from Malabar were residing both close to the Portuguese strongholds in Cochin and Cranganore, and, under the authority of local Hindu kings, in the hilly hinterland to which the Portuguese sources refer as the “Serra”.

As mentioned above, because of the contacts of the Malabar Christians with the Middle East, facilitated through the trade routes crossing the Arabian Sea, their ecclesiastical life was ensured, at least since medieval times, by Metropolitan bishops consecrated and sent from Iraq to Malabar, by the *Catholicoi* of the Church of the East.<sup>32</sup> At the same time, at least since the beginning of the sixteenth century, the administration of the Christian community from Malabar was entrusted to an indigenous archdeacon, chosen from the Pakalomattam noble family, who was supposed to work in close relation with the East Syriac bishops.<sup>33</sup> As Jacob Kollaparambil asserts, “the whole government of [the Indian] Christianity was practically under the competence of the archdeacon, except [...] in matters that needed episcopal order. Besides, the one who held the office of the

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Malayalam, *nasrāṇikal*), while the terms “Christians of Saint Thomas” and “Syriac Christians” are of later date, and point to the need of the Malabar Christians to differentiate themselves from other Christian groups (ibid.).

<sup>28</sup> See George Schurhammer, *The Malabar Church and Rome During the Early Portuguese Period and Before*, (Trichinopoly: St. Joseph’s Industrial School’s Press, 1934): 10-24.

<sup>29</sup> On the various Catholic missionaries active in India, see Županov, “Chapter 9: South Asia,” in Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to Early Modern Catholic Global Missions*, Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition 80, (Leiden: Brill, 2018): 237-268.

<sup>30</sup> On the basis of the *Padroado real* (“Royal Patronage”) the Portuguese Crown had the right to appoint bishops and control the religious life of the regions subjected to its rule; this was regulated through a series of bulls granted by the popes from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (see Paolo Aranha, *Il Cristianesimo Latino in India nel XVI Secolo*, (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2006): 115-118).

<sup>31</sup> Malekandathil, *Maritime India...*, 63-82.

<sup>32</sup> I. Perczel, *Cosmopolitisme de la Mer d’Arabie...*

<sup>33</sup> See id., “Four Apologetic Church Histories from India,” *The Harp* 24 (2009): 205. On the institution of the Archdeaconate, the fundamental work is: Jacob Kollaparambil, *The Archdeacon of All-India*, (Kottayam: Catholic Bishop’s House, 1972).



archdeacon was also the national head of the Christian community. Thus, the archdeacon exerted great influence both in ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical spheres.”<sup>34</sup>

As Heleen Murre-van den Berg emphasizes, since the end of the fifteenth century “after almost two centuries of near isolation, the Church of the East in Mesopotamia was reconnected to the wider world; its clergy started to travel and influences from outside began to impact upon its internal development.”<sup>35</sup> In this context, the contacts between the Church of the East and the Indian Church from the Malabar Coast “were resumed in the late fifteenth century, testifying to the important fact that, in this period, the Church of the East was being reintegrated into a global network of political and ecclesiastical contacts.”<sup>36</sup> Yet, in 1552, the abbot of the Rabban Hormizd Monastery (near Alqosh, in Iraq), John Sulaqa revolted against the then Patriarch, Simeon bar Mama, and went to Rome. There he made a Catholic profession of faith and was re-consecrated and appointed Catholicos Patriarch by the pope, in the spring of 1553; this meant the creation of the Chaldean Catholic Church as the ‘Uniate’ counterpart of the Church of the East.<sup>37</sup> Consequently, since 1553, both the ‘Nestorian’ and the Chaldean Patriarchs sent metropolitan bishops to Malabar and contended for their own jurisdiction over the South Indian Christian community. According to the same scholar, in the context of renewed contacts and communication between the Indian Church and the East Syriac Christians from Iraq, the creation of the Chaldean Catholic Church in the Middle East was encouraged by both the Catholic presence in India, and by the internal conflicts and rivalries within East Syriac ecclesiastical circles in Iraq.<sup>38</sup>

In competition with the East-Syriac and Chaldean bishops coming from Iraq to India, the Portuguese attempted to control the religious life of the Malabar Christians by cutting off their connection with the Syriac Iraqi prelates and by imposing on them Roman Catholicism in line with the reforms adopted by the Council of Trent. A process of ‘Latinization’ carried through by the Catholic missionaries active in the area during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, had two main objectives. The first one was to achieve Catholic Orthodoxy in terms of doctrine, rites, and jurisdiction, by uprooting the Syriac identity of the Malabar Christians, and by purging their Syriac books from what the Catholic missionaries considered “Nestorian” heresy (in this sense, the Syriac language was often regarded by the European missionaries as a vehicle for heresy precisely because East Syriac theology was

<sup>34</sup> Kollaparambil, *ibid.*, 15.

<sup>35</sup> Heleen Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures: The Church of the East in Eastern Ottoman Provinces (1500-1800)*, (Leuven-Paris-Bristol: Peeters, 2015): 23.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> On this matter, see *ibid.*, 44-54; Giuseppe Beltrami, *La Chiesa Caldea nel secolo dell’Unione*, (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1933).

<sup>38</sup> Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 47.



articulated in this language). The second objective was to suppress many of the social and cultural customs and practices which the Malabar Christians adopted because of their interaction with and integration within the non-Christian local society from Malabar. A few examples of these are: the observance of the rules on purity and untouchability, the practice of charms, magic, divination, the participation in the festivals of their non-Christian neighbors, and the adoption of the dress, appearance and habits of the Nayers by the Malabar Christians.<sup>39</sup> These two tendencies are mirrored in the decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599),<sup>40</sup> a turning point in the history of the Malabar Christians, which also placed this Christian community under the direct authority of the Latin archbishop of Goa. As a result of the synod, the same Christian community of the Malabar Christians received a European bishop in the person of the Catalan Francisco Ros SJ (1601-1624), who was followed by two other Jesuit archbishops until 1653, when the Malabar Christians revolted against the Jesuit archbishops and the Portuguese.

Yet, the Syriac rites and language in the liturgy, as well as many of the local social customs were part of the identity of Malabar Christians, and the missionary strategies used by the Catholic clergy among them needed to be refined to make the Catholic mission among the Malabar Christians successful. Consequently, the initial idea that the Syriac language was just a vehicle of Nestorian heresy was reconsidered by the Catholic missionaries. In an important recent work entitled *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation in Early Modern India: Francisco Ros SJ in Malabar (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*,<sup>41</sup> Fr. Antony Mecherry examines substantial information from archives in Europe and India about the Jesuit mission and the practice of *accommodatio* among the Malabar Christians. Fr. Mecherry analyses the practice of *accommodatio* promoted by Francisco Ros among the Malabar Christians, and stresses that the Catalan Jesuit was as important for the practice of *accommodatio* in the Early Modern Catholic missions in Asia as other prominent missionaries such as: Alessandro Valignano in Japan, Matteo Ricci in China, or Roberto de Nobili in Tamil Nadu.<sup>42</sup> In Mecherry's words:

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<sup>39</sup> An overview of these customs are listed in the Ninth Action of Acts of the Synod of Diamper entitled "On the Reformation of Manners;" see Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara (ed.). *Archivo Portuguez-Oriental. Fasciculo 4*, (Nova-Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1862): 488-519.

<sup>40</sup> On the Synod of Diamper, see Jonas Thaliath, *The Synod of Diamper*, OCA 152, (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1958); see as well the papers from George Nedungatt (ed.), *The Synod of Diamper Revisited*, Kanonika 9, (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2001).

<sup>41</sup> Antony Mecherry SJ., *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation in Early Modern India: Francisco Ros SJ in Malabar (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2019).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 431. In fact, even before Mecherry's scholarly contribution, the same idea was formulated by István Perczel: "Be this as it may, all this newly discovered material shows patently that Roz was one of the inventors and first practitioners of the Jesuit *accommodatio* and this makes us understand the reasons behind his persistent support for Roberto Nobili's Madurai mission. Most certainly, this material that will be gradually edited, translated and made known in the future, will help to assign Roz's due place in the missionary endeavour shared with Valignano, Ricci, Gomez and Nobili" (*Accommodationist Strategies...*, 223).



“Given the dilemma faced by the missionaries, namely an underlying conflict between the faith that they wanted to import to India and the local culture that resisted such imports, Malabar turned out to be the primary testing ground of the Jesuit accommodation. [...] The Jesuit praxis of accommodation was a “a way-out” approach promoted by Francisco Ros and Roberto de Nobili in their attempt to respond to the local resistance of the people of Malabar. In this process, Ros appeared as a Chaldean in terms of his imitation and appropriation of the traditions of the Malabar Church and Nobili appeared as a high-caste sage in terms of his imitation and appropriation of the customs and symbols of the Brahmins of Madurai. While Ros [...] tried to perpetuate the Syriac language and the Indo-Oriental format of the Malabar Church, Nobili presented the Catholic religion before his potential converts as a universal faith that was compatible with their cultural symbolism.”<sup>43</sup>

According to the same scholar, the Rosian<sup>44</sup> missionary strategy consisted of an “approach of inclusive Latinization that always tended to appropriate the distinctive identity, culture and tradition of the Thomas Christians;”<sup>45</sup> in this context, “giving priority to the context of the mission led Ros to emphasize the psychological rationale of accommodation that called for his companions to retain and promote the symbols of the Malabar Church – that is, the Syriac language, the format of its East Syrian rite, and the customs of the Thomas Christians.”<sup>46</sup> The Syriac literary output stemming from this missionary context has the potential to reveal new details about Bishop Ros and the Jesuit mission in Malabar; at the practical level, this Catholic material in Syriac also illustrates how the Syriac identity of the Malabar Church was promoted through literary production as an expression of Rosian *accommodatio*. As I will show further in this thesis, the Syriac texts stemming from this missionary context had a strong impact on the community of the Malabar Christians overall. Such Catholic texts in Syriac which were initially composed during the times of Francisco Ros, continued to be copied by diligent Indian scribes from Malabar – who were not necessarily Syro-Catholic – and used in their circles at least until the late eighteenth century.

However, several factors made the Jesuit mission among the Malabar Christians falter; the most important emerging problems were related to the Syriac identity of the South Indian Christian community. Thus, after the Synod of Diamper, the Chaldean Archbishopric of Angamaly-Cranganore was reduced to a suffragan bishopric under the authority of the Archbishop of Goa, who was the primate of India under *Padroado* rule. Even before the Synod of Diamper, Middle Eastern bishops were averted from Malabar by the Portuguese, under suspicion and charges of heresy. Yet, placing the Malabar Church under the direct authority of the Portuguese meant *de iure* cutting all its ties with the Chaldean Church in Iraq; through Francisco Ros’ efforts, the See of Angamaly-Cranganore was restored as an archbishopric in 1608,<sup>47</sup> but the connection with the Chaldean Church remained severed, although maintaining this connection was very important for the Syriac identity of the Malabar Christians.

<sup>43</sup> Mecherry, *Testing Ground...*, XXXI.

<sup>44</sup> I.e., the missionary strategy adopted by Francisco Ros; the label “Rosian” belongs to Mecherry.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 430.

<sup>47</sup> See *ibid.*, 272-274.



In addition to this, the Jesuit archbishops attempted to lessen the role of the archdeacon within the same Christian community. Tensions between the archdeacons and the Jesuit (arch)bishops had rose since the times of Francisco Ros, and a somehow conflictual relationship between the two leaders continued for the first half of the seventeenth century. During the leadership of Archbishop Francisco Garcia (1641-1659), this conflict escalated, as the Jesuit prelate attempted to deprive Archdeacon Thomas Pakalomattam from his administrative role in the Malabar Church.<sup>48</sup> Yet, the institution of the archdeaconate played a fundamental role in the organization of the South Indian Church: before the Synod of Diamper, the archdeacon was *de facto* the leader of the Saint Thomas Christians, while the authority of the Metropolitan Bishop was basically confined to bestowing holy orders.

Another drawback to the Jesuit mission is related to the centrality of the Syriac language as a source of distinction and sacrality for the ecclesiastical identity of the Malabar Christians. While Francisco Ros was a linguistic genius, who learnt Syriac as an autodidact in the beginning of his Indian mission in 1584,<sup>49</sup> his successors to the leadership of the same Christian community, Archbishops Estevão de Brito (1624-1641) and the aforementioned Francisco Garcia, did not know Syriac well enough so as to fulfil their episcopal duties which created great discontent in the community; in addition to this, the Syriac training offered in the Jesuit Seminary of Vaipicotta (where the pupils from among the Thomas Christians were instructed) became unsatisfactory.<sup>50</sup> In a memorandum sent to the Portuguese Viceroy, Dom Felipe Mascarenhas, in 1645 against Archbishop Garcia,<sup>51</sup> the Malabar Christians articulated this discontent in two points. The first was: “our worship is in the Syriac language, and so we need a prelate who knows Syriac, can perform the pontificals in Syriac, and can be vigilant against errors being made by copyists of Syriac books.”<sup>52</sup> The second complaint is related to the previous one and gives a list of the Syriacist disciples of Francisco Ros from among the local clergy:

<sup>48</sup> See Jacob Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians' Revolution in 1653*, (Kottayam: The Catholic Bishop's House, 1981): 60-105.

<sup>49</sup> See Mecherry, *Testing Ground...*, 94-96.

<sup>50</sup> Based on documents from the Historical Archive *De propaganda fide*, J. Kollaparambil writes, “the people loved to have their liturgical worship in Syriac, and the Holy See had enjoined the missionaries to try hard to continue it, and yet the fathers began downplaying the importance of Syriac. Archbishop Brito could not even read Syriac, and so was unable to preside over his subjects' liturgical celebrations. The people, therefore, complained and petitioned the Holy See that Brito's successor to be appointed – whoever he be, secular or religious, preferably a non-Jesuit – should know their liturgical language. But the Holy See could not satisfy the people, because the candidate presented by the King (Francis Garcia), was another Jesuit. Though Dom Garcia learnt Syriac later, nevertheless he did not acquire enough proficiency to conduct liturgical services in Syriac. Similarly, the service offered at the Vaipicotta seminary was also not very satisfactory. After Fr. John Campori, who knew Syriac fairly well, Fr. Francis Fernandez taught Syriac at the seminary, but he was not very proficient in it. The seminarians' Syriac became rather defective” (Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians...*, 54).

<sup>51</sup> For an English translation on the basis of the memorandum see *ibid.*, 73-83.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.



“Archbishop Francis Ros and Fr. João Maria (Campori)<sup>53</sup> were well-versed in Syriac. From them some other fathers learned it, but did not master it well, even its correct pronunciation. These now teach our seminarians, and so our younger priests do not know or read Syriac correctly. However, we have in this Christianity some priests who know Syriac well, having learned it from Archbishop Ros, namely Cassanar Cochacko, Cassanar Ittithome, Cassanar Audepo, Cassanar Matola, Cassanar Cunhanddi, Cassanar Menacheri, Cassanar Irali, Cassanar Chanddi, Cassanar Bengur, and Cassanar Alexander of Caro (Kadavil) [from] Kaduthuruthy, who wrote these complaints, as directed by the Archdeacon, Cassanars and the Christians. Fr. Alexander wrote similar complaints and sent them through Fr. Francis Donati.<sup>54</sup> He composed a hymn in Syriac in honour of the Most Holy Sacrament. Our Archbishop does not give him a chance to utilize his talents and abilities better.”<sup>55</sup>

Pieces of information like the one quoted above are very important for the reconstruction of the Syriac literacy in Malabar during this time, as it was through the mediation of such local priests (*kattanars*),<sup>56</sup> who functioned as *malpānē* (= “teachers” in Syriac), that the manuscripts were copied and Syriac knowledge transmitted. Yet, such complaints of the Malabar Christians were left unsolved and the relationship between them and the Jesuit Archbishop worsened.<sup>57</sup>

In a nutshell, the struggle of the Malabar Christians for preserving their connection to the Chaldean Church in Iraq, embodied by the Syriac bishops, rites and language, and for safeguarding the prominence of the institution of the archdeaconate led to their revolt against the Jesuits and the Portuguese in 1653 (the so-called “Bent Cross Oath”). The revolt erupted when Mar A’tallah, a former Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop of Damascus, who in 1631 entered Catholic communion, came to South India in order to take over the leadership of the Malabar Church. Mar A’tallah was sent to India by the Coptic Patriarch in Cairo, at the request of Archdeacon Thomas Pakalomattam. The context of this request was the irreconcilable conflict between the Archdeacon and Archbishop Garcia; thus, in 1648 or 1649, the Archdeacon sent letters to several Oriental patriarchs (among them the Coptic Patriarch in Cairo) asking for a bishop for his flock in Malabar.<sup>58</sup> Mar A’tallah’s arrival in South India was requested by Archdeacon Thomas Pakalomattam who was in conflict with the appointed Jesuit Archbishop, Francisco Garcia (1641-1659). Yet, the ship carrying Mar A’tallah to South India landed first at Meliapor, on the Coromandel Coast, in Tamil Nadu, and Mar A’tallah remained there, in the house of the Jesuits, for a while. Then, he embarked from Meliapor on a ship heading to Cochin with the intention of meeting the Archdeacon and the Malabar Christians; this ship reached Cochin in the last days of December 1652, but there Mar A’tallah was impeded from meeting with the Malabar Christians and the Archdeacon; moreover, the ship carrying the Syriac prelate was quickly averted to Goa, from where Mar A’tallah travelled to

<sup>53</sup> Giuseppe Maria Campori was Francisco Ros’ secretary. On Campori, see, for instance, Vincenzo Poggi, S.J., “Giesuiti e Diamper,” in Nedungatt (ed.), *The Synod of Diamper...*, 105-133.

<sup>54</sup> Francesco Donati was a Dominican missionary who knew well Hebrew, Arabic and Syriac; apparently, he opened a seminary in Kaduthuruthy, but was opposed by Archbishop Estevão de Brito (see Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians...*, 45).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>56</sup> “Cassanar” is the Portuguese spelling of “kattanan” which in Malayalam designates the local priests of the Malabar Christians.

<sup>57</sup> See Kollaparambil, *ibid.*, 83-93.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.



Europe. However, soon after this incident the rumour that the Syriac prelate was drown in the sea by the Portuguese spread among the Malabar Christians. and, as a result, they revolted against the Portuguese and their Jesuit Archbishop in 1653. Shortly after Mar A'tallah's ship was forced to leave Cochin heading to Goa, the revolting Malabar Christians chose Archdeacon Thomas as their Metropolitan bishop under the name Mar Thoma I and consecrated him uncanonically through the imposition of the hands of twelve local priests.<sup>59</sup>

Since after the revolt doubt was cast on the validity of Mar Thoma I's uncanonical consecration, a part of his followers returned to the fold of the Catholic Church, when Mar Thoma's own cousin, Alexander Parambil (1663-1687), was consecrated and appointed as their Syro-Catholic bishop. Alexander Parambil's consecration was performed in 1663 by Giuseppe Maria Sebastiani OCD, Apostolic Vicar, appointed directly by the pope, under the authority of the *Congregatio de propaganda fide*. A few years after Alexander Parambil's consecration as Syro-Catholic bishop of the Malabar Christians, in his turn, Mar Thoma I received a valid consecration, this time from a Syriac Orthodox prelate belonging to the Church of Antioch, namely from Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalil, the Metropolitan of Jerusalem, who arrived in Malabar in 1665.<sup>60</sup> All these events happened at a time when the power shifted in Malabar from the Portuguese to the Dutch: the Dutch capture of Cochin happened in 1663, and this had direct repercussions on the ecclesiastical life of the Malabar Christians, as it limited the interference of the Portuguese *Padroado* authorities in the community.

As a result of this split in the community, two rival groups were formed: "the Old Faction" (in Malayalam, *Paḷayakūr*), i.e. the group that remained in the Catholic fold, under the leadership of Alexander Parambil, and preserved the East Syriac liturgy revised by Francisco Ros, after the Synod of Diamper; and "the New Faction" (in Malayalam, *Puttaṅkūr*), i.e., the group lead by the Mar Thoma Metropolitans (their succession was hereditarily transmitted from uncle to nephew), who, since the second half of the seventeenth century, strove to adhere to the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, although at times they pendulated between Rome and Antioch for recognition or valid consecration.<sup>61</sup> It is a commonplace in historiography that the bond of the *Puttaṅkūr* with the Syriac Orthodox rite and liturgy started in the seventeenth century with Mar Thoma I's

<sup>59</sup> See *ibid.*, 107-167.

<sup>60</sup> See Joseph Thekkedath, *History of Christianity in India From the Middle of the Sixteenth to the End of the Seventeenth Century 1542-1700*, Vol. 2, (Bangalore: Church History Association of India, 1988): 100-102; on the mission of Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalil in India, see Ignatius Yaqoub III, *History of the Syrian Church of India*, transl. by Matti Moosa, (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009): 53-58.

<sup>61</sup> On this matter, see, for instance, John Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops, The Malabar Independent Syrian Church and Its Place in the Story of the St. Thomas Christians of South India*, Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 20, (Piscatway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009): 119-167. On the hesitance of the Mar Thoma Metropolitans between Rome and Antioch, see Placid Podipara, "The Efforts for Reunion in Malankara, South India," in Thomas Kalayil (ed.), *The Collected Works of Rev. Dr. Placid J. Podipara C.M.I., 1899-1985*, vol. 1 (Dr. Placid's Writings on the History of the Saint Thomas Christians of India), (Mannanam, Kerala: Sanjos Publications, 2007): 225-232.



consecration by a Syriac Orthodox prelate.<sup>62</sup> However, Fr. Cyril O.I.C. and John Fenwick have collected evidence that this process of adhesion to the Church of Antioch was a slow one and, at least up to 1750, both factions were using the Malabar Catholic version of the East Syriac liturgy as revised by Francisco Ros.<sup>63</sup> It was rather through the successive work of various Syriac Orthodox missionaries sent by the Church of Antioch, for more than a century and a half, that the Syriac Orthodox tradition consolidated in Malabar.

Among them, after Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalil, one should mention a certain Mor Andreos of Aleppo who came to South India in 1676 and is credited by the Patriarch Ignatius Yaqoub III with the consecration of Mar Thoma II (1670-1686: the nephew of Mar Thoma I), although this author doubts whether Andreos truly was a bishop or just a priest who pretended to be a bishop.<sup>64</sup> Mor Andreos is still venerated in Kallada where he spent his last years, as a saint under the name Kallada Muppan: the Kallada Elder. However, according to Paulinus of St. Bartholomew, he was a simple Jacobite priest of bad character who pretended to be a patriarch sent by the Pope and was not accepted even by Mar Thoma's party because of his drunkardly habits.<sup>65</sup> Recently, István Perczel published a letter to the Malabar faithful, written by the Syro-Catholic Patriarch of Aleppo, Ignatios Petros Kaahbadine, which claims that Andreos was a Syro-Catholic priest of bad character, who even apostatized to Islam. The letter, written in 1684, warns Peter's faithful in Malabar, not to listen to Andreos.<sup>66</sup> Nor does a letter by the Syrian Orthodox patriarch Iganitios Abd al-Masih II, sent in 1684 to Malabar with the second Syriac Orthodox mission of Mor Baselios Yaldo, know about Mor Andreos, which is a further proof that Andreos was an impostor, exploiting the troubled situation in Malabar.<sup>67</sup>

The most important West Syriac mission in Malabar in the seventeenth was that of the Maphrian Mor Baselios Yaldo and Mor Ivanios Hidayat Allah who arrived to Kerala in 1685. While Mor Baselios died shortly after reaching Malabar, Mor Ivanios is credited with organizing a Council at Chengannur in 1686.<sup>68</sup> As Fenwick notices, "Mor Ivanios seems to have adopted the approach of Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalil before him, and to have concentrated on the (re-)introduction of features

<sup>62</sup> See Thekkedath, *History of Christianity...*, 100-109.

<sup>63</sup> See Fr. Cyril O.I.C., "The Introduction of the Antiochene Rite into the Malankara Church," in Jacob Vellian (ed.), *The Malabar Church: Symposium in Honour of Rev. Placid J. Podipara C.M.I.*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 186, (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1970): 137-164. See as well Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 151 et passim. Ample evidence for this process is gathered throughout the whole of Fenwick's book.

<sup>64</sup> Although there is doubt whether Mar Andreas was indeed a bishop or just a priest who pretended to be a patriarch (Ignatius Yaqoub III, *History of the Syrian Church...*, 61-63).

<sup>65</sup> Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo, *India orientalis christiana, continens fundationes ecclesiarum, seriem episcoporum, missiones, schismata, persecutiones, reges, viros illustres*, (Rome: Typis Solomonianis, 1794): 96-97.

<sup>66</sup> See István Perczel, "Classical Syriac as a Modern Lingua Franca...", 315-17.

<sup>67</sup> See *ibid.*, 317.

<sup>68</sup> On the Council of Chengannur, see *ibid.*, 70-76.



that were common to both East and West Syrian traditions – of which the use of leavened bread was a major touchstone of Syrian authenticity for the Indians – while gradually increasing the West Syrian element.”<sup>69</sup> The same missionary strategy of progressively orienting the Malabar Christians towards the West Syriac tradition was continued by Mor Ivanios Yuhanon Ibn al Arqugiani, who reached Malabar in 1747.<sup>70</sup> However, for the consolidation of the liturgical practice of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch in Malabar, a key role was played by the mission of Mor Baselios Shukr Allah Qasagbi, Maphrian of the East; the prelate arrived on the Malabar Coast together with Mor Gregorios Yohanna, Metropolitan of Jerusalem, in 1751. In Fenwick’s words,

“From the 1750s onwards the West Syrian rites begin to make significant headway [to Malabar]. Hitherto there seems to have been indifference or resistance: when the Maphrian’s delegation had first arrived it found ‘only about fifteen priests [who] could speak Syriac, but they were not interested in our Syriac rite’. That now demonstrably changed. The substantial resources brought by Mar Basilios and his companions, together with their concerted effort to instruct a new generation of Indian priests in Syrian Orthodox rites was so successful that by 1778 the Puthenkuttukar were described by a Romo-Syrian as using the same liturgy as the Catholic Syrians in Antioch.”<sup>71</sup>

Beside its liturgical achievement, another outcome of this mission was the consecration of two rival lines of bishops among the *Puttaṅkūr*:

- (1) one line beginning with Abraham Kattumangat (Mar Koorilose I)<sup>72</sup> who was apparently consecrated bishop in the 1760s by Mor Baselios Shukr Allah and afterwards elevated to the rank of metropolitan bishop by Mor Gregorios Yohanna; this branch of the Western Syriac tradition became later the Malabar Independent Syrian Church of Thozhiyur;
- (2) a second chain of bishops who continued the lineage of the Mar Thoma Metropolitans, through the consecration of Mar Thoma VI as Mor Dionysius I by Mor Gregorios Yohanna in 1770.<sup>73</sup>

As Fenwick pointed out, the reason why the latter lineage got precedence over the former one within the *Puttaṅkūr* resides in the fact that after the revolt of 1653, with the lineage of the Mar Thoma Metropolitans, “a new role of ‘Malankara Metropolitan’ emerged – an Indian bishop who combined within his own person both the spiritual role of Metropolitan and the ‘head of community’ and ‘head of ecclesiastical administration’ roles traditionally exercised by the Archdeacons. Increasingly, as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries progressed, it was this combined role to which claimants aspired.”<sup>74</sup> Yet, in the nineteenth century, in the context of the British rule over Malabar, the Thozhiyur lineage of bishops did provide a West Syriac Metropolitan

<sup>69</sup> Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 151.

<sup>70</sup> See *ibid.*, 160-162.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 187. On this matter, see as well Fr. Cyril O.I.C., *The Introduction of the Antiochene Rite...*, 151.

<sup>72</sup> For the names of the bishops belonging to the MISC I have adopted the forms in use in Kerala, which are used throughout Fenwick’s book; for the same reason, I have used the title “Mar” instead of “Mor” to refer to prelates of the same Church, although I am aware that they belong to the West Syriac tradition.

<sup>73</sup> On the mission of 1751 and the consecration of two lines of bishops, see Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 193-345.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.



for the whole community of *Puttaṅkūr* Malankara Christians, in the person of Geeverghese Mar Philoxenos II.<sup>75</sup> This lineage of West Syriac bishops is important for the present inquiry, as manuscript material coming from the archives of the Church of Thozhiyur testify to the fact that the *Puttaṅkūr* continued to copy and adapt texts from its Syro-Catholic past for a West Syriac audience, after the revolt of 1653.

The following quote from Fenwick's work is illustrative regarding the complex relationship between the *Paḷayakūr* and the *Puttaṅkūr* after the revolt of 1653:

"Initially there was considerable fluidity and contact between the two groups [i.e., between the *Paḷayakūr* and the *Puttaṅkūr*]. This is illustrated by the fact that until the early nineteenth century a number of Churches were still being shared by Pazhayakuttukar and Puthenkuttukar. Visscher records that in the first decades of the 18th century, in some Churches 'the service is performed by the Syrians and Papists indifferently, not a little to the grief of the former who are scandalised at the multiplicity of images introduced by their rivals.' Nearly a century later again, when Kerr visited Kerala in 1806, he described how in some Churches the liturgy was performed in the 'Syrian and Latin rituals alternately by the priests of the Christians of St Thomas who have adhered to their ancient rites, and those who have been united to the Church of Rome. When the latter have celebrated Mass they carry away their images from the Church before the others enter.'"<sup>76</sup>

An important document testifying both to this fluidity, and to its crisis at the end of the eighteenth century, is a palm-leaf chronicle from Kuruppampady in Malayalam, from 1770, translated and annotated by Susan Thomas. The chronicle tells the story how, in 1768, a tension arose between the *Paḷayakūr* and the *Puttaṅkūr* concerning the utilization of the Church, which resulted in the majoritarian *Puttaṅkūr* paying off the *Paḷayakūr*, so that the latter may construct a new church, while the *Puttaṅkūr* kept the old church.<sup>77</sup> The same "fluidity and contact" between the two rival groups referred to by Fenwick is reflected at the level of the transmission of Syriac knowledge. Up to the nineteenth century, scribes from among the *Paḷayakūr* continued to copy East Syriac writings condemned by the Synod of Diamper<sup>78</sup> together with Syro-Catholic works originating from the literary output initiated by the Catholic missionaries in the second half of the sixteenth century. By the same token, copyists from among the *Puttaṅkūr* did not copy only works related to the literary, theological and liturgical heritage of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, but among others they continued to adapt and transmit Syro-Catholic works that, in the meanwhile, had become part of the literary canon of Syriac literacy in Malabar; if properly contextualized, such texts bear witness to the complicated and entangled religious landscape of the history of the Malabar Churches.

### 3. Syriac Catholic Literacy in Malabar and the *Malabar Sermonary*

To contextualize the Catholic missionary literature in Syriac, which emerged in Malabar in the sixteenth century and to show its impact on the Malabar Christians both in the times around the Synod of Diamper and after the revolt from 1653, it is necessary to make a few remarks on the

<sup>75</sup> On this matter, see *ibid.*, 347-375.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>77</sup> Susan Thomas, "The parting of ways: Ripples of the oath of Coonan Cross," *Oriens Christianus*, 91 (2007): 204-220.

<sup>78</sup> On this issue, see I. Perczel, *Some New Documents...*



previous Syriac textual tradition of the South Indian Christian community. As far as one can rely on the preserved and clearly dated evidence, the Syriac manuscript material from Malabar up to the 1560s generally consists of standard East Syriac literature, mostly liturgical material. Indicative in this sense are, for instance, the Syriac manuscripts from Malabar (either locally copied, or brought from the Middle East to South India) preserved in the Vatican Library and discussed by Van der Ploeg in his book *The Christians of St. Thomas in South India and Their Syriac Manuscripts*.<sup>79</sup> Most of them are standard East Syriac liturgical and biblical books belonging to the various Syriac prelates from Iraq consecrated and sent by their Patriarchs to the Malabar Coast for the local Christian community. Such works continued to be copied and eventually adapted by diligent local scribes fond of their Syriac Church and culture. It is possible that many of the East Syriac books condemned by the Synod of Diamper had belonged to only a very learned ecclesiastical elite directly related to the circle of Mar Abraham (?-1597), the last Chaldean Metropolitan of the Malabar Christians before the Synod of Diamper.<sup>80</sup> Yet, the continuous copying of several such condemned works by the Malayalee Syriacist scribes, throughout the centuries, is an indicator that at least some of them were quite popular among the Malabar Christians before and after the Synod of Diamper.<sup>81</sup>

Besides this, in the second half of the sixteenth century, a new Catholic culture in Syriac started to develop in Malabar comprising both translations/adaptations from Latin and European vernacular languages and original creations meant to compete and argue against East Syriac sources of authority. The earliest clearly dated Syro-Catholic compositions to be used in the Catholic mission among the Malabar Christians are from the year 1567.<sup>82</sup> It is possible that these Catholic texts were produced in response to the fact that by the early 1560s Mar Joseph, the Chaldean Metropolitan of Malabar and the brother of the first Chaldean Patriarch, John Sulaqa, refused to ordain to priesthood Malayalee pupils trained by the Franciscans in their seminary at Cochin, on account of their ignorance of the Syriac rites and language.<sup>83</sup> To the year 1567 one can link such works as: a

<sup>79</sup> Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas*..., 184-203.

<sup>80</sup> See Perczel, *Some New Documents*...; for the list of books condemned by the Synod of Diamper, see Da Cunha Rivara, *Archivo Portuguez-Oriental*, fasc. 4, 328-337.

<sup>81</sup> See Perczel, *Some New Documents*....

<sup>82</sup> I have not included here the text "on the administration of the Holy Orders" translated from Latin into Syriac by Mar Joseph, the Metropolitan of Malabar, comprised between fol. 1-10 of MS Vatican Syriac 66, as it is not clearly dated; on this matter, see Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas*..., 193-195. Apparently, the text is related to Mar Joseph's detention in Bassein (ibid., 194).

<sup>83</sup> See Thekkedath, *History of Christianity*..., 44.



collection of *testimonia* from the Greek and Latin Church Fathers on the primacy of Saint Peter over the whole Church<sup>84</sup> and the fragment of a Catholic sermon on vowing.

The sermon on vowing belongs to a larger corpus of Catholic sermons for various feast-days and commemorations of saints,<sup>85</sup> which makes the object of the present thesis. I will refer further to this collection as the *Malabar Sermonary*. The sermonary is similar to a standard collection of Catholic sermons from medieval and early modern Europe, and its contents was designed so as to teach the Indian audience biblical exegesis as it was practice in Europe in the Middle Ages. Further on, I will provide a detailed account on its contents, manuscript tradition, intended audience and function. The sermonary reflects the appropriation of the European knowledge on constructing scholastic and humanistic sermons according to the rules prescribed by the *artes praedicandi* (European medieval handbooks on composing sermons); this literary genre was foreign to the Syriac literature from the Middle East. The Indian Syriacist scribes copied these sermons in independent collections with a life of their own, but occasionally manuscripts of the *Malabar Sermonary* contain other material as well besides sermons;<sup>86</sup> yet, as I will argue, the sermonary was intended as a unitary collection. In the times around the Synod of Diamper other sermons have been added to the collection and the Malayalee scribes continued to copy and adapt these texts until the nineteenth century.

Some texts from the sermonary reflect the effort of the missionaries to accommodate Catholic doctrine to a community keen on preserving its East Syriac traditions and must have been composed within the Syriacist circles of Francisco Ros. Such is, for instance, a sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle, an original composition based on both Latin sources from Europe and Syriac Middle Eastern sources.<sup>87</sup> As source analysis suggests, this sermon must have been composed sometimes in the first decades of the seventeenth century, after 1601.<sup>88</sup> As I will further, the sermon was the source of new liturgical poetry included in the Malabar Catholic revision of the East Syriac ritual prescribed by the Synod of Diamper and done in the times of Francisco Ros.<sup>89</sup> Another similar example on adjusting Catholic doctrine to an East Syriac audience is a *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*.<sup>90</sup> In the second chapter of the thesis, I argue that these two sermons (on the Apostle

<sup>84</sup> See I. Perczel, "Description and cataloguing of Codex Mannanam Syriacus 46," in Radu Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas the Beloved Apostle: A Syriac Catholic Panegyric from Seventeenth Century Malabar*, Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 54 (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2019): 98, 100.

<sup>85</sup> The texts are comprised between fol. 33r-37v and 113r-118r of the manuscript. On this, see I. Perczel's description of the manuscript: *ibid.*, 97-103; the MS is also mentioned in Emmanuel Thelly, "Syriac Manuscripts in Mannanam Library," *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 84 (2004):, 268.

<sup>86</sup> Two such examples are MSS Mannanam Syriac 46 (described by I. Perczel in Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 97-103) and Thrissur Syriac 17 (on this MS, see Mustăță, *ibid.*, 103-112; Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas...*, 145; Mar Aprem, *Assyrian Manuscripts in India*, (Thrissur: Mar Narsai Press, 2011): 16).

<sup>87</sup> See Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-31.

<sup>89</sup> See the third chapter of the thesis.

<sup>90</sup> I am discussing this text in the second chapter of the thesis.



Thomas and on the afflictions of the righteous) must have been written by Francisco Ros himself.<sup>91</sup> The sermonary addressing the audience of the Malabar Christians, might have been used for teaching purposes, perhaps for the instruction of future priests in the seminary. This is suggested by the fact that after 1653 (when the Malabar Christians revolted against the Portuguese and the Jesuit Archbishops) the Syriac Orthodox branch of Syriac Christians from Malabar re-edited and reused this sermonary, and even composed sermons according to the prescriptions of the European medieval *artes praedicandi* in order to polemicize with their Syro-Catholic rivals. One such Syriac Orthodox composition belonging to the same literary genre is the untitled sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* edited and discussed in the first chapter of the thesis. This practice of writing sermons in Syriac, while observing the rules of European medieval *artes praedicandi* was already embedded in the compositions belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary*.

Together with a variety of other literary and theological texts, the sermonary seems to have been part of the Syriac institution in Malabar at the turn of seventeenth century. While there is need for further research in order to identify which compositions belong to the year 1567 and which ones have been added later, it seems that the majority of the sermons from the collection were composed around the Synod of Diamper and reflect the activity of Francisco Ros and his circle. Arguably from the same literary setting, István Perczel announced the discovery of: original theological treatises on various topics, compilations on canon-law, Syriac-Garshuni Malayalam explanations on the books of the Bible, translations from Latin of biblical or Patristic works (such as a translation of the Revelation of John on the basis of the Vulgate, or a translation of Pseudo-Dionysius' "Mystical Theology" from the Latin version by Ambrogio Traversari), and commentaries on various biblical works by Western authors such as Denis the Carthusian;<sup>92</sup> all these works need further study. While there is need for substantial research to establish the precise date and authorship of these texts, they still provide the general picture of a Syriac *paideia* in Malabar against which the texts referred to in this thesis can be better understood.

Almost a century later, a similar Catholic literary movement in Syriac took place in the Middle East, after the establishment of the Capuchin mission in Aleppo, in 1667. In this context of Catholic consolidation, many Catholic literary and theological works have been composed, compiled, and translated into Syriac, through the literary activity of learned men such as Joseph II Ṣliba, the Patriarch of the Chaldeans (1696-1714).<sup>93</sup> The Syriac Catholic material from the Middle East has

<sup>91</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> On the discovery of these texts, see Perczel, *What Can a Nineteenth-Century Syriac Manuscript Teach Us...*; see as well *id.*, *Classical Syriac as Modern Lingua Franca....* and Perczel with the contribution of Mustaṭā, *Notes on Syriac Learning....*

<sup>93</sup> See Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 60-68.



been usually compiled or translated from Latin into Syriac through the intermediary of already existing Arabic translations.<sup>94</sup> Compared to this, the distinctive textual peculiarity of the Syriac Catholic texts from Malabar seems to be precisely the fact that they lack such an Arabic intermediary and reflect the connection of the Malabar Christians with the Iberian Peninsula at the turn of the seventeenth century; thus, from a glocal perspective, they enrich our understanding on the variety of Catholic missions and their literary expression among different groups of Syriac Christians in different parts of the world, in the early modern times.

#### 4. The *Malabar Sermonary*

##### 4.1. Title

Throughout this thesis I will refer to this collection of Catholic sermons in Syriac from Malabar as the *Malabar Sermonary*, which is a convention. The actual title of the collection appears in only one manuscript: MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 125r, before a sermon for the First Sunday of the Lent:<sup>95</sup>

“Book of Sermons and Discourses Useful for the People” (ܡܠܟܬܐ ܕܡܫܠܝܢ ܘܡܠܟܬܐ ܕܡܫܠܝܢ ܕܡܫܠܝܢ).

Although in the Thrissur MS the title of the sermonary is inserted in the middle of the manuscript, one can reconstruct the fact that this must have been the initial title of the collection, since with the same sermon<sup>96</sup> begins the oldest extant copy of the sermonary (MS Mannanam Syriac 46). However, from the beginning of MS Mannanam Syriac 46 one or two folios have been lost, so the title and the beginning of the sermon are missing. While the term (ܡܠܟܬܐ) means in Syriac “answer”,

“response”, but also “meaning”, “conversation”, it is most likely that the expression (ܡܠܟܬܐ ܕܡܫܠܝܢ)

from the title was intended as a calque in translation of the Latin expression *discursus et sermones* present in the title of various medieval and early modern European collections of sermons. Such was, for instance, the title of a famous collection of sermons from the sixteenth century Iberian Peninsula: the fourth volume from the *Flos Sanctorum* by Alonso/Alfonso de Villegas y Selvago entitled *Flos sanctorum quarta y ultima parte y discursos o sermones sobre los evangelios de todas las dominicas del año, ferias de quaresma y de sanctos principals*.<sup>97</sup> This Iberian collection of

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 245-252.

<sup>95</sup> The sermon is recorded under number 8b in the synopsis that I have provided in Appendix 1. All further references to the sermons in the thesis are given according to the numbers that I assigned to them in the synopsis.

<sup>96</sup> Sermon 8b in the synopsis.

<sup>97</sup> This is the title from the second edition of the collection, Alexander S. Wilkinson (ed.), *Iberian Books: Books Published in Spanish of Portuguese or in the Iberian Peninsula before 1601*, (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 762 (recorded under no. 19582), as in the first edition, the collection is simply entitled: *Flos sanctorum quarta y ultimate parte* (see *ibid.*, recorded under no. 19577). On various Iberian collections called *Flos Sanctorum*, see José Aragüés Aldaz, “La difusa autoría del Flos Sanctorum: Silencios, presencias, imposturas,” in Maud Le Guellec (ed.), *El autor oculto en la literatura española. Siglos XIX a XVIII*, Collection de la Casa de Velázquez (140), (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2014): 21-40; *id.*, “Para el estudio del Flos Sanctorum Renascentista (I): la conformación de un género,” in M. Vitse (ed.), *Homenaje a Henri Guerreiro. La hagiografía entre historia y literature en la España de la Edad Media y del Siglo de Oro*, (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2005): 97-147; *id.*, “Los Flores Sanctorum medievales y renacentistas. Brevisimo panorama crítico,” in Natalia Fernández Rodríguez and Maria Fernández Ferreiro (eds.), *Literatura medieval y*



sermons was first published in Madrid in 1589.<sup>98</sup> It was part of a work in five volumes, of which the first three volumes consisted of the lives of Christ, of the Virgin Mary and of saints, the fourth volume was devoted to sermons, while the fifth volume entitled *Fructus Sanctorum* contained compilations of *exempla* to be used for preaching. The link of the *Malabar Sermonary* to Villegas' collection is supported by the fact that besides sermons, the oldest manuscript of the collection (MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 184vA-187vB) contains an extract from a series of *exempla* about Marian miracles; these *exempla* were translated or rather adapted from Spanish into Syriac from Villegas' *Fructus Sanctorum*. I have provided a study and a detailed description of this translation in the appendix.<sup>99</sup>

#### 4.2. Sermons belonging to the corpus

Based on the manuscript evidence gathered so far, I have collected seventy-two sermons. The synopsis following the introduction of this thesis records the manuscript tradition for every single piece and I will use its numbering for further reference throughout the thesis. The *Malabar Sermonary* contains sixty-eight Catholic sermons which were composed in the Catholic mission among the Malabar Christians at least since 1567; as mentioned above, the source analysis indicates that perhaps most of the sermons were written in the times around the Synod of Diamper (1599). After the revolt of 1653, the corpus was modified and reedited among the *Puttaṅkūr*, i.e., the Malabar Christians who gradually adopted the West Syriac tradition of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch. As I will show further, two more sermons (3b and 31b in the synopsis) preserved only in the Syriac Orthodox revision of the corpus must have had an initial Catholic version. In addition to this, the consulted manuscripts also contain two Syriac Orthodox sermons (46 and 47 in the synopsis) which were composed according to the rules prescribed by the European *artes praedicandi*; these two pieces show the adoption of the same European literary genre among the *Puttaṅkūr* due to the influence of the *Malabar Sermonary* which was in use among the *Paḷayakūr*.

#### 4.3. Manuscripts

So far I have collected five manuscripts that contain the *Malabar Sermonary*, although given the state of the art in the field, there might be more manuscripts preserved in private libraries of the Malabar Christians in Kerala. None of these five manuscripts contain a colophon; the oldest one,

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*renacentista en España: líneas y pautas*, (Salamanca: La Semyr, 2012): 349-361; Mathilde Albisson, "El flos sanctorum castellano: de las compilaciones medievales a los legendarios postridentinos. Evolución de un subgénero hagiográfico entre continuidad y ruptura," in Christoph Strosetzki (ed.), *Perspectivas actuales del hispanismo mundial*, vol.1, Wissenschaftliche Schriften der WWU Münster 22.1 (Münster: ULB, 2019): 53-65; Helena Carvajal González and Silvia González-Sarasa Hernáez. "Los *Flos Sanctorum*: La impronta de la tradición manuscrita en la evolución de un *producto editorial*," in Fernández Rodríguez, *Literatura medieval...*, 433-442; Jonathan Greenwood, "Floral Arrangements: Compilations of Saints' Lives in Early Modern Europe," *Journal of Early Modern History* 22 (2018): 181-203.

<sup>98</sup> Wilkinson, *Iberian Books...*, 762 (recorded under no. 19577).

<sup>99</sup> See Appendix 2.



MS Mannanam Syriac 46 was dated by István Perczel to the seventeenth century<sup>100</sup> and it contains the initial Catholic redaction of the sermonary. In addition to Syriac sermons, between fol. 210r-240r, this manuscript also contains a group of shorter sermons written in Garshuni Malayalam (i.e., Malayalam written in Syriac script with a series of additional signs)<sup>101</sup> which belong to a different literary genre; these texts are rather a sort of “harmony” of the Gospels for every feast day and reflect the fact that the missionaries did not have a standard translation of the Bible into the vernacular<sup>102</sup>. There is need for further research in order to establish the relationship between these sermons in Malayalam and the Syriac sermons. The same initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary* is contained in two nineteenth century manuscripts: MS Thrissur Syriac 17 and MS Mannanam Syriac 47.

MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1, which is a mid-eighteenth century codex, contains the West Syriac recension of the sermonary; in addition to Catholic sermons from the corpus which were rewritten among the Syriac Orthodox Christians from Malabar after 1653, it contains a Syriac Orthodox sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* (sermon 47 in the synopsis) fashioned according to the pattern of European medieval sermons, while using sources read in West Syriac circles; the study of this sermon makes the object of the first chapter of this thesis. As already mentioned above, two other sermons from the same manuscript do not survive in their initial Catholic redaction, but only in this West Syriac revision of the sermonary circulating among the Puttāṅkūr; such is a sermon on the Revelation of Christ to the Magi comprised between fol. 38r-43r (3b in the synopsis) and a sermon on the Eucharist, comprised between fol. 1r-12v (31b in the synopsis). The sermon on the Revelation to the Magi must have been initially written in Catholic milieu as it quotes from Latin Church Fathers, such as Cyprian of Carthage (fol. 39r). As will be shown further, an initial Catholic version of the sermon on the Eucharist (31b in the synopsis) was used as a source for liturgical poetry included in the Malabar Catholic revision of the East Syriac ritual after the Synod of Diamper.<sup>103</sup>

MS Ernakulam Syriac 31 is a very interesting nineteenth century codex, mainly consisting of sermons from the initial Catholic redaction of the corpus. It shares with other manuscripts of the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary* three sermons: a sermon on Palm Sunday (14a in the synopsis), a sermon on the commemoration of all saints (27 in the synopsis) and a sermon on

<sup>100</sup> Perczel, *Description and Cataloguing of Codex Mannanam Syriacus 46*, 97-98.

<sup>101</sup> On Garshuni Malayalam, see id., “Garshuni Malayalam: A Witness to An early Stage of Indian Christian Literature,” *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 17.2 (2014): 263-323.

<sup>102</sup> I would like to thank Professor Ophira Gamliel from the University of Glasgow for teaching me Malayalam and for reading with me a Garshuni Malayalam sermon on the Palms Sunday, comprised in the same manuscript between fol. 212rV-213vA. On the Garshuni Malayalam sermons, see the section “Audience, language, and function” of this introduction.

<sup>103</sup> See the third chapter of the thesis.



the evangelists (29 in the synopsis). Yet, the majority of the sermons from this manuscript, especially the quadragesimal section is not preserved in other manuscripts. One of the intriguing pieces from this manuscript is an untitled sermon on Lazarus and the rich man (sermon 46 in the synopsis). Like the Sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr studied in the first chapter of this thesis (sermon 47 in the synopsis), it is a Syriac Orthodox sermon fashioned upon the pattern of European sermons, while using West Syriac sources; for instance, on fol. 200r the sermon refers to Severus of Antioch as “Holy Mor Severios, the glorified Patriarch of Antioch” (ܡܪ ܫܠܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܦܬܪܝܚܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܘܟܐ).<sup>104</sup>

#### 4.4. Date

From the initial Catholic redaction of the sermonary only one piece is clearly dated: a fragment of a sermon on vowing, which is comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 35vA-37vB (32 in the synopsis); this fragment consisting of the second half of the sermon on vowing was pasted to the first half of another sermon on the Elevation of the Holy Cross from MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 33rB-35vA (26a in the synopsis), and reflects an accident in the transmission history of the text. In the end of the fragment of the sermon on vowing, either the author or the scribe who copied this piece wrote: (ܬܠܬܝܬܐ ܕܝܠܘܠ ܕܝܠܘܠܐ) “on the 11<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* (September), 1567 A.D.”<sup>105</sup> The same sermon is completely preserved only in its West Syriac revision, in MS Thozhiyur 1: fol. 68v-75r, where it bears the title: (ܐܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ ܕܝܬܐ) “Again, a sermon on the one who makes a vow, and on vowing.”<sup>106</sup>

On the basis of source analysis, it is clear however, that other compositions have been added to the corpus at a later stage, sometime around the Synod of Diamper; for instance, the sermon for the feast of Saint Thomas the Apostle (sermon 22 in the synopsis) must have been written after 1601, as it made use of Pedro Ribadeneira's *Flos Sanctorum* (whose second volume was first published in 1601),<sup>107</sup> but since the same Syriac sermon was used as a source for liturgical poetry prescribed by the Synod of Diamper, the sermon most likely dates from the first decade of the seventeenth century.<sup>108</sup> As I will show in the second chapter of the thesis, the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (number 36 in the synopsis) and the sermon for the feast day of the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis), made use of a *Treatise on Tribulation* by the same Pedro

<sup>104</sup> There is need for further study in order to establish whether the circulation, recension and reediting of the *Malabar Sermonary* among the *Putankūr* is reflected as well on other compositions from this manuscript.

<sup>105</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 37vB.

<sup>106</sup> MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 68v.

<sup>107</sup> See Mustată, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 24-31.

<sup>108</sup> On this matter, see the third chapter of the thesis.



Ribadeneyra, whose first edition was published in 1589.<sup>109</sup> These individual examples show that the sermonary was not a monolithic collection, but was rather conceived as an open corpus to which various pieces were added at different times, at least since 1567, by more than a single author; none of the sermons belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary* contains any explicit mark of authorship. To determine further elements for dating, there is need for substantial philological research and source analysis on each piece from the corpus. This cannot be properly done without editing, translating, and studying thoroughly every single composition from the sermonary.

#### 4.5. Audience, language, and function

The title “Book of Sermons and Discourses Useful for the People” suggests that the *Malabar Sermonary* was intended as a collection of model sermons *ad populum*, i.e., that it was intended for a lay audience. However, as David d’Avray observes,

“The audience and function of model sermon collections may have been much less specific than we have tended to assume. Though to preach the sermons to people was the most common way of using them, it is difficult to find evidence that this was their exclusive function or audience [...]. It may be better to think of them as a cultural phenomenon in which both clergy and laity participated in different ways and degrees.”<sup>110</sup>

Indeed, the *Malabar Sermonary* seems to have been written initially for the education of the local Syriac clergy in the seminary; one of the main functions of the collection was to introduce to future priests both sermon-writing and the rudiments of biblical exegesis, as it was practiced in medieval and early modern Europe. Some of the more elaborate sermons from the collection would occasionally engage in quite sophisticated theological debates, which suggests that at least a part of the sermons served multiple audiences (i.e., they were addressed to both clergy and laypeople).<sup>111</sup> Such is, for instance, a sermon for the Assumption of the Virgin (number 24c in the synopsis), which depicts Esther as a prefiguration of Virgin Mary. This sermon puts an emphasis on the theology of Virgin Mary as God-Bearer, and collects many *auctoritates* from: Ambrose, Ephrem the Syrian, Jerome, John Chrysostom, Eusebius of Emesa, John of Damascus, Anselm of Canterbury, and the Patriarch of Venice Lawrence Justinian (1382-1456). In MS Thrissur Syriac 17, when copying this sermon, the scribe wrote in the margins of the folios the names of the Church Fathers from whose writings these *auctoritates* were excerpted; this fact again points to the need of the priest/preacher to have preaching material quickly available.<sup>112</sup>

In addition to this, sometimes the authors of these Syriac sermons inserted in their text allegories/tropological interpretations, which targeted the clergy. For instance, in the end of the

<sup>109</sup> See the second chapter of the thesis.

<sup>110</sup> David d’Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars. Sermons diffused from Paris before 1300*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985): 64.

<sup>111</sup> On this issue, see Louis-Jacques Bataillon, “Approaches to the Study of Medieval Sermons,” in *La predication au XIIIe siècle en France et Italie. Études et documents*, (Ashgate: Variorum, 1993): 25 (the first essay in the volume).

<sup>112</sup> The text of the sermon is to be found in MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 188r-194r.



sermon on the Apostle Thomas from the sermonary (number 22 in the synopsis), its author (presumably Francisco Ros) introduced an allegorical interpretation about the Ephraimites, from Judges 12, while criticizing the corrupt life of the clergy.<sup>113</sup> The source of this interpretation is the *Literal Postill*, a systematic biblical commentary, by the Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra (1270-1349); in his *Postill* Nicholas of Lyra endows the same passage from Judges 12 with a tropological interpretation about the corrupt life of the clergy.<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, the fact that the collection was first intended for priests who in their turn would mediate theology and exegesis to a lay audience, can be inferred from the *prothema* (or prologue) of a sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis) which starts with the words:

[illegible][illegible]

The sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* were written in Syriac because Classical Syriac was the language of theology and liturgy among the Malabar Christians. Composing these sermons implied

<sup>113</sup> See Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 89-90.

<sup>114</sup> *Biblia Sacra cum Glossa interlineari, ordinaria, et Nicolai Lyrani Postilla, eiusdem Moralitytibus, Burgensis Additionibus, et Thoringi Replicis. Tomus Secundus: Continet Libros Iosue, Iudicum, Ruth, Regum, Paralipomenon, Esdrae, Neemiae, Tobiae, Iudith, et Esther*, (Venice: 1588): fol. 48r.

<sup>115</sup> Ante correctionem (تِلْكَ); post correctionem (تِلْكَ).

<sup>116</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 206r.

<sup>117</sup> See 1 Kings 6: 31-32.

<sup>118</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 26rA.

<sup>119</sup> d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars...*, 130.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.



a great effort from the part of the Catholic missionaries, who took pains to translate from Latin, adapt and replicate (often artificially) categories and terminology specific to medieval European theology, but alien to the Syriac culture. All this effort to provide material for instruction in Syriac emphasizes once again the didactic function of the *Malabar Sermonary* for the local Syriac clergy from Malabar. As part of the newly created Syro-Catholic literacy in Malabar, the sermonary was probably meant to compete with and replace East Syriac literature of instruction; a popular East Syriac text of instruction was Išo'dad of Merw's *Commentary on the Gospels* which was condemned by the Synod of Diamper<sup>121</sup> and remained quite popular among the Malabar Christians, being copied by diligent scribes up to the nineteenth century.<sup>122</sup>

Yet, if these sermons were also to be delivered to laypeople, they must have been delivered in Malayalam and not in Syriac, which was the language known only by a priestly elite; therefore, the delivery of these sermons must have been mediated through priests. There is further evidence on such priestly mediation: according to a Jesuit annual letter dated to the 7th of November 1594, Francisco Ros taught Archdeacon George of the Cross Syriac<sup>123</sup> and, on the feast day of the Assumption of the Virgin (i.e., on the 15th of August 1594), the archdeacon preached (presumably in Malayalam) a sermon which Francisco Ros made him write in Syriac. On this issue, the letter annual letter reads:

“On the day of the Assumption of our Lady, [the archdeacon] publicly preached a sermon that the Father [i.e., Francisco Ros] made him write in Syriac, in which sermon [the archdeacon] said many devote and Catholic things which are very much against other apocryphal and false [teachings] that they hold concerning this feast day. [He preached], saying in the beginning of his sermon, that what he was preaching now was truly the teaching of the Holy Mother Church, and that the things different from these [teachings], that [the people] had heard previously from both him and the other kattanars, were false, and that for as many years as he had lived he remained in [these errors] because of his ignorance. And when some people asked him how was it that he was preaching such new [teachings] which were never heard before among them, he answered: ‘I have understood that we have many errors and false teachings spread throughout our books, which are very much against our salvation’.”<sup>124</sup>

<sup>121</sup> For the list of condemned books by the Synod of Diamper, see the Acts of the Synod of Diamper, Third Action, chapter 14, decree 14 (Da Cunha Rivara, *Arquivo Portuguez-Oriental*, fasc. 4., 330-337; the *Commentary* of Išo'dad of Merw is mentioned on page 334 as the “The Exposition of the Gospels”).

<sup>122</sup> See Perczel, *Some New Documents...*, 422-425.

<sup>123</sup> See Josef Wicki, S.J. and John Gomes, S.J. (eds.), *Documenta Indica XVI (1592-1594)*, Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu 127, (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1984): 742.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 742-743: *Dia de Asumpção da N. Senhora pregou elle publicamente hum sermão que o Padre lhe fes escrever em suriano, no qual disse muitas cousas devotas e catholicas mui contrarias às outras apocriphas e falças que elles acerca desta festa tem; dizendo no cabo da pregação que, o que lhe então pregara, era verdadeiramente a doutrina da santa Madre Igreja, e as cousas que dantes tinham ouvido assy a elle como aos outros casanairos diferentes destas serão falsas, em que por sua ignorancia avia tantos annos que estavam. E preguntando-lhe alguns como preguava cousas tão novas e nunca ovidas entre elles, respondeo: «Entendei que temos muitos erros e falcidades semeadas por nossos livros mui contrarias a nossa salvação[...].»* The document is mentioned by Mecherry, *Testing Ground...*, 133.



As I mentioned above, the oldest copy of the *Malabar Sermonary* (MS Mannanam 46) contains, besides these Syriac sermons, simpler sermons written in Garshuni Malayalam which were conceived as a sort of harmony of the Gospel readings for a given feast day. The presence of both types of sermons in the same manuscript most likely envisaged two types of lay instruction. As shown by the same David d'Avray, it is not uncommon for medieval and early modern preaching to have "two distinct types of preaching to the laity, one elementary and the other one in a sense supplementary [...]; the relative infrequency of straightforward catechetical instruction in model sermons becomes more comprehensible if such instruction was given by a more elementary sort of preaching."<sup>125</sup> According to this classification one might derive that the sermons written in Garshuni Malayalam were probably intended for a more basic instruction, while the Syriac model sermons, which were also used for instructing the future priests, became part of the "supplementary" preaching for the laypeople.

#### 4.6. Literary genre and the connection with the European tradition of sermon-writing

From a formal, literary point of view, the *Malabar Sermonary* comprises both compositions which resemble medieval model sermons from Europe constructed according to the rules imposed by the *artes praedicandi* (handbooks on composing sermons),<sup>126</sup> and sermons influenced by the classical rhetoric specific to the so-called humanistic sermons;<sup>127</sup> in addition to this, some compositions from the corpus seem to be a hybrid between a sermon and a commentary. To formally contextualize the Syriac sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary*, I have relied on the fundamental work on the medieval sermons done by David d'Avray,<sup>128</sup> Louis-Jacques Bataillon,<sup>129</sup> and Nicole Bériou,<sup>130</sup> as well as on John O'Malley's description of the humanistic sermon as a literary genre.<sup>131</sup> The emergence of the medieval model sermon (also called "scholastic" sermon, "thematic" sermon or *sermo modernus*) as a literary genre has been linked to the foundation of the first universities in Europe, and the genre

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None of the three Syriac sermons devoted to the Assumption of the Virgin from the *Malabar Sermonary* (see number 24 in the synopsis) contains a prologue which would correspond with the description from this letter.

<sup>125</sup> d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars...*, 82.

<sup>126</sup> On *artes praedicandi*, see M. G. Briscoe, "Artes Praedicandi," in M. Briscoe and B. H. Jaye, *Artes Praedicandi. Artes Orandi*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992): 11-76; see as well Phyllis B. Roberts, "The *Ars Praedicandi* and the Medieval Sermon," in Carolyn Muessig (ed.), *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages*, (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002): 41-62; see as well, Siegfried Wenzel, *Medieval Artes Praedicandi: A Synthesis of Scholastic Sermon Structure*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

<sup>127</sup> John O'Malley, "Chapter 2: The New Rhetoric: *Ars Laudandi et Vituperandi*," in *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome. Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reforms in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521*, (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1979): 36-76

<sup>128</sup> d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars...*

<sup>129</sup> Bataillon, *La predication au XIIIe siècle...*

<sup>130</sup> Nicole Bériou, *L'avènement des maîtres de la Parole: La prédication à Paris au XIIIe siècle*, vol. 1-2, (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1998); ead., "Les sermons latins après 1200," in Beverly M. Kienzle (ed.), *The Sermon, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge Occidental* 81, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000): 363-445.

<sup>131</sup> John O'Malley, *Praise and Blame...*



bloomed especially since the thirteenth century.<sup>132</sup> In a recent work, Randall B. Smith devotes a chapter to the elements of a medieval model sermon,<sup>133</sup> and describes its structure as follows:

“After stating his opening *thema* – a Bible verse normally chosen from among the lectionary readings for the day – the medieval preacher would make a *divisio* of the verse into several parts, each of which was associated with a separate section of the sermon. [...] The three basic elements of the *sermo modernus*-style sermon were (1) the *thema*, (2) the *divisio* of the *thema*, and (3) the *dilatatio* of each of the parts created by this opening *divisio*. Members created by the opening *divisio* could be subdivided and then subdivided again if the preacher wished. [...] Further subdivisions of such subdivisions were not uncommon. Medieval preachers also sometimes added a relatively brief introduction section after the statement of the *thema* verse, the *prothema*, which had its own *divisio* and *dilatatio* and finished with a brief prayer.”<sup>134</sup>

Smith emphasizes how the medieval preacher divided in a very well-ordered manner the preaching material to obtain the desired sermon; the mechanisms of dividing the preaching material several times, achieved through the use of *distinctiones* supported and developed through *similia*, *exempla*, and *auctoritates* from Scriptures and the Church Fathers is, in fact, the main characteristic of the thirteenth century sermon. As Louis-Jacques Bataillon underlines, in the thirteenth century, the collections of *distinctiones* and of *exempla* became the most important preaching tools in achieving this goal.<sup>135</sup> The collections of *distinctiones* recorded the various spiritual meanings of words from Scriptures, assisting the preacher in the process of “dividing” and developing the preaching material. As Richard and Mary Rouse noted,

“In the first half of the thirteenth century, preachers often employed distinctions per se in their sermons, citing them to illustrate the meaning of various words which occurred in the Bible-text that constituted the sermon’s theme. But as the century progressed and sermons became more highly structured, preachers seemed to recur to collections of distinctions principally as a source of sermon structure, as a storehouse of ready-to-wear divisions on a theme. A preacher would take a distinction apart and employ each separate symbolic meaning of a word as a topic or subtopic to formulate the divisions and subdivisions of his sermon.”<sup>136</sup>

In their turn, the collections of *exempla* contained short edifying stories taken out from their original context, which were interwoven by the preachers in the narrative of their sermons.<sup>137</sup> All these distinctive elements, preaching aids and categories created a sort of common language of medieval preaching which the *Malabar Sermonary* assimilated. Most of the sermons in the corpus show

<sup>132</sup> On the development of the genre in the twelfth century, see Mark Zier, “Sermons of the Twelfth Century Schoolmasters and Canons,” in Beverly M. Kienzle (ed.), *The Sermon*, 325-362.

<sup>133</sup> Randall B. Smith, “The Basic elements of the Thirteenth-Century *Modern Sermon*,” in *Aquinas, Bonaventure, and the Scholastic Culture of Medieval Paris: Preaching, Prologues and Biblical Commentaries*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021): 45-66.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 46-48. On the structure of the sermon see as well Bériou, *Les sermons latins...*, 370-382.

<sup>135</sup> Bataillon, “Les instruments de travail des prédicateurs au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,” in *La predication...*, 200 (the fourth essay in the volume).

<sup>136</sup> Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, “Biblical Distinctions in the Thirteenth Century,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 41 (1974): 36-37. On *distinctiones*, see as well Bataillon, “Intermédiaires entre le traités de morale pratique et les sermons: les *distinctiones* pratiques alphabétiques,” in *La predication...*, 213-226 (the sixth essay in the volume); also see Siegfried Wenzel, “*Distinctiones* and Sermons: The *Distinctiones* Lathbury (*Alphabetum Morale*) and Other Collections in Fourteenth-Century England,” *Mediaeval Studies* 78 (2016): 181-202. See as well the online resources provided by the project led by Marjorie Burghart, entitled “Distinguo: Studying Distinctiones, the Backbones of Medieval Latin Preaching,” accessible at: <https://distinguo.hypotheses.org/>.

<sup>137</sup> On *exemplum*, see C. Bremond, J. Le Goff et al., *L’«Exemplum»*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge Occidental Fasc. 40, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982); see as well Marie-Anne Polo de Beaulieu, Pascal Collomb et al. (eds.), *Le tonnerre des exemples: Exempla et médiation culturelle dans l’Occident médiéval*, (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010).



structural similarities with collections of medieval sermons; such similarities consist, for instance, in the use of the *prothema* leading to the initial prayer. However, the use of *distinctiones* and the divisions specific to medieval sermons do not appear in the Syriac collection of sermons as coherent as they do in medieval European sermons.

In fact, to give account of both the connection and the gap between the *Malabar Sermonary* and the medieval model sermons, it is important to mention that the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* seem to have incorporated and synthesized the essential elements of medieval preaching under the influence of the Spanish sermons by Alonso de Villegas from the fourth volume of his *Flos Sanctorum*. In his sermons, Villegas also used *prothemata* leading to the initial prayer, but again, he did not display the same systematic division of the preaching material according to *distinctiones* as a medieval scholastic sermon. As mentioned above, besides sermons, the oldest manuscript of the *Malabar Sermonary* (MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 184vA-187vB) contains an extract from a series of Marian *exempla*; these *exempla* were translated or rather adapted from Spanish into Syriac from the fifth volume of Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*, entitled *Fructus Sanctorum*,<sup>138</sup> a fact that clearly proves the influence of Villegas' work on the *Malabar Sermonary*.

Yet, as I mentioned before, the *Malabar Sermonary* is not a monolithic corpus; among others, it contains a couple of sermons which begin with the *thema*, being immediately followed by a threefold *divisio thematis* (like a medieval scholastic sermon). For instance, a sermon for Christmas (number 1a in the synopsis)<sup>139</sup> begins in the following way:

بعض قوسیدان [.] حالانکہ یہ ممکن ہے کہ حق، مصدقہ و ذوق،<sup>140</sup> الحرف، ہمدان، سحر،<sup>141</sup> ذوق، صبح، صبح  
 دہی، نعمت، حتمی، ہالانکہ یہ ممکن ہے کہ حق، مصدقہ و ذوق،<sup>142</sup> الحرف، ہمدان، سحر،<sup>141</sup> ذوق، صبح، صبح

*“A decree went out [Luke 2: 1]. In the feast of today three things are announced to you: (1) first, the joy greater than all, that happened today in heavens and on earth for the Nativity of our Lord; (2) secondly, I am letting you know the reasons why our Lord was born; (3) thirdly, I am showing you the fruits of His birth.”*

A similar structure appears in another sermon for Easter (number 16d in the synopsis). While most of the sermons from the collection lack the *thema*, many of them are preceded by indications about the Gospel reading of the feast day.<sup>143</sup> In addition to this, the majority of the Syriac sermons have a *prothema*, usually based on exquisite episodes from the historical books of the Old Testament, and

<sup>138</sup> I have provided a study and a detailed description of this translation in Appendix 2.

<sup>139</sup> The text is comprised in MS Mannanum Syriac 46: 16vB-18vB. In the following emendation of the text, I have abbreviated it as M, while *em.* stands for *emendavi*.

<sup>140</sup> Legi nequit propter cariem.

<sup>141</sup> Em. (ﻛﻠﻤﺘﻪ); M (ﻛﻠﻤﺘﻪ).

<sup>142</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: 16vB.

<sup>143</sup> See the incipit of the sermons in the synopsis.



often endowed with an allegorical/tropological interpretation; this is a feature which the *Malabar Sermonary* shares with Alonso de Villegas' sermons.

It is possible that one of the authors of the sermons comprised in the *Malabar Sermonary* – perhaps Francisco Ros himself – made use of the sermons from the fourth volume of Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*, by taking them as a model. Yet, this author of the Syriac sermons used the Spanish collection as a preaching aid or anthology of *exempla* from which he would occasionally select preaching material to be inserted in new sermons, and the intertextual connection between the Syriac collection and the Spanish model is not obvious, nor easy to detect. The compilation of *exempla* in the *Malabar Sermonary* often consisted of a synchronic reading of various sources put together through bricolage and paraphrase, which makes source identification difficult. The editing and systematic study of more compositions from the *Malabar Sermonary* might illuminate this matter.

While most of the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* show continuity with European medieval model sermons, being possibly fashioned according to the model provided by the Spanish sermons of Alonso de Villegas, some other compositions from the collection correspond rather to the classicizing rhetoric of the humanistic sermon. The humanistic sermon was described by John O'Malley as a form “imbued with principles of the revived rhetoric of classical antiquity, a rhetoric integral to Renaissance humanism;”<sup>144</sup> usually, it is in the exordium that the influence of the classical rhetoric would be mostly visible in this type of sermon. Such are for instance, a sermon for the Assumption of the Virgin (number 24a in the synopsis), the sermon on the commemoration of the Apostle Thomas (number 22 in the synopsis) and the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (number 36 in the synopsis).

A question both important and difficult to answer is whether the *Malabar Sermonary* consists of sermons translated from Latin and other European vernacular languages, or it comprises original creations. To answer this question, I have confronted the text of the Syriac sermons with as many medieval and early modern collections of sermons as I could; I used Johannes Baptist Schneyer's *Repertory of Medieval Sermons*<sup>145</sup> and its continuation by Ludwig Hödl and Wendelin Knoch;<sup>146</sup> I also consulted the various collections of printed sermons from the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century described by Anne Thayer in *Penitence, Preaching and the*

<sup>144</sup> O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*..., 38; on the humanistic sermon as a literary genre, see *ibid.*, 36-76.

<sup>145</sup> Johannes Baptist Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters, für die Zeit von 1150-1350*, vol. 1-11, (Münster: Aschendorff, 1969-1990).

<sup>146</sup> Ludwig Hödl and Wendelin Knoch (eds.), *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1350-1500 nach den Vorarbeiten von J. B. Schneyer*, (Münster: Aschendorf, 2001).



*Coming of the Reformation*;<sup>147</sup> yet, I did not find any clear model for any composition from the *Malabar Sermonary*. Given the limitations of the research – only Schneyer’s repertory records around 100.000 Latin sermons – and the need for studying in detail every composition from the *Malabar Sermonary* (which is not a monolithic collection), I cannot exclude the possibility that at least some Syriac sermons might have been adapted on the basis of a European collection.<sup>148</sup>

However, a close look at the internal evidence of the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* suggests that most of the sermons were written on the spot, being intended as a synthesis of European preaching for the audience of the Syriac Christians from Malabar. While I have mentioned the connection of the Syriac collection to Alonso de Villegas’ sermons, the authors of the Syriac sermons made use of all sorts of other preaching aids, from biblical commentaries to collections of *exempla* and other collections of model sermons; such collections were used as a storehouse of preaching elements from which the authors of the *Malabar Sermonary* would pick up and adapt various fragments according to their need. For instance, the prologue of a sermon on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul (number 21 in the synopsis) compares the two Apostles with the sun and the moon and is an adaptation in Syriac of the *prothema* of a sermon for the same feast day by Jacob of Voragine;<sup>149</sup> yet, the rest of the Syriac sermon is different from Jacob of Voragine’s sermon.

There is further evidence that the authors of the sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary* compiled the preaching material on the spot so as to create new sermons for the Indian Syriac Christians. This can be inferred from the fact that many sermons from the corpus show a predilection for the same *exempla*/imagery, which are repeated in several sermons. Thus, the same *prothema* based on 3 Kings 6: 31, which presents the doors of the sanctuary in the temple of Solomon as an allegory of Virgin Mary is to be found in a sermon for the feast day of the Annunciation (number 13 in the synopsis),<sup>150</sup> and in a sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis).<sup>151</sup> Two sermons for the Nativity of the Virgin Mary (numbers 25a and 25b in the synopsis) share several *exempla*; among them, an allegory of Virgin Mary as the throne of Solomon based on 3 Kings 10

<sup>147</sup> See Anne T. Thayer, “Printed Model Sermon Collections,” in *Penitence, Preaching and the Coming of the Reformation*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002): 13-45.

<sup>148</sup> In order to elucidate this aspect, there is need, on the one hand, of a better study of the European medieval and early modern collections of sermons and, on the other hand, of a thorough study of each sermon from the *Malabar Sermonary*.

<sup>149</sup> The prologue of the Syriac sermon is to be found in MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 78v; the Latin text adapted here is the *prothema* of the first sermon on the commemoration of the Apostles Peter and Paul from Jacob of Voragine’s *Sermones aurei* (see Jacob of Voragine, “De SS. Petro et Paulo Apostolis. Sermo I,” in *Sermones Aurei de Praecipuis Sanctorum Festis et Deiparae Virginis* edited by Rudolphus Clutius, vol. 2, (Krakow: Apud Christophorum Bartl, 1760): 209.

<sup>150</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 42rB

<sup>151</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 206r.



appears in the prologue of 25b<sup>152</sup> and in the main text of 25a.<sup>153</sup> Again, a sermon on the Transfiguration of Christ (number 23 in the synopsis) and a sermon for the second Sunday of the Lent (number 9 in the synopsis) share several *exempla* and motifs.

In addition to this, occasionally the same *exempla* have been compiled in various Syriac sermons by using the same European source independently and differently, so that there is no intertextual connection between the Syriac sermons themselves; for instance, the same *exemplum* about David and a plague, based on 2 Samuel 24, was compiled on the basis of Pedro Ribadeneyra S.J.'s *Treatise on Tribulation* (a treatise written in Spanish and first published in 1589) in both the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (number 36 in the synopsis) and in the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis); yet, the two Syriac sermons used the text of the Spanish source independently of each other and in different ways.<sup>154</sup> Editing the Syriac sermons will allow a better analysis of these aspects and of the mechanisms of compilation.

The reiteration of the same *exempla*/imagery in several sermons suggests that rather than translating Latin sermons into Syriac, the Catholic authors of the *Malabar Sermonary* relied on the experience of the medieval and early modern European preaching culture to create a new collection of sermons. Hence, they conceived the corpus of Syriac sermons as a rather independent collection addressing the Syriac Christians of Malabar and, thus, enriching the preaching culture of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in the context of the early modern global Catholicism. A similar tendency is to be observed in the global proliferation of the lives of saints with a life of their own. For instance, such hagiographic collections were fashioned worldwide upon the model of the *Flos Sanctorum*, “a uniquely Iberian genre immersed in European efforts to collect the lives of saints and then arrange them according to the liturgical year.”<sup>155</sup> As Jonathan Greenwood has shown, these collections of hagiographies originating from the Iberian Peninsula eventually became so popular that they were imitated and adapted in various languages, across regions, from New Spain to South India and Japan.<sup>156</sup>

Yet, an important element which gives specificity to the *Malabar Sermonary* is the use of Syriac sources, which were meant to fill in the gap between the East Syriac past and the Catholic present of the Malabar Christians. Overall, the collection mostly relies on authorities acknowledged by the Catholic Church and on other types of sources available in Europe, whereas the use of Syriac

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., fol. 54v-55r.

<sup>153</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 48rA-B.

<sup>154</sup> I am discussing this in detail in the second chapter of the thesis.

<sup>155</sup> Jonathan Greenwood, *Floral Arrangements...*, 181.

<sup>156</sup> See id., “Readable flowers: global circulation and translation of collected saints lives,” *Journal of Global History* 13 (2018): 22-45.



sources is rather marginal. However, there are two sermons in the corpus dedicated to East Syriac feast days which are missing from the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar: a sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis) and a sermon on Mar Behnam, the Persian martyr (number 28 in the synopsis). The sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites mostly relies on biblical *exempla*, though a story about the Patriarch Sabriš'o I, a plague and the institution of the feast day, expurgated of 'Nestorian' elements,<sup>157</sup> appears in the beginning of its text. The same story about the 'Nestorian' saint and the institution of this feast day appears uncensored in a *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (number 36 in the synopsis)<sup>158</sup> as a means of *accommodatio*. The sermon on Mar Behnam, the Persian martyr, is dominated by European Catholic imagery. It begins with the Woman clothed with the sun from the twelfth chapter of the *Revelation* of John presented as an allegory of the Church giving birth to the martyrs,<sup>159</sup> and the text contains very few/close to no details about the life or identity of Mar Behnam. For this reason, the reader has the impression that the text could have been used as a model sermon for any martyr celebrated by the Church. The ambiguity/confusion caused by overlapping the East Syriac and Roman Catholic liturgical calendars is to be noticed in one sermon for the Annunciation (number 13 in the synopsis); in one manuscript this text is ascribed to "the Annunciation of Gabriel" (ܐܡܬܝܢ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ),<sup>160</sup> while in another manuscript the same sermon is assigned to the "second Sunday of the Annunciation according to the Syrians" (ܐܡܬܝܢ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ),<sup>161</sup> which corresponds with the time of the Advent in the Roman Catholic Calendar.<sup>162</sup> The blend of traditions and the strife to convey a sense of continuity between the Syriac and Latin traditions is to be noticed in the sermon on the Apostle Thomas (number 22 in the synopsis), which promotes the cult of the Apostle of India, by integrating both Syriac and European sources. The promotion of the cult of Virgin Mary through extensive quotes from Ephrem the Syrian's poetry is featured in a sermon for the feast day of the Assumption of the Virgin (number 24c in the synopsis). These few examples are meant to provide a general picture about the content of the *Malabar Sermonary* at the crossroads between the Syriac tradition present on the Malabar Coast at least since medieval times, and the Catholic presence in South India endorsed by the Portuguese crown.

<sup>157</sup> I will discuss this text in the second chapter of the thesis.

<sup>158</sup> I will discuss this text in the second chapter of the thesis.

<sup>159</sup> See Perczel, *Description and Cataloguing of Codex Mannanam Syriacus* 46..., 99.

<sup>160</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 42rB.

<sup>161</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac. 17: fol. 152r.

<sup>162</sup> On the liturgical calendar of the Syriac Churches, see François Cassingena-Trévedy, "L'organisation du cycle annuel," in id. and I Jurasz (eds.), *Les liturgies syriaques*, Études syriaques 3, (Paris: Geuthner, 2006): 13-48.



Scholarship on medieval sermon studies in the last two decades focused on performance theory, and on reconstructing the delivery of a sermon as an event.<sup>163</sup> Due to the state of the art, it is not possible to discuss here such aspects related to the *Malabar Sermonary*. Generally speaking, model sermon collections were written to guide the preacher throughout the preparation of his sermon, and they do not comprise the actual sermons delivered by a certain preacher.<sup>164</sup> However, without a thorough study of each composition in the *Malabar Sermonary*, one should not exclude a priori the possibility that some of these sermons might have been actually delivered before being included in the collection. Given the Jesuit propensity for theatre and performance,<sup>165</sup> further research on the *Malabar Sermonary* might benefit from comparing sermons of the collection with letters and reports documenting missionaries preaching in Malabar; this approach might prove useful for reconstructing the preaching setting and delivery of such sermons.

### 5. Francisco Ros and the *Malabar Sermonary*

In the attempt to give an account on the beginning and augmentation of the *Malabar Sermonary*, the present thesis inextricably connects with the activity of Francisco Ros S. J. (1559-1624), the promoter of Catholic literature in Syriac in South Indian environment, and the first European Archbishop of the Malabar Christians, after the Synod of Diamper (1599). While the composition of the sermon on vowing (number 32 in the synopsis) is dated to the 11<sup>th</sup> of September (*Elul*) 1567 and might be related to Mar Joseph Sulaqa's journey to Malabar, many compositions from the sermonary used Spanish sources published from the 1580s to the early 1600s, which point to the time when Francisco Ros was active in Malabar. Among the Syriacist missionaries present in Malabar at that time, Ros was the only Spaniard (in the large sense, as he was a Catalan from Girona), which suggests that these sermons based on Spanish could easily have been authored by him or at least have been written under his close supervision. Moreover, as I will show further, the *Malabar Sermonary* was used as a source of inspiration for newly created hymns which were inserted in the Catholic revision of the East Syriac ritual prescribed by the Synod of Diamper (1599).<sup>166</sup> The revision and correction of the ritual is again one of the landmarks of Ros' activity and must have been done in the first years after the synod, when the Jesuit missionary was the (Arch)bishop of the Malabar Christians.

<sup>163</sup> See, for instance, the essays from Muessig, *Preacher, Sermon and Audience...*, especially Augustine Thompson, "From Texts to Preaching: Retrieving the Medieval Sermon as an Event," in *ibid.*, 13-37, and Beverly Mayne Kienzle, "Medieval Sermons and Their Performance: Theory and Record," in *ibid.*, 89-124.

<sup>164</sup> On the general problems raised by model sermon collections, see d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars...*, 64-131.

<sup>165</sup> On this topic in South Indian context, see I. Županov, "Conversion Scenarios: Discussions, Miracles and Encounters: The Theatrical Mode," in *ead.*, *Disputed Mission: Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-century India*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999): 148-194.

<sup>166</sup> See the third chapter of the thesis.



Since the Syriac texts stemming from Francisco Ros' literary activity in Malabar never bear any direct mark of authorship, source analysis remains the most effective tool in tracing back these texts to the context of their production, and this remark applies to the *Malabar Sermonary*. There is need for systematic philological work on each composition in the corpus in order to establish correct criteria for dating each sermon. Yet, occasionally, information supplemented by other sources related to Francisco Ros can be used to determine the marks of his authorship. For instance, a cumulation of intertextual elements between a report written in Portuguese by Francisco Ros himself in 1607 and the sermon on the Apostle Thomas from the *Malabar Sermonary* (number 22 in the synopsis) suggests that this Syriac sermon must have been written by Ros.<sup>167</sup> Since the preliminary evidence suggests that the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary* is to a great extent the work of the Jesuit missionary, a few words about his life and oeuvre are in order here.

On the life and activity of Francisco Ros, there are three main scholarly studies. In the first volume of his work on *The Jesuits in Malabar*<sup>168</sup> from 1939, Domenico Ferroli has outlined the first historical sketch on the activity of the Jesuit Archbishop, mostly relying on material from the *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu*. Almost a decade later, Ángel Santos published two articles entitled “Francisco Ros, S.J., Arzobispo de Cranganor, primer obispo jesuita de la India (1557-1624)”<sup>169</sup> in which he is correcting some of Ferroli's mistakes; yet, though marking important contributions to the field, these two works are outdated and do not provide a balanced account on the life and activity of the Jesuit missionary. A nuanced assessment on the life and activity of Francisco Ros is Antony Mecherry's recent book *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation In Early Modern India: Francisco Ros SJ in Malabar (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*<sup>170</sup> from 2019. In the following lines I am mostly relying on information from Mecherry's research.

Francisco Ros was born in 1559, in Girona, Catalonia (Spain). In 1575 he started his Jesuit noviciate in Barcelona before he entered the Jesuit college in Zaragoza; after the completion of his studies in 1582 (three years of philosophy and three of theology), in April 1584 Ros left Europe from Lisbon to become a missionary among the Malabar Christians; he arrived in Cochin in November, the same year, and Alessandro Valignano, the Jesuit Visitor, assigned him to study languages, especially Syriac, which the Catalan Jesuit completed in Goa as an autodidact. At the Second Council of Goa (1585), Ros was appointed as assistant of Mar Abraham, the last Chaldean

<sup>167</sup> See the discussion of this sources in the second chapter of the thesis and in Appendix 7.

<sup>168</sup> Domenico Ferroli S.J., *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. 1, (Bangalore: Bangalore Press, 1939): 291-360;

<sup>169</sup> Ángel Santos, “Francisco Ros, S.J., Arzobispo de Cranganor, primer obispo jesuita de la India (1557-1624)” *Missionalia Hispanica* 5 (1948): 325-392 and *ibid.* 6 (1949): 79-142.

<sup>170</sup> Antony Mecherry, *Testing Ground...*



Metropolitan of the Malabar Christians whom he followed in Malabar; the Jesuit missionary was supposed to help the Chaldean prelate in correcting the ‘Nestorian’ books of the Malabar Christians according to Catholic orthodoxy. Initially Mar Abraham was reluctant to hand in his Syriac books to Ros for correction, and the Ros started to suspect the Chaldean prelate of crypto-Nestorianism; the ‘Nestorian’ mistakes from Mar Abraham’s books were collected and put in writing in two treatises. The, first, discovered recently by Mecherry, entitled *De Syrorum Orientalium Erroribus*, was written in 1586,<sup>171</sup> while the text was substantially reworked and renamed *De erroribus Nestorianorum qui in hac India Orientali versantur*, which the Jesuit missionary sent to Rome in 1587<sup>172</sup>. Besides correcting ‘Nestorian’ mistakes from the Syriac books of Mar Abraham, since 1587 the Jesuit missionary became teacher of Syriac in the Jesuit seminary from Vaipikotta, where the local clergy from among the Syriac Christians was educated. It is beginning with his appointment as a teacher of Syriac that the corpus of Catholic literature in Syriac mentioned earlier in the introduction of this thesis was produced, including most of the sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary*. These Syro-Catholic texts which represent a substantial part of Ros’ Syriac legacy continued to be written as well after the Synod of Diamper (1599); in 1601, the Jesuit missionary was consecrated as the first European bishop of the Syriac Christians of Malabar. In fact, by correcting the ‘Nestorian’ books from errors, Ros got a good grasp of the East Syriac literature which circulated from Iraq to the Malabar Coast. On this basis, he created a new type of Catholic literature in Syriac for an Indian audience, which combined the East Syriac literary tradition with the European culture of the times of the Council of Trent. Complementary to this literary work in Syriac was Ros’ reformation of the liturgy of the Malabar Christians after the Synod of Diamper.<sup>173</sup> As shown by pioneering studies by István Perczel<sup>174</sup> and as I will try to substantiate in the present thesis, this stream of Catholic literature in Syriac can be regarded as a reflection of the missionary principle of *accommodatio* at the level of literary production.

Since the Synod of Diamper reduced the Metropolitan See of Angamaly (i.e., Ros’ diocese) to the status of a suffragan bishopric dependent on the Archbishop of Goa (who was the *Padroado* primate of India), Ros struggled to restore the Metropolitan status of his diocese which he achieved in 1608.<sup>175</sup> He was an adamant opposer of the Chaldean Metropolitan bishops coming from the Middle East to the Malabar Coast, whom he suspected of crypto-Nestorianism, and he also

<sup>171</sup> Id., (ed. and intr.), *De Syrorum Orientalium Erroribus Auctore P. Francisco Ros S.I.: A Latin-Syriac Treatise from Early Modern Malabar (1586)*, (Piscataway N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2021).

<sup>172</sup> See Francisco Roz S.J., *De erroribus Nestorianorum qui in hac India orientali versantur*, edited by P. Castets and I. Hausherr, *Orientalia Christiana* 11.1, (Rome: Pontificum Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1928).

<sup>173</sup> On this topic, see E.R. Hambye, “Un manuscrit oublié de la liturgie syro-malabare latinisée,” in *Mémorial Mgr Khouri-Sarkis (1898-1968)*, (Louvain: Imprimerie orientale, 1970): 219-231; see as well Jacob Vellian, “The Synod of Diamper and the Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church,” in Nedungatt, *The Synod of Diamper...*, 173-198.

<sup>174</sup> See, for instance, Perczel, *Accommodationist Strategies...*

<sup>175</sup> See Mecherry, *Testing Ground...*, 272-273.



developed a conflictual relationship with his archdeacon, who was *de facto* the administrative ruler of the Malabar Christians. Yet, in the controversy about the Metropolitan status of his diocese, Ros defended the privileges of the Malabar Christians and understood the pre-eminence of his diocese as a source of prestige for the identity of the Malabar Christians. For this reason and on account of his role in preserving the Syriac language, rites, and identity of the Malabar Christians, his missionary strategy was described by Fr. Mecherry as a “participative praxis of accommodation.”<sup>176</sup> Moreover, in the context of the Malabar rites controversy, Francisco Ros also appeared as a defender of Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656),<sup>177</sup> the famous accommodationist missionary for Tamil Nadu, who adopted the habit of an Indian sannyasin to convert the Brahmins of Madurai to Christianity. As Mecherry stresses, “the Jesuit accommodation in its classical understanding focused on entering the cultural world of missions through the local traditions to come out of that world, maintaining the identity of the missionary intact and giving new identity to the converted group;”<sup>178</sup> yet, beyond this dissimulative approach, “Archbishop Ros proved that accommodation in mission was not merely a friendly approach or dissimulating way to get things done, but a careful and future-oriented participation in the cultural, social, liturgical, and psychological life in a mission area.”<sup>179</sup>

Since Francisco Ros is the main agent behind the development of the *Malabar Sermonary*, this thesis aims to present the collection of sermons as an expression of his Syriac literary legacy. Subsequently this legacy was transformed, assimilated and incorporated into their respective Syriac literary canon by both the Syro-Catholic and Syriac Orthodox Christians from Malabar.

## 6. Aim of the thesis

The Syriac literature of early modern Malabar is an understudied field of research; while the catalogues of some manuscript collections that I have consulted are in progress, most of the Syriac manuscripts from India are not catalogued. Yet, the research presented in the present thesis could have never materialized without the efforts of the SRITE project, led by István Perczel, in collaboration with the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Collegeville (MN) for preserving and digitizing the manuscripts of the Syriac Christians of Malabar<sup>180</sup>.

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>177</sup> On Roberto de Nobili and *accommodatio*, see Županov, *Disputed Mission...*; also see the essays from Matteo Sanfilippo and C. Prezzolini (eds.), *Roberto de Nobili missionario gesuita poliziano: Atti del convegno Montepulciano 20 ottobre 2007*, (Perugia: Guerra Edizioni, 2008); Paolo Aranha, “Sacramenti o *samskārah*? L’illusione dell’*accommodatio* nella controversia dei riti malabarici,” *Cristianesimo nella storia* 31 (2010): 621-646; Margherita Trento, “Śivadharmā or Bonifacio? Behind the Scenes of the Madurai Mission Controversy (1608-1619),” in Županov and Fabre (eds.), *The Rites Controversies...*, 91-121. On the relationship between Francisco Ros and Roberto de Nobili, see Mecherry, *Testing Ground...*, 351-428.

<sup>178</sup> Mecherry, *ibid.*, 114.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 350.

<sup>180</sup> On this matter, see Perczel, “Report on the SRITE Project: The Syrian/Mappila Christian Community in Southwest India,” *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 23 (2017): 327-338.



With the exception of apologetic Church histories, the Syriac texts stemming from the Catholic mission among the Malabar Christians have not been edited and remain for the most part unstudied. One of the methodological challenges that I had to face is that while the Syriac manuscripts copied in the Middle East usually contain detailed colophons, the Indian manuscripts comprising Catholic literature in Syriac usually do not have colophons, and the authorship of such texts is usually not documented; sometimes even the titles of the works are missing from the manuscripts and due to the local climate, most of these texts written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries survive only in nineteenth century manuscript copies. In order to overcome these methodological problems, the main safe way to date such texts is philology and source analysis, and the *Malabar Sermonary* is no exception to this.

Therefore, in the present thesis I have chosen to write a microhistory based on the compilation and reception of the *Malabar Sermonary*, as the history of this collection with its two versions and the entanglement between the sermonary and the liturgy outlines the ecclesiastical history of the community of Malabar Christians. To show the history of the corpus with its two redactions as well as its reception, the thesis consists of three case studies which, like connected histories,<sup>181</sup> document various stages in the making and the reception history of the corpus; I consider the sermonary with its textual tradition an expression of the local complicated ecclesiastical history at least up to the eighteenth century. By looking at the corpus from this perspective, one gets a glimpse into the fascinating intellectual history of Syriac writing and compilation in South India, and its literary networks with both Europe and the Middle East from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

## 7. Outline of the thesis:

**Chapter 1:** In this chapter I analyse a polemic sermon against the Portuguese and the Syro-Catholic group among the Malabar Christians, written by the Syriac Orthodox group after the second half of the seventeenth century. This piece, at the structural level mirrors perfectly the rules prescribed by the Medieval *artes praedicandi*, but is based exclusively on West Syriac sources (i.e. Myaphysite). The sermon is a witness to the appropriation of European sermons in Syriac by the Syriac Orthodox Christian faction as a means of polemic with their Syro-Catholic rivals. It has been incorporated in the manuscript containing the Syriac Orthodox revision of the *Malabar Sermonary* (Thozhiyur 1). Also, the author of this sermon used Coptic sources in Arabic which suggests that he must have been a Syriac Orthodox missionary coming from the Middle East to India sometimes between the

<sup>181</sup> On connected histories, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31.3 (Jul. 1997): 735-762; id., *Explorations in Connected History: from the Tagus to the Ganges*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005).



mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries. In the appendix,<sup>182</sup> I provide the edition and an English translation of this text.

**Chapter 2:** The second text that I analyse is a *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*; this sermon survives in two redactions: its initial Catholic redaction (in which its Catholic author included some East Syriac features as means of *accommodatio*) and its Syriac Orthodox later revision (made after 1653). I found it an interesting task to compare the two textual versions and highlight the transformation of the text from one redaction to the other. I also explore the various European sources used in the composition of the initial Catholic version of this sermon, which I am attributing to Francisco Ros. I also look at the use of the same *exempla* in this sermon and other compositions in the *Malabar Sermonary*, to better understand the art of compilation involved in the making of this collection as a whole. Besides the analysis of this text, I provide in the appendix<sup>183</sup> editions and English translations of the two redactions of this text.

### Chapter 3

In this chapter I discuss the relationship between sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* and religious poetry. I discovered a group of liturgical poems, circulating first in anthologies, and then disguised as anthems and inserted in the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* (a sort of East Syriac Breviary) prescribed by the Synod of Diamper; among the main sources for such poems are analogous sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*; this type of poetry can be used as a *terminus ante quem* for dating the corresponding sermons and it also provides an interesting instance of intertextuality between the sermons and a different literary genre from the local Catholic Syriac literature. The intertextuality between the sermons and the newly established rituals proves that the sermonary was not a marginal collection, but it had quite a prominent role among the Syro-Catholic compositions of that time in Malabar. In this chapter I present three examples of intertextuality between liturgical hymns from the revised Catholic *Ḥudrā* and sermons from the sermonary (I am including the hymns for the feast day of Corpus Christi, for the commemoration of Saint Thomas the Apostle, and for the feast of the Transfiguration of Christ). This type of poetry appears in a place of the ritual where it was supposed to replace the poetry of Narsai; each Catholic poem based on sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* is written in the meter of Narsai. Sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*, which survive only in their West Syriac redaction or only in nineteenth century manuscript copies, were used as the main source for this type of liturgical poetry; therefore, this case of intertextuality helps one retrieve these sermons preserved only in their West Syriac

<sup>182</sup> See the appendices 3.a. and 3.b..

<sup>183</sup> See the appendices 4.a. and b. and 5a and b..



redaction or in late manuscript copies back to the initial Catholic version of the *Malabar Sermonary*.



## Chapter 1: Un untitled sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* and the reception history of the *Malabar Sermonary* among the *Puttaṅkūr*

### 1. Shared churches, shared rituals, shared texts

In 1772, Salvador dos Reis, the Jesuit Archbishop of the Syro-Catholic community of the Malabar Christians (*Paḷayakūr*) (1758-1777),<sup>184</sup> wrote to the Congregation *De propaganda fide* in Rome a letter in which he describes the practice of sharing the same churches by the Syro-Catholic Christians (*Paḷayakūr*) and their Syriac Orthodox rivals (*Puttaṅkūr*) in Malabar,<sup>185</sup> a practice known in canon law as *communicatio in sacris*. The subject matter of the letter is an intensely debated topic in the correspondence of the early modern Catholic missions worldwide. In his important book on *communicatio in sacris* in the Levant and Ottoman Empire, Cesare Santus defines this practice, as follows:

“*Communicatio in sacris* (or *in divinis* or *in ritibus*, as well) is the term by which the Church of Rome intended to define and, depending on context, to limit or prohibit any kind of participation of a Catholic [Christian] to the liturgical celebrations or the sacraments of a non-Catholic cult. The same term is also used, less frequently, for the opposite phenomenon [i.e., participation of a non-Catholic to the Catholic celebrations/sacraments]. In his *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, Raoul Naz defines the first case as ‘positive’ *communicatio in sacris*, and the second case as ‘negative’ one, distinguishing between an ‘active and formal’ participation which is done with the intention of performing a real cult to God, and a purely ‘passive and material’ participation, which is done exclusively for social convenience or for preserving good relations between the two groups [i.e., between the Catholic and non-Catholic group].”<sup>186</sup>

Dos Reis narrates this phenomenon and emphasizes from the very beginning of his letter that, due to the entanglement between the two Christian groups (*Paḷayakūr* and *Puttaṅkūr*), this widespread practice of sharing churches would be impossible to abolish in Malabar. For this reason, he feels the need to comply with canon law and to reinsure the Roman authorities that the sharing of the churches between the two Christian groups is a simply “material” *communicatio in sacris*, i.e., it is done solely for “social convenience.” The main explanation for this situation, according to the prelate, resides in the fact that most such churches are under the authority of the “heathen” rajas of Travancore and Cochin, whom he accuses of accepting bribe from the bishops of the *Puttaṅkūr*. For the same reason, the prelate insists, it is not possible for the Catholics to say mass on portable altars in private houses either, as this would require again the permission of the rajas. In support of the status quo, Dom Salvador adds the advice that he received from the Apostolic Vicar on the matter: “in his opinion, the Catholics should not be troubled [by this matter], but, because of the injustice of

<sup>184</sup> On Salvador dos Reis, see Ferroli, *The Jesuits in Malabar*, vol. 2., 91-92; Hambye, *History of Christianity in India: Eighteenth Century*, vol. 3, (Bangalore: The Church History Association of India, 1997): 27.

<sup>185</sup> APF SC (IOC) 33: fol. 340r-v. I have transcribed and translated the text of this letter in Appendix 8. The practice of sharing the same churches by the *Paḷayakūr* and *Puttaṅkūr* is mentioned as well by E. R. Hambye S.J., *History of Christianity in India: Eighteenth Century*, vol. 3, (Bangalore: The Church History Association of India, 1997): 78-79.

<sup>186</sup> C. Santus, *Transgressioni necessarie: “Communicatio in sacris”, coesistenza e conflitti tra le comunità Cristiane orientali (Levante e Imperio Ottomano, XVII-XVIII secolo)*, (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2019): 8. For a summary of the debates and controversies related to the *communicatio in sacris*, see as well, id., “La *communicatio in sacris* con gli «scismatici» orientali in età moderna,” *MEFRIM* 126/2 (2014): 325-340.



the times, the ‘material’ [liturgical] participation (*communicatio materialis*) should be allowed so as to avoid confusion and not to stir up agitation.”<sup>187</sup> Furthermore, in order to underline the oddity which a strict delimitation of the two rival groups sharing the same churches would bring to the Syro-Catholic community, the prelate gives one notable such example:

“Not by my [commandment], but by the commandment of the king himself, and without my knowledge, in an uncommon way, this kind of [liturgical] participation had been abolished only in the church called Chattukulangara, where the King of Cochin rules. After the quarrels of the Catholics against the schismatics had been reported to the king, the chief minister of this king commanded that a wall be built in the middle of this church from the central altar to the main gate, so that [the wall] would divide the church into two equal parts: one part being allotted to the Catholics, and the other one to the schismatics. In what regards the [garments] of the priest and the ornaments of the altar, after an inquiry had been made, I have learnt that they are not the same for both the Catholics and the schismatics, but different. Again, they celebrate [each] their [own] ceremonies at a different time, [and not simultaneously].”<sup>188</sup>

The example of the Chattukulangara Church described in the letter as a point of contact and contention, but also of separation between the two groups of Malabar Christians is important for the present discussion. The Chattukulangara or Arthat Church, was situated very close (at approximatively three miles’ distance) to Anjur, where the headquarters of The Malabar Independent Syrian Church from Thozhiyur were to be located since 1772.<sup>189</sup> As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, this Christian community is a branch of the *Puttaṅkūr* which traces its origins to one lineage of bishops consecrated by Mor Baselios Shukr Allah Qasabgi, Maphrian of the East, and by Mor Gregorios Yohanna, Metropolitan of Jerusalem, who both arrived to Malabar in 1751.<sup>190</sup> While the Arthat Church was situated in the realm of the raja of Cochin, Thozhiyur (Anjur) was already in the territory controlled by the Zamorin of Calicut. In an undated letter reproduced by Fenwick, Mar Koorilose I, the first prelate from the Thozhiyur lineage of bishops, requested to the raja of Cochin to put the Chattukulangara “half-church [in Malayalam, *ara-paḷli*]” under his jurisdiction, arguing that this was the northernmost church belonging to the *Puttaṅkūr*, but apparently he was not granted permission by the raja.<sup>191</sup>

Yet, the phenomenon of the “half-church” expressed in Salvador dos Reis’ letter as a portent of religious entanglement and interaction for both the *Paḷayakūr* and the *Puttaṅkūr*, has parallel developments at the level of the ritual and Syriac literary production. While from the point of view of the shared sacred space, the *communicatio in sacris* between the two groups is described by Salvador dos Reis as *communicatio materialis*, a conventional or “passive” liturgical participation forced by the local context, Fr. Cyril O.I.C.<sup>192</sup> and J. Fenwick<sup>193</sup> have showed that after the revolt of

<sup>187</sup> APF SC (IOC) 33: fol. 340r-v.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> See Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 270-275.

<sup>190</sup> See *ibid.*, 193-345.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 282-283.

<sup>192</sup> See Fr. Cyril O.I.C., *The Introduction of the Antiochene Rite...*



1653, the reorientation of the *Puttaṅkūr* towards the West Syriac tradition of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch was a gradual and slow process, which was completed through the work of several West Syriac missionaries until the first decades of the nineteenth century (at least until the Synod of Mavelikara in 1836)<sup>194</sup>. Fr. Cyril O.I.C. focused on the liturgical evolution of the *Puttaṅkūr*, who initially continued to use the East Syriac liturgy in its Catholic revision made by Francisco Ros after the Synod of Diamper<sup>195</sup>; the adoption of the West Syriac rites and liturgy of the Syriac Orthodox Church seems to have been consolidated only by the mid-eighteenth century<sup>196</sup>. In his book on the history of the Malabar Independent Syrian Church, John Fenwick has supplemented Fr. Cyril's hypothesis with reports by various missionaries – similar to Salvador dos Reis' letter quoted above – which bear witness to the fluidity between the two groups<sup>197</sup>: despite their confessional boundaries, even after entering Syriac Orthodox communion, the “New Faction” (*Puttaṅkūr*) shared with the “Old Faction” (*Paḷayakūr*) churches, rituals and literary texts, which it inherited from its Syro-Catholic past.

As an expression of this reality, in his book on the Syriac manuscripts of the Malabar Christians, J.P.M. van der Ploeg discusses one liturgical manuscript in use by the *Puttaṅkūr*<sup>198</sup> which “was completed by the deacon Abraham at Mûldûrûti [i.e. Mulanthuruthy] «in the year of the Nativity of our Lord 1734», 2045 A. Gr., in the month *ḥziran* (June) in the days of Mar Thoma, Bishop and Metropolitan of India.”<sup>199</sup> This manuscript is preserved in the Library of the Dharmaram College in Bangalore (MS Bangalore Syriac 1, according to Van der Ploeg's list ), and it is an East Syriac liturgical book, a *Kaškul*, comprising services used for the ferial section of the liturgical year. The reference to “Mar Thoma, Bishop and Metropolitan of India” indicates that the scribe belonged to the *Puttaṅkūr*. According to Van der Ploeg, the manuscript “shows that in 1734 the Jacobites still used the canonical prayers of the Church of the East more than eighty years after their separation (1653), with only few and very small Jacobite variants. On page 686, in a *korožûta*, Mary is called the Mother of God, which may well be a Catholic heritage. The canonical prayers had more or less

<sup>193</sup> See J. Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*

<sup>194</sup> Fr. Cyril O.I.C., *The Introduction of the Antiochene Rite...*, 158.

<sup>195</sup> A report by Bonifacius a Bambino Gesù, O.C.D. submitted to the Congregation *De propaganda fide* in 1750 and quoted by Fr. Cyril O.I.C. claims that “the heretics [i.e. the *Puttaṅkūr* ] retain the breviary, the Missal and the ritual reformed by Bishop Francis Roz, but mention the name of the heretic Patriarch and of the then ruling archdeacon, in the diptychs” (ibid., 148).

<sup>196</sup> According to Fr. Cyril O.I.C., “the Jacobites [i.e. the Syriac Orthodox Christians] of the Malankara Church, at least up to 1748, were celebrating the holy mass with leavened bread according to the liturgy reformed by Bishop Roz S.J. After the arrival of the Antiochene Bishops [i.e. Mor Basilios Shukr Allah Qasagbi, Maphrian of the East, and Mor Gregorios Yohanna, Metropolitan of Jerusalem] in 1751 they began to use the Antiochene liturgy” (ibid., 153). On the same issue, see as well Hambye, *History of Christianity...*, 61-64.

<sup>197</sup> See, for instance, J. Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 138 et passim).

<sup>198</sup> J.P.M. van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas...*, 154-157.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid, 155.



the same form as they now have among the Syro-Malabarians [i.e. the *Paḷayakūr*].”<sup>200</sup> Since there is no study on the way how the text of the *Kaṣkul* was changed/“corrected” in Catholic milieu after the Synod of Diamper, it is not possible to know for sure whether the text of the manuscript from Bangalore was indeed the pre-Diamper East Syriac *Kaṣkul*, as Van der Ploeg claims, or its Catholic revision after Diamper, to which were added a few West Syriac elements; the reference to Mary as “Mother of God” might be either a Catholic element or a West Syriac one and is inconclusive. As a preliminary remark, it seems that the text of the *Kaṣkul* in its Catholic revision from Malabar is not that different from its initial East Syriac version; yet, this revision requires further study. More substantial additions and modifications might be noticed in the Malabar Catholic revision of *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* (which comprise services for the sanctoral and temporal sections of the liturgical year).<sup>201</sup>

In addition to the shared churches and rituals, the two Syriac Christian groups of Malabar (*Paḷayakūr* and *Puttāṅkūr*) shared religious texts as well. As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, one manuscript of the *Malabar Sermonary* (MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1) preserved in the manuscript library of the Malabar Independent Syrian Church of Thozhiyur bears witness to the fact that the *Puttāṅkūr* copied and reedited Catholic sermons from the sermonary or even used the literary genre of the European scholastic sermon in order to write a polemic sermon against their rivals from among the *Paḷayakūr* and the Portuguese. It is on this aspect that I will focus in this chapter of the thesis.

## **2. MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1 and the Syriac Orthodox revision of the *Malabar Sermonary***

MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1, which contains a revision of the *Malabar Sermonary* from the Syriac Orthodox milieu, is preserved in the manuscript library of the Malabar Independent Syrian Church of Thozhiyur, which belongs to the West Syriac tradition in Malabar. As mentioned above, this community is part of the *Puttāṅkūr* and its lineage of bishops was established through the consecration of Rabban Abraham Kattumangat as bishop Mar Koorilose I by Mor Basilios Shukr Allah in the 1760s, and through his elevation to the rank of metropolitan by Mor Gregorios Yohanna.<sup>202</sup> The manuscript comprising 204 folios contains two parts, which must have been written shortly after one another, as they were written on the same type of paper.<sup>203</sup> The first part of

<sup>200</sup> Ibid. 156.

<sup>201</sup> One such change will be discussed in the third chapter of the thesis, when presenting the intertextuality between sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* and Catholic liturgical poetry inserted in the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*, prescribed by the Synod of Diamper.

<sup>202</sup> See Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 193-345.

<sup>203</sup> Since I worked with digital copies of the manuscript, I would like to thank Professor David Taylor (Oxford) for kindly sharing with me information about the paper watermark and dimensions of the manuscript.



the manuscript, comprised between fol. 1r-140v, is written in Indian East Syriac script<sup>204</sup> and contains the West Syriac revision and reediting of the *Malabar Sermonary*. This part of the manuscript is not dated and does not contain any colophon, but it must have been copied before 1765. It is certain that at least one sermon belonging to this part of the manuscript (comprised between fol. 80r-95r) was composed earlier by a Syriac Orthodox missionary who came from the Middle East to Malabar, as this text made use of Christian Arabic sources. I will discuss in detail this sermon in this chapter of the thesis. The second part of the manuscript, comprised between fol. 141r-204v, is written in *Serṭā* script and mainly consists of *mēmre* written by Ephrem the Syrian, Jacob of Sarug, and other authors, as well as West Syriac liturgical material; its two main subparts are dated to 1766 and 1765 A.D. (there are colophons on fol. 153r and 202v<sup>205</sup>). Further on, I will focus only on the first part of the manuscript due to its relevance for the history of the *Malabar Sermonary*. On fol. 1r, an ownership note added later in *Serṭā* script with East Syriac vocalization reads: “The Book of the priest Joseph Panēkil” (ܐܡܪ ܕܝܫܥܝܐ ܡܢܬܐ ܕܝܫܥܝܐ ܡܢܬܐ ܕܝܫܥܝܐ). For a better understanding of the relationship between this peculiar manuscript of the *Malabar Sermonary* and the whole corpus, I am recording here the contents of the first section of the manuscript (which contains the Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermonary); I also add in brackets the references to the synopsis of the corpus:

fol. **1r-12v**: Sermon on the Eucharist (number 31b in the synopsis); fol. **12v-21v**: Sermon on the Dormition of the Holy Virgin (number 24a in the synopsis); fol. **21v-30r**: Sermon on the Nativity of the Holy Virgin (number 25a in the synopsis); fol. **30r-38r**: Sermon on the Nativity of Christ (number 1c in the synopsis); fol. **38r-43r**: Sermon on the Revelation of the Lord to the Magi (number 3b in the synopsis); fol. **43r-47v**: Sermon on the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (number 20 in the synopsis); fol. **48r-51r**: Sermon on the commemoration of Peter and Paul the Apostles (number 21 in the synopsis); fol. **51r-59v**: Sermon on the Ascension of Christ (number 17a in the synopsis); fol. **59v-68v**: Sermon on the Pentecost (number 18b in the synopsis); fol. **68v-75r**: Sermon on the one who makes a vow and on vowing (number 32 in the synopsis); fol. **75v-78r**: Sermon on the Sunday of the Glorified Trinity (number 19 in the synopsis); fol. **80r-95r**: Untitled sermon against the Paḷayakūr and the Portuguese (number 47 in the synopsis); fol. **95r-101r**: Untitled sermon on the Eucharistic celebration (number 31a in the synopsis); fol. **102r-105v**: Untitled sermon on the afflictions of the righteous (number 36 in the synopsis); fol. **106r-110r**: Prayers for the Passion Day of Christ which were added later in *Serṭā* script, followed by lexical notes (fol. **111r-v**); fol. **113v-126v**: Sermon on the Palm Sunday added by a later hand (different from the one who copied the other sermons) (number 14b in the synopsis).

In addition to this, the same part of the manuscript also contains a few other items such as:

<sup>204</sup> On this type of script, see Françoise Briquel Chatonnet and A. Desreumaux, “A Study and Characterization of the Syro-Malabar Script,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 55.2 (2010): 407-421.

205 The first colophon on fol. 153r reads: “[The book] is completed and it is requested from whomsoever who will read it, that he says: ‘In Your mercy, God, absolve the sins committed by Your humble servant, George from Mulanthuruthy, who copied these [pages] in the year 1766 AD., on the 22 [day] of the month of *Elul* (i.e. September), and to God be glory!’ In the year 942 of the Kollam [era].” ( **مُكْمَرٌ مُمْلَكًا مَعَ صَلَاةٍ مَعِ بُرْقَانٍ كَرَامَةٍ تَسْتَعِينُ سُلَيْمًا بَهْدًا** ) ( **مَسْبُورًا خَدِيمًا مَعَزِيَّةً وَمُعَذِّبًا ذَلِيلًا مَحْجَرًا** ); the date according to the Kollam era was added later by a different hand; the second colophon on fol. 202 v reads: “In the year 2076 of the Greeks and 1940 according to the Kollam era, on Thursday, the 11<sup>th</sup> of [the month] of latter *Teshrin* [i.e. November], in the church of Kayamkulam” ( **سَعِدًا حَسَنًا سَلَامًا حَسَنًا مَعَ لَيْلَةٍ دَلِيلَةٍ سَعِيدَةٍ سَعِيدًا حَسَنًا** ).



fol. 127r-132v: an epitome made on the basis of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History* (???), perhaps translated from Latin; title: (ܐܦܝܬܘܡܐ ܕܠܚܝܩܐ ܕܗܝܫܬܪܝܐ ܕܥܣܝܒܝܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ); inc.: (ܕܢܨܬܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ); fol. 133r-138r: a short work on chronology; title: (ܬܝܠܕܐ ܕܠܚܝܩܐ ܕܗܝܫܬܪܝܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ); incipit: (ܬܝܠܕܐ ܕܠܚܝܩܐ ܕܗܝܫܬܪܝܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ ܕܥܥܩܠܐ); the text is followed by another note on chronology (fol. 138v-140v).

[illegible]

<sup>206</sup> See the synopsis appended to the introduction of this thesis.

<sup>207</sup> The date follows the text of the sermon in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 37v; see I. Perczel, "Description and Cataloguing of Codex Mannanam Syriacus 46...", in Mustată, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 98.

[illegible]

<sup>209</sup> I will discuss this instance in the third chapter of the thesis.

<sup>210</sup> For the description of the manuscript, see Mustată, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 103-112.



comprised between fol. 127r and 132v, while in MS Thrissur Syriac 17 the epitome is to be found between fol. 209v and 214r<sup>211</sup>.

### 3. A polemic sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr*

Among the sermons from MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1, the untitled piece comprised between fol. 80r and 95r is an original composition which was written by a Syriac Orthodox author – most likely a prelate of the *Puttaṅkūr* – against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr*. The sermon does not contain any explicit title, date, or mark of authorship, but it records the tensions and problems of the *Puttaṅkūr* after 1653. As I will show, the author of this piece made use of Christian Arabic sources, which implies that he could not have been an Indian prelate/teacher of the *Puttaṅkūr* (who did not speak Arabic). He must have been one of the Syriac Orthodox missionaries who came from the Middle East to the Malabar Coast and contributed to the consolidation of the Syriac Orthodox tradition among the *Puttaṅkūr* in the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. At the structural level, the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* follows the literary genre of the European medieval model sermon, which was alien to the Syriac tradition. In the Syro-Catholic literature from Malabar this literary genre was embedded in the compositions from the *Malabar Sermonary*, which implies that the author of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* wrote this piece as a result of his contact with the *Malabar Sermonary*, in South India.

Furthermore, the purging of the *Malabar Sermonary* of teachings contrary to West Syriac Orthodoxy, and the composition of this Syriac Orthodox sermon according to the rules of an European Catholic literary genre point again to the activity of the first Syriac Orthodox missionaries who came to Malabar after the revolt from 1653. Their intention was to emulate and polemicize with the Syro-Catholic literary culture of the *Paḷayakūr*. This missionary strategy seems to correspond to the activity of Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalīl and Mor Ivanios Hidayat Allah, both active in Malabar in the second half of the seventeenth century. These Syriac Orthodox bishops from the Middle East are credited with the “re-Syriacisation” of the *Puttaṅkūr* in the spirit of the West Syriac tradition of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch<sup>212</sup>; this ‘re-Syriacisation’ was achieved without necessarily rejecting all the liturgical and literary elements belonging to the East Syriac and Syro-Catholic past of the Malabar Christians.

At the literary level, the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* shows how the *Puttaṅkūr* assimilated key categories and tools for writing sermons, which reached the Malabar Christians

<sup>211</sup> I have not compared the text from the two manuscripts in detail, but the title and the beginning of the text are essentially the same in the two manuscripts.

<sup>212</sup> See Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 139 et passim.



through the mediation of the *Malabar Sermonary*. In other words, for the composition of the *Malabar Sermonary*, its Catholic authors used European collections of sermons, biblical commentaries, and collections of *exempla* in an eclectic manner, and thus they fashioned the sermonary as a synthesis of various preaching tools existing in Europe in the sixteenth and at the turn of the seventeenth century. Likewise, the author of the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* shows an effort to replicate this entire preaching toolkit of European origin by means of analogous Christian sources in Syriac and Arabic acknowledged by the Syriac Orthodox tradition and available in the Middle East. For this reason, the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* is very important in the attempt to understand the reception history of the *Malabar Sermonary* after 1653.

In the following paragraphs of this chapter, I will focus on the contents and historical setting, the structure, the source analysis, and polemical message of the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr*. As I will show, at the structural level the sermon follows the prescriptions of the European medieval *artes praedicandi* (manuals on writing sermons) mediated through the *Malabar Sermonary*. Yet, the *exempla* and Patristic *auctoritates* used in the sermon were meant to reinforce the literary connection of the *Puttaṅkūr* with the literary tradition of the Church of Antioch, aiming to provide a Syriac Orthodox alternative to the Catholic preaching tools used in the composition of the *Malabar Sermonary*. The same type of connection between Indian Christianity and the Syriac Orthodox tradition is explicitly acclaimed at the polemical level of the text.

### 3.1. Summary and historical setting of the sermon

The sermon is based on the Gospel reading from Matthew 10:16-33, which it transposes into the religious experience of the *Puttaṅkūr* after 1653. Thus, the exegesis of the Gospel reading is constructed around key topics such as the persecution, affliction, and poverty of the *Puttaṅkūr* understood as imitation of Christ. This is meant to legitimize the orthodoxy of the *Puttaṅkūr* and to contrast it to the bad habits and imminent punishment of the Muslims, “heathens” (i.e., the Hindus), Portuguese, and *Paḷayakūr*. The latter group is depicted as heretical, while bribery and the pursuit of earthly riches is indicated as the source of its alleged heresy/apostasy. Since the Gospel reading contains many passages in which Christ speaks in the first person singular, occasionally, the preacher blurs the line between Christ’s words and his own interpretation, to create the illusion that the sermon is delivered by Christ himself. The following passage is illustrative in this sense:

*A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a servant than his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and for the servant [to be] like his master (Matthew 10: 24-25), that is: ‘see how I, your Teacher and your Lord, have walked through the world! Likewise, also you should imitate Me!’ And if they called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more [would they call so] the sons of His household (Matthew 10:25), ‘if they insulted Me, Who am the Lord of the entire creation, and reviled Me?’ And they said that He has demon, and [that He is] Beelzebub, and that He casts out demons by the prince of demons. (Luke 11: 15)*







*Puttaṅkūr* as the lazy versus diligent merchants. The same contrast between the two rival groups is maintained in the subtext of a story about a miraculous Cross from Alexandria. This is an account about the apostasy of a poor Christian from Alexandria who converts to Judaism for the sake of wealth and is struck by death after having desecrated a Cross which started to bleed; according to the account, due to the miracle of the bleeding Cross the Jewish master of the Christian apostate converts to Christianity. The function of this story is to persuade the audience of the *Puttaṅkūr* to accept its poverty as a condition granted by God. Although a clear link between the Christian apostate from this story and the *Paḷayakūr* is not expressed in the text, later on in the sermon, the *Paḷayakūr* are accused of being corrupted by bribery and of having renounced true faith for the sake of acquiring riches. The commandment to be poor given to the *Puttaṅkūr* is in the end legitimized by Christ's poverty.

The exhortation to Christian poverty is followed by a polemic message in the concluding part of the sermon, where its author recapitulates the history of the Indian Church from Saint Thomas to the coming of the Portuguese. The ecclesiastical identity of the *Puttaṅkūr* is described in terms of their allegiance to the Syriac Fathers, while the Portuguese and the Muslims are depicted as deceitful agents of war and bribery. The tensions articulated in this part of the sermon refer to the forced Catholicisation of the Malabar Christians under Portuguese rule, since the second half of the sixteenth century. The author of the Syriac sermon claims that this process of Catholicisation was achieved through bribery.

Furthermore, the text also alludes to “the killing” of the Syriac bishops by the Portuguese *Padroado* authorities. This accusation refers the story of Mar A'tallah, whom the *Puttaṅkūr* believed to have been drowned by the Portuguese in the Bay of Cochin.<sup>221</sup> Since these polemical elements are important for the contextualization of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr*, I will discuss them in detail further in this chapter. The polemical part of the sermon concludes by reinforcing the Syriac Orthodox identity of the *Puttaṅkūr* against the *Paḷayakūr* called “the disciples of the Franks”.

### 3.2 Structure of the sermon

While the narrative plot of the sermon is centred on the situation of the *Puttaṅkūr* in the aftermath of the revolt of 1653, and on their rivalry with the *Paḷayakūr*, its author carefully fashioned the structure of this piece, by mimicking at the structural level the rhetoric of an European medieval model sermon. Yet, while doing so, he did not use an *ars praedicandi*, but rather took as model the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*, which, in their turn, seem to have been fashioned upon the

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<sup>221</sup> See above pp. 10-11.



model provided by the Spanish sermons from the fourth volume of Alonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*. The main difference between a medieval model sermon and Villegas' sermons is that the latter do not display such a systematic division of the preaching material according to *distinctiones* as a medieval scholastic sermon.<sup>222</sup>

The literary genre of the European medieval 'scholastic'/'thematic' sermon emerged in Western Europe in the twelfth century. In contrast to the Patristic homily which was based on the unsystematic commentary of a given biblical text verse by verse, the new type of sermon had a clear structure, which was encoded in manuals of preaching or *artes praedicandi*.<sup>223</sup> The development of this new type of sermon has been associated with the emergence of the first universities in Europe, and with the interest in preaching shown by the mendicant orders created in the beginning of the thirteenth century.<sup>224</sup> On the basis of several *artes praedicandi*, Siegfried Wenzel compiled the following structure for the construction of a medieval model sermon:

"(a) the *thema* is announced; (b) it is or it may be followed by a protheme as a kind of prologue, which leads to (c) a prayer for divine assistance; (d) then the *thema* is repeated or resumed; (e) some kind of connection to the next part is established, which may be [...] a bridge passage, or else a longer (f) introduction of the *thema*; (g) the division follows; (h) the members of the division are confirmed; the members are then explained or further developed with various processes including (i) subdivisions and distinctions as well as (j) other processes of dilatation; (k) at the end of the development the members might be tied together; (l) finally, the sermon ends with a closing formula, essentially a prayer."<sup>225</sup>

In order to show how the sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr was constructed, and to highlight its peculiarities, I am comparing it here with the structure proposed by Wenzel which I am regarding as an ideal type<sup>226</sup>:

a) The *thema* is "a word or string of words taken from Scripture upon which the entire sermon is built."<sup>227</sup> Instead of writing down a *thema*, the author of the Syriac sermon indicates the Gospel reading from Matthew 10: 16-33; the *incipit* and *explicit* of the reading are given according to the standard Syriac text from the Peshitta version. With few exceptions, the sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary* do not contain a *thema*; it is more common to find the references to the Gospel reading on which a certain sermon is based.<sup>228</sup>

<sup>222</sup> See Introduction, p. 26.

<sup>223</sup> As Phyllis Roberts emphasizes, "*homilia* or homily referred to the kind of preaching where a biblical passage, normally read during the Mass, was explained phrase by phrase and was, therefore, a commentary on the gospel of the Mass. The term *sermo*, or sermon, came into use by the thirteenth century and was applied to the type of preaching where a short quotation, also taken from the liturgy of the day, was divided at length and developed according to the rules of the *ars praedicandi*" (*The "Ars Praedicandi"*..., 44).

<sup>224</sup> M. G. Briscoe, *Artes Praedicandi*, 28.

<sup>225</sup> Wenzel, *Medieval «Artes Praedicandi»*..., 48.

<sup>226</sup> On the structure of a medieval model sermon, see as well Bériou, *Les sermons latins*..., 370-382; Smith, *Aquinas, Bonaventure*..., 45-66.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>228</sup> Among the exceptions, there is, for instance, a sermon on the Nativity of Christ (number 1a in the synopsis).



b) Immediately after this, follows the *prothema* or prologue. In the *Malabar Sermonary*, the *prothema* is usually a digression inspired from the Old Testament which relates to the corresponding feast-day or to the topic of the sermon when interpreted typologically, tropologically or allegorically. In the late sixteenth century, the taste for such long *prothemata* inspired from Old Testament exquisite stories seems to be a feature that the *Malabar Sermonary* shares with the sermons from the fourth volume of the *Flos Sanctorum* written by Alonso de Villegas. In the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr, the *prothema* about the wisdom of Solomon inspired from 3 (1) Kings 3 serves more the purpose of leading to the initial prayer, a function described by several *artes praedicandi*.<sup>229</sup> The *prothema* of this sermon presents the only instance in the text, where its author did not use the standard biblical text from the Peshitta version. Instead of this, the author provided what looks like a memory quote based on a free rephrasing of the Syriac biblical text, with very few elements which might betray the influence of the Latin text of the Vulgate.

The only instance when one notices a clear influence of the Vulgate in the text is the sentence based on 3 (1) Kings 3: 11-12. For comparison, I am listing this text as it appears in the sermon and in the Latin and Syriac Scriptures:

**Sermon against the Portuguese and the Palayakūr** (80v): “Because you did not ask for gold and silver, nor for the souls of your enemies, but for knowledge and prudence of the heart, behold, I have given you something that I have not given to the kings who preceded you and, also, there will be no other [king] similar to you among those who follow you.”

سگ دڙڪ جيئن ته هٿي. نه آهي دليلدستج. بل جلد به مضمحل ٿيندي ڏيکاري ٿي.  
انهن لاءِ مدد بل انهن لفظن ۾ پيش. هيءَ لا به تڪرور سان سنڌ ڏيئي ڪري.

**Vulgata Clementina**<sup>230</sup>: “Because you asked this word and you did not seek either many days for yourself, or riches, or the souls of your enemies, but you asked wisdom for yourself so as to discern judgement, behold, I have done to you according to your utterances, and I have given you a wise and intelligent mind, so much so that before you there was no one similar to you, nor would anyone rise after you.”

<sup>229</sup> See Wenzel, *Medieval «Artes Praedicandi»*..., 55.

<sup>230</sup> Throughout the thesis, for the analysis of the Latin biblical sources I used the text of the Tridentine Vulgate: *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Clementinam*, edited by M. Tuveedale (London: 2005); I have compared this edition with the Stuttgart critical edition: *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, vol. 1-2, edited by B. Sicher, I Gribomont et al., (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1969); whenever there are differences between the two texts, I have recorded the variant readings in the footnotes.



*Quia postulasti verbum hoc, et non petisti tibi dies multos, nec divitias, aut animas inimicorum tuorum, sed postulasti tibi sapientiam ad discernendum iudicium, ecce feci tibi secundum sermones tuos, et dedi tibi cor sapiens et intelligens, in tantum ut nullus ante te similis tui fuerit, nec post te surrecturus sit.*

**Peshitta<sup>231</sup>:** “Because you asked this word, and you did not ask wealth for yourself, and you did not ask the souls of your enemies, and you did not ask many days for yourself, but you asked for wisdom so as to listen to judgement, behold, I have done to you according to your word. Behold, I have given you a wise heart and prudence so that before you there was no one like you, and after you [no one] like you will rise.”

[illegible]

After comparing the three texts, one notices that expressions such as: “gold and silver” (ܕܠܕܢܐ) or “knowledge and prudence of the heart” (ܕܠܒܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ) are missing from both the Latin and Syriac Scriptures. However, the last part of the quote: “and, also, after you, there will be no other [king] similar to you” (ܘܥܕ ܕܡܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܫܝܠܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ) is fashioned according to the Vulgate which reads: *in tantum ut nullus ante te similis tui fuerit, nec post te surrecturus sit*. In contrast to this, the Peshitta version reads: “so that there was no one like you before you, and after you will rise no one like you” (ܘܥܕ ܕܡܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܫܝܠܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ).<sup>7</sup>

Apart from this *prothema*, whenever the author of this sermon quotes the Scriptures, he relies exclusively on the biblical text of the Peshitta. Since the contamination of the Syriac and Latin biblical accounts is one of the peculiarities of the Syriac Catholic sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*,<sup>232</sup> the text of this *prothema* about the wisdom of Solomon might have been copied/inspired from another sermon belonging to the same corpus.<sup>233</sup> Sometimes the authors of the sermons included in the *Malabar Sermonary* copied or reused and adapted the same *prothemata* and

<sup>231</sup> For the analysis of Syriac biblical texts from the Old Testament, I have used the editions published by the Leiden Peshitta Institute; since the Leiden Peshitta does not cover all the books of the Old Testament, I have also used the edition published by the Trinitarian Bible Society (London: 1913). For Syriac texts from the New Testament, I have used: *The New Testament in Syriac* (London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1905-1920).

<sup>232</sup> On this matter, see the analysis of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* in the second chapter of the thesis. See as well the analysis that I provided in *Sermon on Saint Thomas*.... 12-20.

<sup>233</sup> Further research on the sermons from the sermonary will confirm or contradict this hypothesis.



*exempla* in more than one sermon. Besides its obvious biblical origin, this story about Solomon receiving wisdom from God is included in many medieval collections of *exempla*.<sup>234</sup>

c) The *prothema* is followed by the initial prayer(s): “Our Father” and “Hail, Mary”. The use of a *prothema* which leads to the initial prayer is again a feature common to many sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

d) After the initial prayer usually the repetition of the *thema* would follow. However, in the case of this sermon, the author introduces a quote (*auctoritas*) from Jacob of Edessa, meant to draw the attention of the audience to the interpretation of the Gospel reading listed before the *prothema* (on fol. 80r). This quote about divine illumination is somehow a prolongation of the topic of divine wisdom granted to Solomon, which appears in the *prothema*.

Immediately after this quote, the author repeats the first half of the first verse from the Gospel reading of Mathew 10: 16. As mentioned above, the sermon does not contain a *thema*, because the author indicates the Gospel reading on which the sermon is based, after which he continues directly with the *prothema*. This is a practice shared by many sermons in the *Malabar Sermonary*.<sup>235</sup> Since the sermon does not list a proper *thema*, I am not sure whether the verse from Matthew 10: 16 can be really considered as the repetition of the *thema*. Yet, this biblical verse has a privileged position in the structure of the sermon. Most of the exegetical part of the sermon is built on it and even in the combination of the parts (*unitio*) – whose function is to string together the other parts of a model sermon<sup>236</sup> – the preacher returns to this verse to convey a synthesis of his message.

While generally incorporating the constituent parts of a medieval model sermon into the text, the author of this piece still covers throughout the text of the sermon the exegesis of the whole Gospel reading indicated before the *prothema* (Matthew 10: 16-33) (on fol. 80r), a feature which is specific to the Patristic homily<sup>237</sup> rather than to the medieval sermon. However, compared to this initial sentence from Matthew 10: 16, the rest of the Gospel reading (Matthew 10: 17-33) plays a secondary role in the structure of the sermon.

e) The “bridge passage”<sup>238</sup> (*pes/positio pedis*) is a brief sentence explaining the *thema*, “which shows the main intent of the introduction” and “agrees with the purpose of the sermon”<sup>239</sup>:

<sup>234</sup> In F. Tubach’s index of *exempla*, the story is recorded under number 4467; see, id., *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales*, (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1969): 340.

<sup>235</sup> See the introduction of the thesis.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>237</sup> See P. Roberts, *The ‘Ars Praedicandi’...*, 44. However, even in medieval Europe, model sermons sometimes incorporate an integral commentary of the whole Gospel reading of a feast day; according to Nicole Bériou, this is a feature of the scholastic sermons delivered by Italian preachers (see Bériou, *Les sermons latins...*, 374).

<sup>238</sup> The translation belongs to Wenzel.



here it explains the first half of Matthew 10: 16: “The Lord told His disciples: ‘Behold, I am sending you out as lambs among the wolves,’ that is to say, the lambs are the disciples and also the Christians, while the wolves are the pagans, the Jews, and the Muslims” (fol. 81r).

f) Introduction of the *thema*: the author explains why it is legitimate to call the Christians “lambs”, by explaining why “the lambs are accepted [animals] in the Holy Books” (fol. 81r).

g) The author of the sermon concludes the introduction of the *thema* with the remark: “And, as our Lord – glory to His name! – was named “a Lamb”, likewise He called those partaking in Him “lambs”, when He said: “Behold, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves! Therefore, be wise as serpents and guileless as doves!” (fol. 82v). After the repetition of this verse (Matthew 10: 16), follows the division of the *thema* with its confirmations and subdivisions (*prosecutiones/distinctiones*). In the *divisio thematis*, “the quoted *thema* is divided into a number of parts (*partes, membra*), which then serve as starting points for further development. The basic function of the division, thus, is to unfold the meaning of the chosen *thema* and thereby to provide the preacher with ample material for his discourse.”<sup>240</sup>

Based on the second part of the verse from Mathew 10: 16: “Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves,” the author exposes the peculiarities of serpents and doves by providing tropological and allegorical interpretations (based on the third redaction of the Greek *Physiologus*) with supporting quotes from Scriptures and Church Fathers acknowledged by the Syriac Orthodox tradition: Ephrem the Syrian and Gregory Bar Hebraeus. This type of division is called *divisio intra auctoritatem*, as it relies on the explanation of the words from the chosen *thema*.<sup>241</sup> It is very interesting that the author of this sermon chose to quote precisely in this place from the *Physiologus*. The *Physiologus* lists the peculiarities of serpents and doves in a schematic and yet well-ordered manner, resembling a *distinctio* from the European medieval collections of sermons.<sup>242</sup> This fact suggests that the Syriac Orthodox author of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* intended to imitate the structure of the compositions belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary*, without necessarily having at hand an *ars praedicandi*.

h) Afterwards, usually would follow the development (*prosecutio*) of the parts announced in the *divisio thematis*; in fact, the author of this sermon develops only one *prosecutio/distinctio*

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid. 65-66.

<sup>241</sup> See *ibid.*, 68.

<sup>242</sup> On *distinctiones*, see, for instance, S. Wenzel, “*Distinctiones*” and *Sermons...*; see also the project led by Marjorie Burghart, *Distinguo: Studying Distinctiones, the Backbone of Mediaeval Preaching*: <https://distinguo.hypotheses.org/author/matte>.



that was announced in the *divisio thematis*, namely the resemblance between the doves and the persecuted Christians. In the *divisio thematis*, the idea is articulated as follows:

“The word that the Lord said: “Be innocent as doves,” that is: in many cities men make big houses for doves and again they put many baskets in these houses. The doves come and dwell in them and they make many nestlings. Then, men take the nestlings and eat or sell some of them, while the doves do not get angry and do not flee away from the dwellings of their masters. In the same way it is right for the true Christians when afflictions and persecutions happen among them because of the heretics, and when a pillage of their goods happens to them, to endure cheerfully and not to depart from the household of Christ, their true Lord” (fol. 83r-v).

This *distinctio* is retaken and developed with a series of biblical and Patristic authorities, including a parable (*matlā*) about the water of two wells (one poisoned and causing death, and the other one fresh, sweet and life-giving) and the story (*taš ‘itā*) about the bleeding Cross of Alexandria. As mentioned above, the function of such stories is to vilify the earthly riches, by celebrating Christian poverty and righteousness, as a mark of distinction of the Syriac Christians of Malabar in a community formed by Jews, pagans, Muslims, and ‘heretic’ Portuguese referred to as “Franks” (*Prangāyē*). In addition to this, the author develops the topic of the persecuted Christians by providing a verse-by-verse commentary on the Gospel reading (Matthew 10: 17-33); however, the author of the sermon does not comment on the rest of the Gospel reading at length, but rather provides brief interpretations which support the ideas already configured in the development of this *distinctio* on the basis of Matthew 10: 16.

j) All this material is synthetically reiterated in the combination of the parts (*unitio*), which in this case begins by repeating the verse of Matthew 10: 16. In the text this part begins with the following words:

Until now we have explained [fol. 92v] a bit from the readings of the Holy Gospel; let us return now to the beginning of the reading and let us speak only about the first sentence, briefly and not at length, so as not to prolong the speech [too much] for those who listen. For, the Lord said: “Behold, I am sending you as lambs among the wolves.”<sup>243</sup> Look carefully and see, my brothers, that He did not give them<sup>244</sup> a sword and war machines<sup>245</sup> in order to threaten the people and subdue them by violence, although – glory to His power! – He is “the King of kings and the Lord of lords”<sup>246</sup> (fol. 92r-v).

Since the function of the *unitio* is to recapitulate and string together the other parts of the sermon<sup>247</sup>, this section summarizes the content and ideology of the sermon. As Wenzel remarks, the *artes praedicandi* recommend the use of an *auctoritas*, “which would combine the members of the main division and thereby “tie up” the entire process of the sermon.”<sup>248</sup> By retaking the verse of Matthew 10:16, the author of the Syriac sermon touches again the

<sup>243</sup> Matthew 10: 16.

<sup>244</sup> I.e. to the Apostles.

<sup>245</sup> In the text [ܡܚܬܡܐ], probably from Gr. μηχανή.

<sup>246</sup> 1 Timothy 6: 15; Revelation 19: 16.

<sup>247</sup> When defining the *unitio* on the basis of various medieval *artes praedicandi*, Wenzel writes: “in a sermon or collation there must be some gluing or chaining together [*conglutinatio et concathenatio*] of what has been said before, and in this way the work one has begun will be finished in perfection” (ibid., 84).

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.



topic of bribery and war which he associates with the Portuguese and the Muslims. Also, he reasserts the Syriac Orthodox identity of the Indian Church; the following passage is illustrative in this sense:

We say that we are Syriacs and sons of the Orthodox Syriacs from the blessed seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, from the race of the Lady Mary, the God-Bearer, and also from the race of Saint [fol. 94v] John the Baptist, Peter, Paul and the rest of the apostles and evangelists; [we are] the disciples of Mar Toma, we are not the disciples of the Franks, unlike you. We do not need wealth, but the poverty of the Son of God, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes and placed in the manger of the beasts, and who did not have a place where to lay His head, according to the word of the Lord (Luke 9: 58). And for the sake of His love we are paying poll-tax, as He humbled Himself – glory to His humility – and asked Simeon to pay the poll-tax on behalf of them both. And we do not want to be kings, as He says: “My kingdom was not from this world” (John 18: 36), but we desire the truth of Christ, we follow His disciples and we venerate and embrace our Syriac fathers (fol. 94r-v).

k) The combination of the parts (*unitio*) is followed by the closing formula: “For these reasons, let us pray and ask unceasingly from the abundant sea of His mercifulness that He may help us and grant us to hate the whole world, but love, praise and exalt our Lord forever!” (fol.95r).

The assimilation of the European model sermon as a literary genre in the Syriac sermon against *Paḷayakūr* and the Portuguese was mediated through the *Malabar Sermonary*, which in its turn followed the model provided by Alonso de Villegas’ sermons. At the literary level, this phenomenon reflects the initial fluidity that existed between *the Paḷayakūr* and the *Puttaṅkūr* after 1653, despite their confessional boundaries: the two rival Christian groups shared a common Syriac literary culture which was a synthesis of the East Syriac literacy from the Middle East and of the European culture after the Council of Trent. In this context, the Syriac Orthodox sermon in European Catholic “disguise” bears witness to the cultural and religious transfer which marked the gradual reorientation of the *Puttaṅkūr* from its Syro-Catholic past to the Syriac Orthodox tradition after 1653.

### 3.3 Analysis of the sources

While in terms of literary genre, the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* was meant to resemble other compositions from the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary*, the effort to provide an alternative to Catholic preaching can be noticed at the level of the compilation of sources and in the use of *exempla*. The *Puttaṅkūr* revised and reedited sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*, which means that this type of material was both influential and useful for them; however, with the exception of one Byzantine Greek source (which perhaps circulated in Arabic Melkite circles), all the sources quoted in the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* are of Middle Eastern origin (Persian



poetry, Syriac Scriptures, Patristic authors acknowledged by the Syriac Orthodox Church, and a Christian Arabic text of Coptic origin). They are meant to strengthen the connection between the South Indian Christians and the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch. In what follows, I will provide an analysis of these sources; whenever relevant, I will show the correspondences between types of sources used in the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* and analogous sources of European origin present in the initial Catholic version of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

## Biblical sources

As mentioned above, apart from the text of the *prothema* which is a memory quote based on the Syriac Scriptures, possibly rephrased on the basis of the Vulgate, the rest of the biblical quotes in the sermon closely follow the reading of the Peshitta version. The following list comprises a few examples from various biblical books; I have not included in the list the Gospel reading of Matthew 10:16-33 which, in its turn, reproduces the text of the Peshitta; whenever there are variations between the text of the sermon and the text of the Peshitta, I have provided both versions:

## Matthew 25: 32-33

**Sermon** (fol. 81v): “the shepherd who separates the lambs from the kids, and the lambs are placed on [His] right and the kids on [His] left” ( **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ**. **وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ** ).  
**(نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُكَ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ نَعْمَلُهُ بِإِذْنِكَ).**

**Peshitta:** “as the shepherd who separates the sheep from the kids, and makes the sheep stand on [His] right and the kids on [His] left” (ܡܬܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܩܪܝܢܐ ܕܚܘܒܐ ܕܗܝܟܠܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܠܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܩܪܝܢܐ ܕܚܘܒܐ ܕܗܝܟܠܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܠܐ)

The main difference between the text of the sermon and the reading of the Peshitta is that the verse of Matthew 25:32-33 is used for the interpretation of Matthew 10:16, which mentions “lambs” (ܠܡܕܝܢ) instead of “sheep” (ܚܝܬܝܢ).

## Isaiah 53: 7

**Sermon** (fol. 81v): “like a lamb he was led to slaughter, and he was silent like a sheep before [the] shearer, and hr did not open his mouth in his humility” ( ﻟﻤﺎ ﺷﺒﮭﺘﯩﻢ ﻟﻠﻐﻨﺎﻡ ﻓﻲ ﺳﻠﺴﻠﺔ ﻣﻦ ﺍﻟﺪﻫﺎﻥ ﻋﺸﺎﺭﻩ ﻧﻌﻢ ﻟﻤﺎ ﺷﺒﮭﺘﯩﻢ ﻟﻠﻐﻨﺎﻡ ﻓﻲ ﺳﻠﺴﻠﺔ ﻣﻦ ﺍﻟﺪﻫﺎﻥ ﻋﺸﺎﺭﻩ ) .







author of this sermon was emulating his Catholic rivals by exclusively making use of sources accepted by the Syriac Orthodox tradition. As already mentioned, the same pattern is followed in relation to the Patristic *auctoritates* quoted in the sermon: the author quotes or alludes to Syriac authors who are part of the canon of the Syriac Orthodox tradition.

### Other sources

A detailed presentation and contextualization of the other sources used in the sermon is important. The Church Fathers quoted in the text are essentially Syriac authors acknowledged by the Syriac Orthodox tradition such as: Ephrem the Syrian, Jacob of Edessa and Gregory Bar 'Ebroyo.

The sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* quotes also Persian poetry, but I was not always able to identify the quoted passages. I have also not found the source of the parable (ܐܬܝܢܐ) about the waters from two wells allegorically interpreted as the two worlds (earthly and heavenly) (fol. 86r-v). As mentioned above, this text is about two groups of thirsty merchants approaching two wells of water; some of the merchants being lazy, while the others being diligent. The lazy merchants drink from a well which is closer to them, although they are warned that its water is no good, and die. The diligent merchants go to the well which is further away, drink from it and live. The diligent merchants are allegorically presented as the Christians who suffer while on earth and rejoice in the afterlife, while the lazy merchants are those who are prosperous and rejoice on earth, but after death go to everlasting torments. Such moralizing stories were very common throughout the Christian world; in Western Europe such stories were usually excerpted and included in collections of *exempla* for the use of preachers; so far, I have not found this particular parable in any European source either.

A category of sources which deserve special analysis are the Christian Arabic sources and other sources which were not available in Europe and were also foreign to the Syriac literary tradition, because they are a strong indicator that the author who wrote this sermon must have belonged to the Middle Eastern clergy elite, who reached Malabar between the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries. From this category, I will discuss the use of the *Physiologus* and the story about the bleeding cross in Alexandria.

### The third ( "Pseudo-Basilean") redaction of the Greek *Physiologus*

The interpretation of Matthew 10: 16 ("Be wise as serpents and guileless as doves") in the division of the *thema*<sup>249</sup> relies on the *Physiologus*. As mentioned above, the author of the Syriac sermon most likely used in this place the *Physiologus*, because he wanted to develop the argument of his sermon by mimicking a *distinctio* of a medieval European model sermon. The intriguing aspect

<sup>249</sup> See the structure of the sermon above.



about this interpretation is that it does not depend on the Syriac versions of the *Physiologus*;<sup>250</sup> it rather looks like an adaptation of the third redaction of the Greek *Physiologus*, which is called ‘Pseudo-Basilian’ and which has been dated between the tenth and the twelfth centuries.<sup>251</sup> In the third redaction of the Greek *Physiologus*, the relevant chapters on snake and dove are chapters 9<sup>252</sup> and chapter 16<sup>253</sup>. Chapter 9 from this version reads:

About the Serpent

In the Gospels the Lord said about the serpent: “Be wise as the serpents!”

The Physiologus said about the serpent that it has four peculiarities (φύσεις). [Its] first quality is that whenever a man is on the point of killing it, [the serpent] surrenders to death its whole body, but protects its head so that it would not get whipped.

Saint Basil says: ‘Likewise, man, whenever someone is afflicting you because of Christ, you should protect your head, while keeping the faith of Christ unshaken, so that you show yourself wise in Christ like a serpent. And how is it that the Lord called wise the serpent which He had cursed? Listen: the curse was suited to the devil and to the serpent because of the transgression, but the Lord did not praise [the serpent] because of [its] evilness, but because it protects its head! For this reason, He said: ‘Be wise as serpents’, that is: be wise as a serpent and protect your head, i.e. the faith of Christ!

The second peculiarity of the serpent: when the serpent goes to a source to drink water, it leaves its poison in its hole, and this is how it goes to drink water.

Saint Basil says: ‘you as well, man, whenever you go to drink from the true source, that is [from the source] of the body and blood of Christ, do not carry evil in your heart, according to [the word of] the Apostle: “if you have arrived to the church and remembered there that someone has something against you, first go and reconcile with your brother, and then offer your gift!” He who eats and drinks the body and blood of the Lord unworthily, eats and drinks condemnation for himself, because of not discerning the body and blood of the Lord.

The third peculiarity of the serpent: whenever the serpent gets old, it loses the sharpness of its sight, and then it enters its hole, keeps a fast for forty days, and binds its own body with abstinence. Its skin gets loosened and then [the serpent] looks for cracked stones or for a narrow place, and it sheds its skin by pushing it through it and gets rejuvenated.

Saint Basil said: ‘Look, man, how the snake behaves for his own salvation! Therefore, you should also fast so that through fasting you get rejuvenated and walk in the will of God! Fasting has been ordered in Paradise. If Adam would have served the first commandment which he received [i.e. fasting], then he would not have been condemned to death. Therefore, cast out the old man, that is, the sins, and seek cracked stones or a narrow place like the snake! For the way leading to the everlasting life is narrow and full of affliction, and the way leading to perdition is broad and wide.’

The fourth peculiarity of the serpent: whenever the serpent finds a man dressed in clothes, it attacks him, but if it sees [a man] naked, it flees away terrified, knowing that the fall [in the primordial sin] belongs to nakedness, and that the cause [of the fall] happened through [the serpent]; therefore, it flees away ashamed.

<sup>250</sup> On the most recent scholarly contribution to the Syriac Physiologus, see Sami Aydin, “The Syriac Tradition,” in C. Macé and J. Gippert (eds.), *The Multilingual Physiologus: Studies on the Oldest Greek Recension and Its Translations*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021): 197-236.

<sup>251</sup> A. Vermeille, *Physiologus: De l'Orient à l'Occident. Un Patchwork multiculturel au service de l'Écriture*, (Neuchâtel: University of Neuchâtel, 2006): 14. The text of the third Greek redaction of the Physiologus has been edited by F. Sbordone in *Physiologi Graeci Singulae Variarum Aetatum Recensiones*, (Naples: Dante Aligheri, 1936): 258-299.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 272-275.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 284.



Saint Basil says: “The demon is the intelligible serpent: whenever he sees you dressed with vices, he attacks you, and makes you do the works of darkness, but whenever he sees you naked from the foul works and from the worries of life, then he flees away from you ashamed.”<sup>254</sup>

In the quoted chapter of the Greek *Physiologus*, the four peculiarities of the serpent are listed as follows: 1) when attacked, the serpent hides its head which is an allegory for the faith in Christ; 2) the serpent lets his poison in its nest when going to drink water; likewise Christians should not partake in the Eucharist without making peace with their neighbours; 3) when the serpent gets old and its sight gets weak, it keeps a fast for forty days, after which it sheds its skin and becomes rejuvenated; 4) the snake does not attack a man while naked, but only while dressed up; likewise the devil attacks the man dressed in sin but flees the one who is naked from the worries of life.

In the text of the Syriac sermon, the same four peculiarities of the serpent are listed but in a different order; yet also the details are different: 1) when attacked, the serpent hides its head, an allegory for preserving the Christian faith in times of persecution (the first peculiarity in the Greek text); 2) the rejuvenation of the serpent which sheds its skin after fasting for forty days (third peculiarity in the Greek text); 3) the snake does not attack a naked man (the fourth peculiarity in the Greek text); 4) the snake leaves its poison in its nest, when going to drink water (the second peculiarity in the Greek text).

While sometimes preserving part of the advices attributed to Basil the Great in the Greek *Physiologus*, the author of the Syriac sermon modified the text of the *Physiologus* to the context of the sermon; most noticeably, he made use of quotes from Gregory Bar ‘Ebroyo and Ephrem the Syrian for the interpretation of this story, adapting it to an audience fond of its Syriac tradition. Thus, when speaking about the rejuvenation of the snake through fasting, he removed the quote from Pseudo-Basil from the Greek *Physiologus*,<sup>255</sup> and replaced it with a quote from the prologue of Gregory Bar ‘Ebroyo’s verse Grammar:

In like manner, if you are unclean as well because of [your] sins and feel burdened by them, then take refuge in fasting not only for forty days, but many times forty [times] forty [days]! And then “enter through the narrow gate,”<sup>256</sup> according to the word of our Lord, and strip off the old garment of [your] dead deeds and become renewed children, while saying, as it is written in the preface [ܡܬܠܚܡܐ] of the Grammar [Book] [which is written] in the meter of [Mor] Aphrem: “restore my youth through the light of Your presence, [fol. 82v] and allow me to become wise through You!”<sup>257</sup> (fol. 82r-v).

<sup>254</sup> For the Greek original, see *ibid.*, 272-275.

<sup>255</sup> “Saint Basil said: ‘Look, man, how the snake behaves for his own salvation! Therefore, you should also fast so that through fasting you get rejuvenated and walk in the will of God! Fasting has been ordered in Paradise [...]’ etc (*ibid.*, 274).

<sup>256</sup> Matthew 7:13.

<sup>257</sup> This is the sixth distich from the prologue of Bar Hebraeus’s *Metrical Grammar* (see Gregorius Barhebraeus qui et Abulpharag, *Grammatica Linguae Syriacae in Metro Ephraemeo*, E. Bertheau (ed.), (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1843): 1.



Likewise, when speaking about the snake leaving its venom in its nest when going to drink water, the author of the Syriac sermon replaced Pseudo-Basil's advice to partake the Eucharist without enmity<sup>258</sup> with a few verses from Ephrem's poetry:

Likewise, when you go to the church, which is the spring of the living water, you should not bear with you any rage or enmity against anyone; and if you feel resentment of any sort [fol. 83r], then [the resentment] should not join you to the house of the Lord! And Mor Aphrem, the teacher, said in one of his *mēmre*<sup>259</sup>: “Oh, [you], who pray to God, do not revile your brother in your heart, for the insult does not allow the prayer to be pure! Oh, [you] who make petition for his offence, behold, a corpse is laid in your heart; forgive your brother his offence and then pray purely! For, anger is worse than a sword; also, fury [is worse] than a knife. Take an arrow and shoot it towards your brother, but do not throw an insult at him! For, if you shoot an arrow towards your brother, it will strike [his] body on the outside, but if you throw an insult at him, it will enter inside his heart”<sup>260</sup> (fol. 82v-83r).

Essentially the same four qualities of the serpent are listed in the Arabic version of the *Physiologus* edited and translated by Sibylle Wentkler<sup>261</sup>; again, I am listing them here by indicating their relation to the Greek text: 1) the serpent gets rejuvenated after fasting for forty days (the third peculiarity in the Greek text); 2) when going to drink water, the serpent leaves its poison in its nest (the second peculiarity in the Greek text); 3) the serpent does not attack a naked man (the fourth peculiarity in the Greek text); 4) when attacked, a serpent hides its head – an allegory of the Christian faith – while delivering the rest of its body to death or persecution (the first peculiarity in the Greek text)<sup>262</sup>. Yet, the author of the Syriac sermon does not seem to have used this Arabic version of *Physiologus*. When providing the interpretation of the dove, he relies again on the third Greek recension of the *Physiologus*, which reads:

About the dove

Which the Lord mentioned in the Gospels: “[be] guileless as doves!”

The *Physiologus* said about it: when its master takes away its nestlings, the dove does not become ill-willed [towards its master], nor does it bear grudge [against him], but it strives to make another nest and nestlings in his house.

Saint Basil said: “Consider [carefully], man, the word of the Lord, and remember the dove! For the Lord did not tell you to become able to fly, not to change your nature, but [to be] grudgeless in your thought. If one takes away from you your tunic or another thing from those belonging to you, [then] for the love of Christ, also give him something else [in addition]. For thus has Christ proclaimed to His disciples, saying: “Blessed are you, whenever they would reproach/rebuke and persecute you for My sake, [and whenever they would say any bad word against you, by lying].”<sup>263</sup>

<sup>258</sup> “Saint Basil says: ‘you as well, man, whenever you go to drink from the true source, that is [from the source] of the body and blood of Christ, do not carry evil in your heart [...]’ etc (Sbordone, *Physiologi Graeci*..., 273-274).

<sup>259</sup> I.e., verse homilies.

<sup>260</sup> I do not know from which *mēmre* by Ephrem have these verses been excerpted. It is certain, however, that they appear among the “rogations” (ܩܪܬܝܢܐ) attributed to Ephrem, which are inserted in the *Beth Gazo* (a collection of Church songs, hymns, and tunes, similar to that of the Greek Orthodox *Octoechos*) which is in use in the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch; for the present reference, see *Bethgazo: Schatzbuch der Melodien der Syrisch Orthodoxen Kirche von Antiochien*, (Glane: Bar Hebraeus Press, 1992): 388-389; the quoted verses correspond to the rogations 66-69.

<sup>261</sup> Sibylle Wentkler, *Der arabische Physiologus: Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Vienna: 2002.

<sup>262</sup> See ead., 151-155 (Arabic text), 245-248 (German translation).

<sup>263</sup> For the Greek original, see Sbordone, *Physiologi Graeci*..., 284.



The story about the dove in the same Arabic version of the *Physiologus* is a completely different text<sup>264</sup> and, therefore, it is not likely that the interpretation about the serpent in the Syriac sermon relied on the Arabic text. On the other hand, the Latin versions of the *Physiologus* have their own textual tradition, developed on the basis of the first redaction of the Greek text<sup>265</sup>. None of the existing versions of the Syriac *Physiologus* contains these two stories in this format. The story about the dove, as it appears in the text of the Syriac sermon, is missing from all the three versions of the Syriac *Physiologus*, which provide a different story.<sup>266</sup> The Syriac text edited by O. G. Tychsen lists the same four peculiarities of the serpent, in the order in which they are listed in the Arabic *Physiologus* edited by Wentkler, but without any kind of allegorical interpretation;<sup>267</sup> the *Physiologus* edited by J.P. N. Land provides only the story about the rejuvenation of the serpent,<sup>268</sup> while from the version edited by K. Arhens is missing the story about the serpent which leaves its poison in its nest when drinking water.<sup>269</sup> It is questionable whether the author of the Syriac sermon read the text of the third Greek redaction of the *Physiologus* in its original version; if this is not the case, then the stories about the serpent and the dove might have been read through some sort of intermediary, be it a sermon, a commentary or other type of work, perhaps through Arabic Melkite intermediary.

### **The miraculous bleeding Cross of Alexandria and anti-Jewish *miracula* in the *Malabar Sermonary***

While I was not able to find the direct source of the Pseudo-Basilian version of the *Physiologus* in the text of the Syriac sermon, a literary connection of the sermon with Christian Arabic literature circulating in the Middle East is better illustrated by the story about the bleeding cross in Alexandria, during the tenure of bishop Theophilus (385?-412). This story is about a poor Christian

<sup>264</sup> Cf. Wentkler, *Der arabische Physiologus...*, 186-188 (Arabic text), 263 (German translation). On a different Arabic version of the *Physiologus* than the one studied by Wentkler, see A. Pirtea, "The Arabic Tradition – Second Part: Phys. Arab. α," in C. Macé and J. Gippert (eds.), *The Multilingual Physiologus...*, 263-282. The text studied by Pirtea is a version based on the second redaction of the Greek text. I would like to thank Dr. Adrian Pirtea for having checked for me the texts on serpent and dove from this Arabic version.

<sup>265</sup> On the relation between the *Physiologus* in multiple languages and the various Greek redactions, see the chart in the first annex ("1. Evolution du Physiologus"), in Vermeille, *Physiologus...*, II. On the most recent scholarly contribution to the Latin versions of the *Physiologus*, see Shari Boodts and C. Macé, "The Latin Tradition," in ead. and J. Gippert (eds.), *The Multilingual Physiologus*, 109-158.

<sup>266</sup> Three main Syriac versions of the *Physiologus* have been edited: O. G. Tychsen (ed.), *Physiologus Syrus seu Historia Animalium*, (Rostock: Ex Officina Libraria Stilleriana, 1795); J.P.N. Land (ed.), "Physiologus Leidensis", in *Anecdota Syriaca*, vol. 4, (Leiden: Brill, 1875): 1-98 (Latin translation), 33\* -102\* (Syriac original); K. Ahrens (ed.), *Buch der Naturgegenstände*, (Kiel: C. F. Haeseler, 1892). A story about the dove (different from the one included in the third redaction of the Greek *Physiologus* and in the Syriac sermon) is comprised in Tychsen: 16 (chapter 26); in Land: 65\* (chapter 39); in Ahrens: 32\*. For the sake of clarity, I have marked with \* the pagination of the Syriac texts whenever the Syriac editions and their translations use different systems of pagination both included in the same volume.

<sup>267</sup> Tychsen, *Physiologus Syrus...*, 6-7 (chapter 7).

<sup>268</sup> Although this text begins by stating that there are three peculiarities of the serpent, it develops only its peculiarity of rejuvenating through fasting; see Land, *Anecdota Syriaca*, 72\*-73\* (chapter 49).

<sup>269</sup> Arhens, *Buch der Naturgegenstände*, 38\*-39\*.



who becomes day labourer for a rich Jew. After seeing the prosperity of his Jewish master, the Christian decides to embrace Judaism, expecting to become wealthy. He is advised by a rabbi to abjure the Trinity, to revile Mary, and to stab with a spear an image of Christ crucified.<sup>270</sup> After piercing the image of Christ crucified, blood pours out of the wounded image and the Christian apostate dies. Seeing the miracle of the bleeding image of Christ, his Jewish master together with many Jews convert to Christianity.

The tale as it appears in the text of the Syriac sermon against the Paḷayakūr and the Portuguese is a slightly modified version of a Coptic legend, which is attested in a tenth century Coptic sermon on repentance attributed to Cyril of Alexandria.<sup>271</sup> In the Coptic Synaxarium, the same miracle of the bleeding Cross of Alexandria came to be commemorated as a feast day on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Mesri/Misra.<sup>272</sup> The Arabic version of the Coptic Synaxarium is dated between the last quarter of the twelfth and the first half of the thirteenth century<sup>273</sup>; since the Coptic Synaxarium circulated in Arabic, it is very likely that the Syriac Orthodox author of the sermon against the Paḷayakūr and the Portuguese was acquainted with this legend in its Arabic version. From the Syriac sermon are missing a few details which are to be found in the Coptic version of the miracle account: for instance, the rich Jew is called Philoxenos and the thaumaturgical properties of the blood from the bleeding cross are tested first on Philoxenos' blind daughter, who regains her sight.

The Coptic legend about the miraculous bleeding cross of Alexandria belongs to a typology of miracle stories about bleeding crosses or icons, and Jews desecrating sacred images, which can be found throughout the whole Christian world, both East and West since the sixth century.<sup>274</sup> One

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<sup>270</sup> The Syriac sermon mentions an image of Christ crucified, while the original legend, which is of Coptic origin, speaks about a cross.

<sup>271</sup> See P.M. Chaîne, "Sermon sur la penitence attribué à Saint Cyrille d' Alexandrie," *Mélanges de la Faculté orientale de l'Université Saint-Joseph à Beyrouth*, 6 (1913): 493-528; for the date of the text, see *ibid.*, 495.

<sup>272</sup> The Arabic text of the Coptic Synaxarium was edited and translated into French by R. Basset (for the bleeding cross of Alexandria, see R. Basset, "Synaxaire arabe Jacobite. V. Les mois de Baounah, Abib, Mésoré et jours complémentaires," in *Patrologia Orientalis* 17, (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1923): 720-723. The same story is included in another edition of the Arabic text of the same synaxarium, which was published by J. Forget in *id.* (ed.), *Synaxarium Alexandrinum*, vol. 2, CSCO, Scriptores Arabici 19 (Beirut, Paris, Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1912): 266-267; Forget's edition reproduces the text published by Basset in *Synaxaire arabe Jacobite*, with the evidence of a few more manuscripts recorded in the critical apparatus; for the Latin translation of the miracle of the Bleeding Cross of Alexandria in this edition, see J. Forget (transl.), *Synaxarium Alexandrinum. Pars Posterior*, CSCO 90, Scriptores Arabici 19, (Leuven: Marcel Istas, 1926): 260-262.

<sup>273</sup> See O. H. E. Burmester, "On the Date and Authorship of the Synaxarium of the Coptic Church," *Journal of Theological Studies* 39. 155 (July 1938): 249-253.

<sup>274</sup> For the emergence, diffusion and transformation of such stories, see the work of Michele Bacci, Katherine Aron-Beller and Jean-Marie Sansterre: M. Bacci, "Quel bello miracolo onde si fa la festa del santo Salvatore: studio sulle metamorfosi di una leggenda," in G. Rossetti (ed.), *Santa Croce e Santo Volto: Contributo allo studio dell' origine e della fortuna del culto del Salvatore (secoli IX-XV)*, (Pissa: GISEM- Edizioni ETS, 2002): 7-86; K. Aron-Beller, "Byzantine Tales of Jewish Image Desecration: Tracing a Narrative," *Jewish Culture and History* 18 (2017): 1-26; ead., "Fictional Tales and Their Narrative Transformations: Accusations of Image Desecration Against Jews in 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Century Europe," *Antisemitism Studies* 1.1 (2017): 38-81; J.-M. Sanserre, "L'image blessée, l'image souffrante:



such foundational tale of Christian anti-Judaism played a crucial role in the definition of this literary genre in Europe, namely the eighth-century Byzantine legend about the miraculous image of Christ in Beirut<sup>275</sup>. The same Byzantine story was identified as the “source” of the Coptic legend about the bleeding cross of Alexandria. While the details regarding the place and time vary in the Greek and Coptic accounts, the essential elements of the miraculous plot are almost the same.<sup>276</sup>

The Byzantine tale recounts the story of a Jew who bought a house from a pious Christian near the synagogue in Beirut. When moving out of the house, the Christian forgot to take with himself the image of Christ which he kept on the wall, while the Jew who moved in did not notice it. Another Jew came in to take meal together with the owner of the house, noticed the icon and scolded his host for not having removed it. Afterwards, the same guest summoned more Jews to the house where the image was kept, and they mocked the icon and re-enacted on it the crucifixion. When they pierced the side of Christ depicted in the icon with a spear, blood and water are said to have flown from the image. After that, the Jews tested the thaumaturgical properties of the blood flowing from the icon on ill and paralytics, who were miraculously healed; the miracle led to the collective conversion of the Jews of Beirut to Christianity.

Most important for the present discussion is the fact that such accounts were included in collections of *exempla* to be used as material for preaching in medieval Western Europe. For instance, the miracle of the image of Christ of Beirut appears among the *exempla* gathered by the Dominican Johann Herolt (-1468) in his *Promptuarium Exemplorum*, a very popular preaching toolkit used in Europe during the late Middle Ages and the early modern times.<sup>277</sup> Once the dogma about the transubstantiation of the Eucharist was adopted by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), there was a change in emphasis in what regards miracle accounts *adversus Iudaeos* in Western Europe: in addition to accusations of desecration/re-enactment of crucifixion on icons or crosses, new accounts

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quelques récits des miracles entre Orient et Occident (VI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles),” *Bulletin de l’Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 69 (1999): 113-130.

<sup>275</sup> On the date of this legend, see Bacci, *Quel bello miracolo...*, 9. The story of the miraculous image of Christ of Beirut was the topic of a sermon attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria. For the text of the Pseudo-Athanasian sermon, see Migne PG 28: 797-812; in fact, in Migne there are two versions of the sermon edited separately; the first version is comprised between col. 797A and 806B, while the second one is to be found between col. 806B-812C. The most comprehensive study on the image of Christ of Beirut is M. Bacci, *Quel bello miracolo...*

<sup>276</sup> On the dependence of the Coptic miracle account on the Greek legend, P. M. Chaîne writes the following: “Le prodige survenu jadis au Crucifixe de Beyrouth, si semblable à celui d’Alexandrie, fut l’objet d’une réputation universelle. Nulle part, au contraire, nous ne voyons relaté le miracle dont l’Egypte fut le témoin. Le fond des deux récits est le même; le prodige du sang, les guérisons, la conversion des Juifs en sont les traits fondamentaux et communs. Ils ne se distinguent que par les détails de lieu et des personnes, par quelques incidents secondaires, et pour ces derniers comme pour l’ensemble de la mise en scène, du caractère dramatique de la narration, le récit du miracle d’Alexandrie l’emporte en intérêt sur celui de Beyrouth” (P.M. Chaîne, “Sermon sur la pénitence attribué à Saint Cyrille d’Alexandrie,” *Mélanges de la Faculté orientale de l’Université Saint-Joseph à Beyrouth*, 6 (1913): 494).

<sup>277</sup> See Bacci, *ibid.*, 40, 69-70.



about the desecration of the Eucharistic host by Jews emerged;<sup>278</sup> again, such tales were introduced in preaching toolkits and collections of *exempla*. Especially the part of collections of *exempla* dedicated to miracles of the Virgin Mary was a place where many of such anti-Jewish miracles about the desecration of crosses/icons and of the Eucharistic host were inserted.<sup>279</sup> As mentioned before, a fragment of one such collection of Marian miracles compiled by Alonso de Villegas was translated from Spanish into Syriac and inserted in the earliest manuscript of the *Malabar Sermonary*.<sup>280</sup>

The Syriac translation of this Spanish compilation of Marian miracles contains several *exempla* mentioning Jews; in some of them they are depicted as agents of apostasy; for instance, the Syriac translation includes a story about a certain Archdeacon from Cilicia named Theophilus who makes a pact with the devil; in this story appears a Jew who is mediating the pact of the archdeacon with the devil.<sup>281</sup> The Syriac translation of the Spanish collection also includes a miracle account about a Jewish boy who, after partaking in the Eucharistic loaf together with other children at the Easter mass, was thrown in the furnace by his angry father. According to this tale, the child was left to burn in the furnace for three days, and he was covered by the Virgin Mary with her mantle. In the end of the tale, the boy gets out of the furnace unharmed by the fire, his mother and their Jewish neighbours convert to Christianity, while his father is thrown in the furnace as a punishment for his deed. This tale appears first in Gregory of Tours' *Liber in gloria martyrum*, chapter 9.<sup>282</sup> After this story entered medieval collections of miracles of the Virgin Mary, which in the thirteenth century were translated into vernacular languages, it was instrumentalized for charges of eucharistic desecration against the Jews.<sup>283</sup> In addition to these anti-Jewish *exempla* (about Theophilus and the Jewish boy in the furnace), the Spanish collection of Marian miracles by Villegas included as well a Spanish story belonging to the same typology as the image of Christ of Beirut; according to this account, during the mass for the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, Mary appears in the cathedral of Toledo warning the Christians that the Jews of the town are re-enacting the crucifixion

<sup>278</sup> Aron-Beller, *Fictional Tales...*, 60-64.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 43-50.

<sup>280</sup> For the discussion of this text and its relation to the Spanish original, see Appendix 2.

<sup>281</sup> In Tubach's checklist, this is the exemplum 3572; for the Spanish original in Villegas' collection, see *Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 268v. The number of the folios indicated here and in the following footnotes are always those inserted in the edition of José Aragués Aldaz, accessible online: (<https://www.uv.es/lemir/Textos/Flos/Discurso48.html>). For the Syriac text, see MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 186vB.

<sup>282</sup> See Gregory of Tours, *Glory of the Martyrs*, R. van Dam (transl.), (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1988): 11; for the Spanish text in Villegas' collection see: *Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 268r-v; for the Syriac translation, see MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 186rA-B.

<sup>283</sup> This miracle account was discussed in detail by Miri Rubin; see ead., "Imagining the Jew: The Late Medieval Eucharistic Discourse," in *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany*, ed. by Ronie Po-Chia Hsia and H. Lehmann, (Cambridge: CUP, 1995): 177-208.



on a wax figure of Christ; after the fact is revealed, the Jews of Toledo are massacred;<sup>284</sup> yet, the translator of the Spanish collection into Syriac chose to leave this *exemplum* out of his Syriac translation.

Given the presence of anti-Judaic *exempla* of European origin in manuscripts of the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary*, it seems that the author of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* provided a conscious alternative to these *exempla*, by making use of the Coptic legend about the bleeding cross of Alexandria. The author of the sermon was most likely acquainted with the Coptic legend through the Arabic translation of the Coptic Synaxarium. I am not aware of any Syriac text where the miracle of the bleeding cross of Alexandria is recounted. Yet, the Syriac tradition had its own share in anti-Judaic stories about the re-enactment of the crucifixion on images of Christ. Such is for instance, the “History of the Likeness of Christ, and of How the Accursed Jews in the City of Tiberias Made a Mock Thereof in the Days of the God-Loving Emperor Zeno.”<sup>285</sup> According to Sidney Griffith, this Syriac story was used by Theodore Abu Qurrah (c. 750-c. 825) in his treatise *On the Veneration of the Holy Icons*.<sup>286</sup> It is therefore noteworthy that the author of the sermon against the *Paḷayakūr* and the Portuguese made use of a Coptic tale which he most likely read in Arabic translation.

### 3. 4. Further evidence for an Arabic speaking author

Tracing the languages and textual traditions which were at interplay in the composition of the Syriac sermon against the *Paḷayakūr* and the Portuguese is important because the use of sources in Arabic points to the authorship of a Middle Eastern clergyman, and not of an Indian bishop from among the Mar Thoma Syriac Orthodox metropolitans from Malabar. Then, the legitimate question is whether the re-editing of the *Malabar Sermonary* among the Puttaṅkūr and the composition of the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* was part of the missionary strategy of the first Syriac Orthodox missionaries in Malabar in the second half of the sixteenth century and in the first decades of the eighteenth. This seems to be the most plausible hypothesis. As the use of the Arabic narrative about the miraculous Cross from Alexandria suggests, the author of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* might have belonged to the Arabic speaking clergy active in Malabar. The influence of Arabic is also strongly suggested by the blessing of the name of

<sup>284</sup> For a detailed analysis of this miracle see Aron-Beller, *Fictional Tales...*, 51-54. For the text of this exemplum in the Spanish collection, see *Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 275r.

<sup>285</sup> For this Syriac source, see E. A. W. Budge (transl.), *The History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ*, vol. 2, (London: Luzac and Co., 1899): 171-246.

<sup>286</sup> See S. Griffith, “Crosse, Icons and the Image of Christ in Edessa: The Place of Iconophilia in the Christian-Muslim Controversies of Early Islamic Times,” in *Transformations of Late Antiquity: Essays for Peter Brown*, ed. by P. Rousseau and M. Papoutsakis, (London and New York: Routledge, 2009): 69, footnote 30. I do not know on which basis M. Bacci ascribes the Syriac text to the tenth century (Bacci, *Quel Bello Miracolo...*, 11).



God/Christ, a practice which is not common in the Syriac sources from Malabar and betrays the influence of Islam in the Middle East. A few examples from the Syriac sermon are listed here:

[illegible][illegible]

“Look carefully and see, my brothers, that He did not give them<sup>287</sup> a sword and war machines in order to threaten the people and subdue them by violence, although – **glory to His power!** – He is «the King of kings and the Lord of lords»” (fol. 92v) ( سَوْدَهُ فُيْوَهَ كَعْبَدِيهِ اَوْ لِسْتِ دِلِّ يَسِتِ دَاوُدَ، فَيُفَا مِهْيَكَّتَمَ كِمْدَتَلَهَ ( fol. 92v) ) (كَجَنَتِنِ). هَكَمْعَلَّجِدَه نَمَ، تَهَذِلَهَ. حِدَ سِهَ خَرَسَتِ لَسْلَسَ. ضَلَحِ ذُلْحَقِ لَأَمْسَمَ مَقْنَزِ ذَمَقْنَه).

[illegible][illegible]

### 3.5. Polemical message and possible authorship

As shown so far, a careful analysis of the sources suggests that the sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr must have been authored by an Arabic-speaking clergyman from the Middle East. Given the entanglement between the *Paḷayakūr* and *Puttāṅkūr*, who shared churches, rituals and texts, the author of the sermon against the *Paḷayakūr* and the Portuguese adopted the literary genre of European medieval sermon to preach to the *Puttāṅkūr*, while using Syriac Orthodox and

<sup>287</sup> I.e. to the Apostles.

288 Sic!

<sup>289</sup> Fol. 89v.



Christian Arabic sources. This was a missionary strategy used by a Syriac Orthodox missionary coming from the Middle East, whose aim was, on the one hand, to reinforce the Syriac Orthodox identity among the Malabar Christians and, on the other hand, to fight back the Syro-Catholics by replicating and responding to their preaching arsenal embedded in the *Malabar Sermonary*. In fact, no other composition from the *Malabar Sermonary* contains as many local elements as this piece does.

The main topics on which the polemical sermon is constructed are the poverty, affliction, and persecution of the Syriac Orthodox Christians from Malabar. The conflictual relationship that it articulates is twofold. First, it summarizes the tensions generated by the Portuguese's attempt to control the religious life of the Syrian Christians of Malabar. The capturing of the itinerant Syriac bishops sent to Malabar by the East Syrian and Chaldean Patriarchs, throughout the sixteenth century, is an emblematic expression of all these tensions; a similar event was at the peak of the revolt of 1653<sup>290</sup>. Then, the strong Syriac identity reinforced against the “sons of the heretics” witnesses to the rivalry and tense relationship that the *Puttaṅkūr* had with their fellows belonging to the *Paḷayakūr*. I will analyze further the main elements meant to articulate the polemic message of the sermon.

### 3.6. The accusation of bribery

The events and tensions exposed in the sermon as part of the collective memory of the *Puttaṅkūr* became literary topoi which are recorded as well by the local Syriac and Malayalam “apologetic or teleological Church histories.”<sup>291</sup> Such is for instance the motive of the killing of the Syrian bishops and the insistence on bribery. To illustrate the use of these two topoi in the sermon, I am relying on the recent research done by Emy Merin Joy who provided a comparative study with an English translation of one piece belonging to this literary genre (apologetic Church history); the text was initially written in Malayalam, around 1720, and subsequently it was readapted from Malayalam into Syriac by a certain priest Mattai Vettikunnel.<sup>292</sup> The main feature of the genre is that it “presents a linear history, singling out one ecclesiastical or jurisdictional line among the many competing ones, which, according to the author of the history, is the only one that has remained faithful to the true tradition of Saint Thomas.”<sup>293</sup> The text analysed by Joy was meant to legitimize in Malabar the authority of an East Syrian bishop, Mar Gabriel, sent to the Malabar Coast, in the

<sup>290</sup> J. Thekkedath, *History of Christianity...*, 91-96.

<sup>291</sup> On this literary genre and its coinage, see Perczel, *Four Apologetic...*

<sup>292</sup> See E. M. Joy, *Christian Manuscripts of Kerala (India): Revisiting Popular Histories of the Syrian Christians in the Early Modern Period*, unpublished MA thesis defended at the Department of Medieval Studies of the Central European University (Budapest/Vienna): 14, available online: [http://www.etd.ceu.edu/2019/joy\\_emy.pdf](http://www.etd.ceu.edu/2019/joy_emy.pdf).

<sup>293</sup> Perczel, *Four Apologetic...*, 189.



beginning of the eighteenth century, by the East Syrian Catholicos Patriarch Mar Eliah XI Mar Awgen (1700-1722).<sup>294</sup> While making a recension of the events that happened among the Saint Thomas Christians after the coming of the Portuguese, the apologetic history speaks about bribery in relation to the “Franks” [i.e., Portuguese] in two instances. First, it states that Aleixo de Menezes, the Archbishop of Goa, bribed the king of Cochin in order to torture the Syrian Christians who refused to accept the decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599):

“Then, by the order of the Roman Pope, Alleša, a Frankish bishop who was Viceroy of the Fort (*koṭṭekkabišeri*) and <arch>bishop, after he came to *Malayālam*, tried by all means to convert the *Surīyānikkar* who were in *Malayālam*. Learning that this was not possible, he gave thirty thousand *kāšu* contributed by people (or: money contributed by thirty thousand people?) to *Pērumpaṭappil Sōrupam* (the Kingdom of Cochin), so that for three entire years the *Surīyānikkar* in the land of *Pērumpaṭappu* were tormented and their minds were tormented so that their minds become weakened and, for this reason, the *Surīyānikkar* in *Malayālam* obeyed the Frankish bishop.”<sup>295</sup>

Again, the same theme of the bribery appears, so as to discredit the consecration of Alexander Parambil as bishop of the “Old Faction” (*Paḷayakūr*) in 1663, by Joseph Maria Sebastiani OCD, Vicar Apostolic:

“After this, the Frankish bishop [Joseph Maria Sebastiani OCD],<sup>296</sup> who was in Fort Kodungallur, wrote letters to the priests and the Christians and, as he sent people in secret to certain people with expensive clothes and ornaments with them, some of them had accepted these complimentary gifts and secretly went to visit the bishop. Those who visited the bishop, he satisfied [them] by words and money. As this was going on, all the supposedly firm churchmen of the *Surīyānikkar* in *Malayālam* started obeying the Frankish bishop. However, the Franks and those *Surīyānikkar* who joined the Franks along with them, bribed the chieftains of each kingdom and tortured those *Surīyānikkar* who refused to join them, so that they join the perfidious Franks.”<sup>297</sup>

However, in addition to Church histories, the same topic of bribery also occurs in documents stemming from Archdeacon Thomas (Mar Thoma I): so, for instance, in a letter in Syriac allegedly sent by Mar Thoma I to “Ignatius the Patriarch of Nineveh.” The letter does not contain any date but must have been written sometimes around 1659;<sup>298</sup> it is also not clear

<sup>294</sup> On the historical circumstances of the composition of this text, the manuscript tradition and the printed edition of the Syriac translation of the Malayalam original text, see Perczel, *ibid.*, 190-191, 198-202; and Joy, *Christian Manuscripts...*, 14-20.

<sup>295</sup> Translation by E. Joy, *ibid.*, 59-60.

<sup>296</sup> The identification belongs to ead., *ibid.*, 41.

<sup>297</sup> Translation by ead., *ibid.*, 60.

<sup>298</sup> This date is suggested by the fact that the letter refers to a certain merchant Stephen, who apparently mediated the correspondence between Mar Thoma I and the various Syriac prelates from the Middle East. According to J. Thekkedath, Stephen was “a Syrian or Armenian merchant” who reached Cochin in 1659 (see J. Thekkedath, *The Troubled Days of Francis Garcia S.J. Archbishop of Cranganore (1641-1659)*, Analecta Gregoriana 187, (Rome: Università Gregoriana Editrice, 1972): 150-151. According to the same scholar: “a little after the death of [Francisco] Garcia [in 1659], Stephen was promised a large sum of money by the Archdeacon [i.e. Mar Thoma I], provided he would pose as nephew of “the newly elected Pope”. Stephen was expected to declare that he had been sent by his uncle to deliver to Thomas Parambil [i.e., Mar Thoma I] a brief which confirmed Thomas as archbishop and patriarch of the St. Thomas Christians. In the months that followed, the fictitious brief was solemnly presented by Stephen to the Archdeacon and exhibited at some meetings held in those kingdoms that were then at war with the king of Cochin and his allies, the Portuguese.” (*ibid.*, 150). Yet, from the copy of another Syriac letter preserved by Mar Thoma I in Mulanthuruthy and confiscated by the captain of Cochin in 1661, it seems that this merchant, Stephen, was carrying the correspondence between various Syriac bishops from the Middle East and the Malabar Christians. This letter is written in Indian East Syriac script and is preserved in APF SOCG 234, on fol. 351r; it was written by the priest Zacharia from Changanacherry on behalf of Mar Thoma I and addressed to the Patriarch of the Church of the East Mar Eliya VIII



whether it is authentic or not. Even if the letter was fabricated in the circle of Mar Thoma I, it is still important for understanding the situation of the followers of Mar Thoma I<sup>299</sup> at that time. The letter is to be found among the documents belonging to Mar Thoma I and Ittithomman Kattanar (his closest adviser) which were confiscated by the captain of Cochin from the Church of Mulanthuruthy, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1661;<sup>300</sup> these documents are currently preserved in the Historical Archive *De propaganda fide* in the Vatican.<sup>301</sup> The following excerpt from the text of the letter is relevant for the present discussion:

Even if this letter never reached any patriarch, it still reflects the tensions and problems which Mar Thoma I and his flock had to face at that time. Reverberations of these problems (poverty, imposition of taxes, bribery, and persecution) have been subsequently encapsulated in both the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the *Palayakūr*, and in the apologetic Church history.

<sup>299</sup> I am deliberately avoiding the use of the terms *Paḷayakūr* and *Putanḳūr* before the consecration of Alexander Parambil as bishop of the Syro-Catholic group in 1663, and before Mar Thoma I's re-consecration by Mor Gregorios Abd Al-Jalī after 1665.

<sup>301</sup> These documents are kept in the Historical Archive De Propaganda Fide, SOCG 234: fol. 342r-356v.

<sup>303</sup> I.e., the Portuguese.

<sup>305</sup> To my knowledge the text of the letter has not been published before; I have provided a transcription of the Syriac text with English translation in Appendix 9.



### 3.7. The fate of Mar A'tallah and the “killing” of the Syriac bishops

In addition to the emphasis on bribery, the Syriac sermon refers to the “killing” of the Syriac bishops which envisages the event that fuelled the revolt of the Malabar Christians against their Jesuit Archbishop and the Portuguese from 1653. As mentioned above, the event is related to Mar A'tallah, a Syriac bishop from Syria, who reached South India in 1652, and was detained by the Jesuits in their convent at Meliapor on the Coromandel Coast. Mar A'tallah's detention in Meliapor and afterwards his alleged drowning in the sea was the event which was at the peak of the revolt of the Malabar Christians from 1653.

Mar A'tallah was a former Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop of Damascus, Nicomedia and Homs, who in 1631 entered Catholic communion; in the times of Pope Urban VIII, he went to Rome, and then returned to the Middle East where he was not accepted by all of his kin because of joining the Catholic Church; for the same reason he was persecuted by the Ottomans. At the death of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Mor Hidayat-Allah in 1639, Mar A'tallah was one of the unsuccessful candidates for the patriarchal See. However, he was appointed by Mor Gregorios Shukr-Allah<sup>306</sup> as Archbishop of Baghdad and Persia and hence a Maphrian(?),<sup>307</sup> but there again he was not well received because of his conversion to Catholicism. While chased by the Ottomans, in 1642 he attempted to go from Isfahan to Rome but ended up in Cairo where he remained until 1651. The Coptic Patriarch sent Mar A'tallah from Cairo to the Malabar Coast, at the request of Archdeacon Thomas; in a letter from 1649 Archdeacon Thomas asked the Coptic Patriarch for an Oriental Orthodox<sup>308</sup>

<sup>306</sup> Mor Gregorios Shukr-Allah was one of the three competitors to the Patriarchal See of Antioch at the death of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Mor Hidayat-Allah in 1639 (see Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians...*, 205-206).

<sup>307</sup> In three letters sent to Archdeacon Thomas, Mar A'tallah referred to himself as “Ignatius, the patriarch of All India and China” (see *ibid.*, 109-112); “Ignatius” is the honorific name of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch; while both J. Thekkedath's and J. Kollaparambil's reconstruction of Mar A'tallah's journey to Malabar established that he was sent to South India by the Coptic Patriarch from Cairo, a report sent from Malabar in 1653 claims the following: “while in Rome for five years (!) Mar A'tallah stayed in the Church of St. Nicolão. On returning to Syria four schismatic [i.e. Syriac Orthodox] bishops objected to his occupying the see of Damascus. Some time later, four men from India, of whom two spoke Syriac, reached the Middle East with a letter requesting that an Archbishop be sent to India, because the Christians of St. Thomas were then disunited. For this purpose they made him (Mar A'tallah) the Patriarch of Antioch naming him Ignatius, and allowing him to fix his seat anywhere in the world where Syriac was spoken, provided he would thereby contradict nobody else. They told him that since he had gone to Rome and thus had become a Frank, he might well go to the Franks of India, namely the Portuguese” (Kollaparambil, *ibid.*, 127); on the question whether Mar A'tallah was a Maphrian, see *ibid.*, 213, 216. According to another report recorded by J. Thekkedath: “When he [i.e. Mar A'tallah] was in Damascus, a crafty rival of his made use of a stratagem to deprive him of his see. He proposed that A'tallah should hand over to him the archdiocese of Damascus, in return for his being made patriarch. In fact, the bishops elected A'tallah patriarch and gave him the name Ignatius, a name which all the Patriarchs of Antioch bear in honour of St. Ignatius the martyr. But his successor in Damascus, wishing to make sure of his position, bribed the Turk in order to drive A'tallah out. Accordingly, the Turkish captain ordered him to leave the place soon, unless he wanted to be killed. The bishops who had elected him patriarch, now made him patriarch of all the Syrians spread all over the world” (Thekkedath, *The Troubled Days...*, 78).

<sup>308</sup> I am using here the term “Oriental Orthodox” in order to distinguish the churches which rejected the Council of Chalcedon (451) from the Greek Orthodox Church.



Bishop for the Syriac Christians of Malabar. Mar A'tallah reached South India in 1652, but was retained by the Jesuits in Meliapor on the Coromandel Coast, and was not allowed to reach Malabar, as he did not have the permission of the Padroado authorities.<sup>309</sup> Then, Mar A'tallah came from Meliapor to Cochin in the last days of December 1652, but was averted from entering Cochin and from meeting with Archdeacon Thomas and the kattanars (local priests of the Syriac Indian Christians). This happened because Mar A'tallah did not have the credentials of the King of Portugal so as to take over the spiritual leadership of the Malabar Christians; moreover, since he was a bishop from the Middle-East, he was suspected of heresy by the Portuguese; in addition to this, Archbishop Francisco Garcia (1641-1659), the Jesuit prelate of the Malabar Christians who was in conflict with Archdeacon Thomas, feared that the Indian Christians would prefer a Syriac bishop over him and, hence, Mar A'tallah's coming would create a schism within the Indian Christian community. For this reason, the ship carrying Mar A'tallah was prevented from entering Cochin and after two days it sailed to Goa.<sup>310</sup>

In this context, on Friday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1653, the Malabar Christians revolted against Archbishop Garcia, the Jesuits and the Portuguese, and swore not to accept anymore a Jesuit prelate. As a consequence of the revolt, twelve priests elected and ordained Archdeacon Thomas as their Metropolitan bishop (Mar Thoma I) through the imposition of their hands; the Archdeacon – now Mar Thoma I – legitimized his non-canonical ordination through a letter supposedly written by Mar A'tallah; through this letter, Mar A'tallah conferred to Mar Thoma I all his powers and prerogatives as a patriarch.<sup>311</sup> As shown by J. Kollaparambil, after leaving Cochin, Mar A'tallah was detained in Goa; from Goa he was sent to Lisbon together with Monsignor Franscella, the Archbishop of Myra; after their arrival to Lisbon around the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 1653, Mar A'tallah – again accompanied by the Archbishop of Lyra – was sent to Rome by the King of Portugal; on their way to Rome, the two prelates reached Paris where both died. Mar A'tallah passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1654 and was buried in the Jerusalem Chapel of the Cordeliers' Convent in Paris.<sup>312</sup> However, after Mar A'tallah's ship departed from Cochin to Goa, rumours spread in Malabar that he was drowned into the sea or killed by the Inquisition in Goa.<sup>313</sup> The “killing of the Syriac bishops” in the sermon against

<sup>309</sup> For the information regarding Mar A'tallah, I am relying on the work of J. Kollaparambil and J. Thekkedath; see J. Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians...*, especially chapters 5 and 6, 107-216; on the same topic, see as well J. Thekkedath, *The Troubled Days...*, 73-82.

<sup>310</sup> See Thekkedath, *ibid.*, 50-60 and Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians...*, 131-140.

<sup>311</sup> Some considered this letter to have been a forgery made by Ittithomman Kattannar; for the English translation of this letter see Kollaparambil, *ibid.*, 110-112.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, 168-175.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, 187-189.



the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* refers precisely to these rumours about Mar A‘tallah’s death. The same topic appears in the apologetic Church history:

„However, as they [i.e., the *Surīyānikkar*] had been joined to the Franks, after fifty-five good years have passed, by the order of the Catholicos, a *Surīyāni* high-priest, called Mar Ginattīs,<sup>314</sup> who came to *Malayālam*, was caught and brought from *Mailappu* to the Fort by the injurious Franks and was drowned in the sea, and because this became known to all of the *Surīyānikkar* in *Malayālam*, then the *Surīyānikkar* living in *Malayālam* altogether gathered in a *yōgam* at the church of *Maṭṭāmcēri* and decided that ‘from now onwards forever, for the times of the generations to come we would not join either in good or bad terms with the injurious Franks,’ and they made an oath.”<sup>315</sup>

### 3.8. West Syriac missionaries in Malabar after 1653 and the consolidation of Syriac Orthodox identity

As expressed in the text of the sermon, the reinforcement of Syriac Orthodox identity seems to correspond to the missionary strategy of the first West Syriac missionaries who came from the Middle East to Malabar after the revolt from 1653. This is suggested by comparing the text of the Syriac sermon with documents stemming from these West Syriac missionaries. I will provide a few examples. The following passage from the *unitio* of the sermon against the *Paḷayakūr* and the Portuguese is emblematic for asserting the Syriac Orthodox identity of the Malabar Christians:

Now, it does not befit you to renege on your Syriac Fathers for a small amount of money that you are receiving from the Franks. For Mor Aprem said: “Those of former times had a trodden way; do not tread a [new] path by yourself!” [...] And if one of them [i.e. the *Paḷayakūr*] would tell us: ‘Behold, pagan peoples left the idols of their fathers and followed Christ. In the same way, we also left the customs of our heretical fathers and followed the Franks,’ we answer him: ‘It suffices you this disgrace that came from your own mouth and bore witness against you, [namely] that you are son of the heretics! From now on do not say anymore «I am a free-born», but «[I am] son of those accursed and anathematized»! Through the grace of God you have become the son of the Franks? However, we do not speak as you do, but we say that we are Syriacs and sons of the Orthodox Syriacs from the blessed seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, from the race of the Lady Mary, the God-Bearer, and also from the race of Saint [fol. 94v] John the Baptist, Peter, Paul and the rest of the apostles and evangelists; [we are] the disciples of Mor Toma, we are not the disciples of the Franks, unlike you. We do not need wealth, but the poverty of the Son of God, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes and placed in the manger of the beasts, and He did not have a place where to lay His head, according to the word of the Lord (Luke 9: 58). And for the sake of His love, we are paying poll-tax, as He humbled Himself – glory to His humility! – and asked Simeon to pay the poll-tax on behalf of them both. And we do not want to be kings, as He says: “My kingdom was not from this world” (John 18: 36), but we desire the truth of Christ, we follow His disciples and we venerate and embrace our Syriac Fathers.”<sup>316</sup>

The quoted text shares its emphasis on Syriac Orthodoxy with a couple of letters written by West Syriac missionaries active in Malabar. In 1665 arrived to Malabar Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalīl, the Metropolitan of Jerusalem, who belonged to the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch; from Mor Gregorios Mar Thoma I received a valid consecration, entering in full communion with the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch.<sup>317</sup> In a circular letter sent by Mor Gregorios to the priests of the churches from Parur, Mulanthuruthy and Kandanad, dated to the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1668, the Syriac prelate wrote the following:

“I am informed of the persecution you suffer from the blind men who, forsaking the true and orthodox canons of the Syrian Church, have adhered to the idolatrous Romanists. They were originally Syrians, following our true faith, but have afterwards turned heretics by the influence of the wicked kings and queens of Portugal.

<sup>314</sup> A spelling of “Ignatius” (see Joy, *Christian Manuscripts...*, 40).

<sup>315</sup> Translation by Joy, *Christian Manuscripts...*, 60.

<sup>316</sup> Fol. 93v-94v.

<sup>317</sup> E. M. Philip, *The Indian Church of Saint Thomas*, (Changanacherry: Mor Adai Study Center, 2002): 144.



They held an unlawful council (Synod of Diamper) and changed the true faith taught by the Apostle of our nation. [...] The heresies of the Romanists are many, which we have no time to enumerate in detail, and of which we hope to speak to you in person. We request you to be zealous in the canons of the Syrian Church. Remember that suffering in this world will bring you happiness in the future life. [...] The false Christians of India forsook the laws of the Syrians and accepted new laws one thousand and six hundred years after the arrival of St. Thomas. [...] It was from the Romanist missionaries of Sampalūr [i.e. the Jesuits of Saint Paul<sup>318</sup>], that the Christians of India learned to believe ‘in the Roman Church’. They forsook the true faith and the famous rituals of the Syrian Church and fell into the heresies of the Romanists from love of money... Woe to them in that day of retribution in which the Great Judge shall occupy His throne with the holy Apostles on twelve thrones!”<sup>319</sup>

Although there are no instances of intertextuality between the Syriac sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr and the circular letter of Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalīl, both documents witness to the same strifes among the *Puttaṅkūr*, and to the effort of the West Syriac missionaries to conform the Indian Christians to the Syriac Orthodox tradition. In practice, the missionary strategy of strengthening the Syriac identity among the *Puttaṅkūr* did not necessarily mean the rejection of all the cultural, liturgical and literary elements belonging to the East Syriac and Syro-Catholic past of the Malabar Christians. It must be rather understood as a gradual “re-Syriacisation” of the Indian Christian community and seems to have been specific to the first Syriac Orthodox missionaries active in Malabar, starting with Mor Gregorios Abd-al Jalīl; Mor Gregorios died in 1671<sup>320</sup>. After him, in 1685, arrived to Malabar, the Maphrian Mor Baselios Yaldo together with Mor Ivanios Hidayat Allah; the coming of the Syriac prelates was requested by Mar Thoma II, the Metropolitan of the Puttaṅkūr, in a letter that he sent around 1683 to the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch ‘Abd-al Masih I. In the end of his letter to the Patriarch, Mar Thoma II wrote:

Therefore, my Lord, you the head of all the churches, we beseech you to send us a metropolitan with four teachers, or else, all the Syrians will be extinct. We are poor and possess no silver. But we have abundant love for the Syrians. If no Syrian will come unto us, all the Indians will join the Franks. Our enemies bribe the heathen rulers and the Company (the Dutch East India Company) to oppress us and force us to join the Franks. Therefore, we ask you to respond soon to our request for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Twelve Apostles and the Syrian Fathers. We also request you to provide us with a letter of recommendation for the Company which will be greatly appreciated. However, at present, we do not fear the Franks.<sup>321</sup>

The same topic of poverty, bribery and persecution which was the subject of the letter written by Mar Thoma I to “Ignatius, the Patriarch of Nineveh” is reiterated here. After Mor Ivanios Hidayat Allah reached Malabar, it seems that the process of conforming the Malabar Church to the West Syriac tradition conducted by Mor Ivanios faced resistance from Mar Thoma III (the nephew of

<sup>318</sup> Here the letter refers to the Jesuits staying in Sampalūr at Ambazhakad, where the Jesuit seminary moved from Vaipicotta after the Dutch conquest of the coastal region.

<sup>319</sup> Extensive fragments from Mor Gregorios’ letter are included by E. M. Philip in his book, based on a Syriac original which was in the possession of the same author (ibid., 145-148); for the present reference: ibid., 145-147. Patriarch Ignatius Yaqoub III, in his *History of the Syrian Church...*, speaks about two circular letters written by Mor Gregorios to the Malabar Christians (see ibid., 56-58).

<sup>320</sup> See Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 139. About Mor Gregorios’ missionary activity in Malabar, Fenwick writes the following: “it appears that Mar Gregorios, rather than attempting to force on the Syrians full-blown Antiochene doctrine and liturgy, proceeded by emphasising and re-introducing those features which were common to both the East and West Syrian traditions – the form of the vestments, leavened bread, clerical marriage and beards, the calendar and fasts” (ibid., 134-135).

<sup>321</sup> Ignatius Yaqoub III, *History of the Syrian Church...*, 59.



Mar Thoma II); Mor Ivanios died in 1693.<sup>322</sup> According to Fenwick, “Mor Ivanios seems to have been opposed by the new Metropolitan Mar Thoma III (a nephew of Mar Thoma II) who both resisted Antiochene doctrine and feared the loss of his own authority in the eyes of his community.”<sup>323</sup> Another West Syriac missionary who reached Malabar in 1747 was Mor Ivanios Yuhanon Al-Arqugiani of Amid; the Syriac bishop came again into conflict with Mar Thoma V (1728-1765) and the Malabar Christians, and was sent back to the Middle East by Mor Baselios Shukr Allah in 1752.<sup>324</sup> As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, apparently, it was only through the activity of Mor Baselios Shukr Allah Qasagbi, Maphrian of the East, who reached Malabar in 1751 that the Antiochene rite was consolidated among the Malabar Christians.

And even so, one finds mixed liturgical manuscripts containing Chaldean and Catholic elements copied for the use of the Syriac Orthodox Indian Christians as late as 1859.<sup>325</sup> Mor Baselios Shukr Allah’s relationship to Mar Thoma V was uneasy; in his book on the history of Syriac dioceses, the Patriarch Ignatius Aphram Barsoum I quotes extensively from Mor Baselios’ journal in Malabar,<sup>326</sup> the details suggest that Mar Thoma’s liturgical practice was not that of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, and the Indian prelate was quite adamant in not conforming to the West Syriac tradition. In fact, since the revolt from 1653, while seeking valid consecration and recognition, many of the Mar Thoma metropolitans were pendulating between Antioch and Rome.<sup>327</sup> In the context of a confrontation with Mar Thoma V about the West Syriac customs and rituals of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, Mor Baselios Shukr Allah describes the missionary activity of the West Syriac bishops who preceded him in Malabar in the following words:

“The fathers who came to you were like a physician who calls on the wounded patient. First he treats the wound to prevent more serious illness. When the deadly wound is cured, then he goes on to treat the scratches. When the fathers saw that you had lost the way, they treated you as they could and strongly eliminated some of your bad customs. They had your priests grow long beards, handed them the faith, and taught them the seasons of fasting and times of prayers, as much as they could. Now Tuma [i.e. Mar Thoma V] is our spiritual son. Let

<sup>322</sup> Mor Ivanios is credited with convening a council in Chenganur in 1686; according to the Patriarch Ignatius Yaqoub III, “After deliberating the dogmas and traditions of the church in the past generations, and after reciting the canons of the three Ecumenical Councils [Nicaea, Constantinople and Ephesus] and the books of *Hodoyo (Nomocanon)*, and *Zalge (The Book of Rays)* and chapters of *Mnurath Qdushe (The Lamp of the Sanctuaries)* by Bar Hebraeus, and the *memre (metrical hymns)* of St. Ephraim and Jacob of Sarug, the council endorsed some general canons to be observed by the church. The president circulated the minutes of the council to the churches in an apostolic letter prefaced with a historical prologue” (id., *History of the Syrian Church...*, 70-71). The same author provides a translation of Mor Ivanios’s letter (ibid., 71-74): most of the issues discussed in it are related to the practice of fasting, the use and symbolism of the leavened bread in the Eucharist, marriage of the priests and other matters related to ecclesiastical discipline.

<sup>323</sup> Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 147.

<sup>324</sup> See ibid., 160-167; Ignatius Yaqoub III, *History of the Syrian Church...*, 87-88, 96-99.

<sup>325</sup> This is the case of a ritual book, MS 16 from the Library of the Malankara Bishop’s House in Tiruvalla recorded by Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas...*, 109; the manuscript is mentioned by Fenwick, *The Forgotten Bishops...*, 139-140 (footnote 60).

<sup>326</sup> See Ignatius Aphram Barsoum I, *History of the Syriac Dioceses*, English transl. by Matti Moosa, vol. 1, (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009): 91-100.

<sup>327</sup> On this topic, see, for instance, P. Podipara, *The Efforts for Reunion in Malankara...*, 225-232.



him come to us, and we will reach a concord with him concerning these customs. Our main purpose is to treat the more sinister wounds and overlook what does not lead to death.”<sup>328</sup>

The extant data does not allow one to draw any definitive conclusion, but the reluctance to renounce on the Syro-Catholic texts which were already part of the literary canon of the Syriac literacy from Malabar, while striving to assert Syriac Orthodox identity, seems to be the outcome of this historical context. The Syriac Orthodox revision and recension of the *Malabar Sermonary* and the composition of the sermon against the Portuguese and *Paḷayakūr* happened at the crossroads between the efforts of the first West Syriac missionaries to introduce Antiochene rituals and discipline, and the reluctance of both the Mar Thoma Metropolitans (from the lineage of the Archdeacons) and the *Puttaṅkūr* to renounce the Syro-Catholic texts which were already part of the canon of Syriac literacy in Malabar and which played an important role in their Syriac religious identity.

## Conclusion

The text analysed here exemplifies the reception of the *Malabar Sermonary* and the appropriation of the European model sermon by the *Puttaṅkūr*, i.e., the group of Malabar Christians who after 1653 sided with the Archdeacon and subsequently gradually turned towards the West Syriac tradition of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch. The polemical message of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* has been conveyed by means of a literary piece belonging to an European literary genre, alien to the Syriac tradition. Yet, the *Malabar Sermonary* – into whose West Syriac revision this sermon was inserted – was a collection of Syriac texts belonging to the new Syro-Catholic literary canon of the Malabar Christians. This canon emerged in the second half of the sixteenth and the first decades of the seventeenth centuries, as an expression of the interaction of the East Syriac Indian Christians with the European Catholic missionaries. The *Paḷayakūr*, the Syro-Catholic group from among the Malabar Christians, was, in fact, expected to excel in this literary genre, because the practice of the rhetoric of the European scholastic sermon into Syriac was already embodied by the texts belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary*. If the sermonary was used as a manual for teaching theology in school by the *Paḷayakūr*, then this explains the adoption of the same literary genre by the *Puttaṅkūr* as a means of polemics and controversy with their rivals. The sermon against the *Paḷayakūr* and Portuguese is important as in no other composition from the sermonary are articulated so many tensions related to the ecclesiastical history of the Malabar Christians at a turning point in its history; the comparison with key events of the community's collective memory encapsulated in apologetic Church histories and correspondence is indicative in this sense. The use of an Arabic source and of idiomatic expressions specific to Arabic-speaking Middle Eastern Christians suggest that the sermon must have been written by one of the Syriac

<sup>328</sup> Ignatius Aphram Barsoum I, *History of the Syriac Dioceses*, 92-93.



Orthodox prelates who came as missionaries from the Middle East to Malabar in the second half of the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth centuries.



## Chapter 2: The *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* and the two redactions of the *Malabar Sermonary*

### 1. Introduction

In the first chapter of the thesis, I have shown how a West Syriac author, most likely a Syriac Orthodox missionary from the Middle East who knew the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*, composed a polemic sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr*. While using Syriac Orthodox sources of authority in Syriac and Arabic, the author followed the rules of a European literary genre: the medieval model sermon, whose structure was encoded in the *artes praedicandi* (handbooks on the art of preaching), once the first universities had emerged in Western Europe, in the end of the eleventh century. In the Syriac Catholic literature from Malabar, this literary genre was embodied by several compositions of the *Malabar Sermonary*. As I mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, in its initial Catholic redaction, the sermonary contained: (1) model sermons constructed according to the rules of the medieval *artes praedicandi*, (2) other compositions which, from a structural point of view, constitute a hybrid between medieval sermons and biblical commentaries, as well as (3) some sermons influenced by the *genus deliberativum* specific to the so-called “humanistic” sermons from Europe.

To understand how this corpus was used and to continue the discussion about its making in an East Syriac-Catholic milieu and its reception history in Syriac Orthodox circles of Malabar, this chapter is devoted to the study of a *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*. The text of the sermon survives in two versions: (1) its initial Catholic redaction and (2) the later Syriac Orthodox revision of its text, which must have been done after 1653<sup>329</sup>. The initial Catholic redaction of the text is contained in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 91vA-94vB, while its Syriac Orthodox revision is to be found in MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 102r-105v; as discussed in the previous chapter, the latter manuscript contains the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr*, and the Syriac Orthodox revision of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

Even if there are other sermons in the corpus, which, from a theological and formal point of view, are more elaborate, I have chosen the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* for analysis, because it is the only piece from the sermonary explicitly celebrating an East Syriac saint, which according to Catholic doctrine would have been considered a “Nestorian” heretic. The parallel reading of the same *exemplum* about the East Syriac holy man in this sermon and in another piece from the *Malabar Sermonary* reveals that one of the authors involved in the composition of the *Malabar Sermonary*, presumably Francisco Ros, initially adopted a more permissive, accommodative approach to the East Syriac models of sanctity, while later – probably after the

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<sup>329</sup> The sermon is recorded as number 36 in the synopsis.



Synod of Diamper – the same author felt the need to question and censor the sanctity of the same East Syriac saint.

Yet, at the textual level, the presence of such East Syriac elements marks the transition from the Syriac literacy of the Church of the East to the newly created Catholic culture in Syriac from Malabar, as a synthesis of both the East Syriac culture of the Middle East and the European Catholic erudition of the late sixteenth century. Explaining how all these elements, both Eastern and Western, came together in the making of the *Malabar Sermonary*, requires more contextual information.

The purpose of the *Malabar Sermonary* was to lead to a gradual Catholicisation of the Syriac Christians of Malabar, and this was meant to be achieved through *accommodatio*. First, the collection was supposed to adapt Catholic doctrine to the Indian Syriac Christians, who were very fond of their East Syriac liturgy and culture. For this reason, occasionally, the Catholic authors who wrote the sermons of the collection would quote from or allude to Syriac authors – most notably to the writings of Ephrem the Syrian – when writing sermons with Marian content. At times they would even argue with East Syriac sources of authority, without necessarily naming them; such is for instance, a polemic directed to Iš‘odad of Merv’s *Commentary on the Gospel of John* in the sermon in praise of Saint Thomas the Apostle from the same corpus.<sup>330</sup> In an untitled sermon on the teaching of the faith (number 43 in the synopsis), the author again refers to a canon of Patriarch Timothy I of Seleucia-Ctesiphon (727/8-823) on the need to attend the mass on Sundays and feast days, taken from ‘Abdiš‘o of Šoba’s *Nomocanon*.<sup>331</sup> The insertion of Syriac sources in the sermons was meant to give a sense of continuity with the East Syriac tradition that existed in Malabar at least since medieval times.

It is noteworthy, however, that the occurrence of East Syriac quotes and references occupies a modest place in the economy of writing these sermons compared to the proliferation of *exempla*, *similia* and *auctoritates* from Latin Church Fathers and European ecclesiastical writers.<sup>332</sup> This ratio between the Syriac sources from the Middle East and the European sources inserted in the sermons, is reflected in the initial Catholic redaction of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*. The example of this sermon proves once again that the main role of the sermonary was to teach Catholic doctrine to the Malabar Christians, and to provide the rudiments of biblical exegesis as it was practiced in medieval and early modern Europe according to the four senses of Scripture (*quattuor sensus Scripturarum*). In addition to this, the use of long *exempla* describing in detail events from

<sup>330</sup> See Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas*..., 33-34.

<sup>331</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 194r-v.

<sup>332</sup> See, for instance, Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas*..., 12-32.



the Old Testament had a parallel in the Iberian world in the Spanish sermons from the fourth volume of Alonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*, where this practice was most likely connected to the prohibition of translating the Bible into vernacular.

As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, the Syriac collection of sermons seems to be based on a conglomerate of sources; it appears as a synthesis of disparate elements taken from European instruments for preaching (both medieval and early modern) available in print in the sixteenth century. The authors involved in the composition of these sermons consciously chose not merely to translate or adapt an European collection of sermons into Syriac for the Malabar Christians; rather, they used various collections of sermons as anthologies from which they would eventually pick up *exempla* and allegories out of their original context, and readapt them according to their taste and need, whenever required. The most important indication for this practice is the replication of the same *exempla* in more than a single sermon with a similar topic, or the repetition of the same *exemplum* in the *prothemata* (prologues) of several sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary*. This recurrent practice provides important insights into the art of compilation of the Syriac collection of sermons. Moreover, the connection of the *Malabar Sermonary* with the sixteenth-century European printing culture is to be noticed in the organization of the preaching material in the manuscripts. Thus, it was by looking at early modern printed collections of sermons, their precise organization, layout, and marginalia – which indicated sources, *exempla* and *similia*, but also delimited such units from the rest of a sermon and provided a clear structure of the preaching material – that the authors of the Syriac sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary* adopted this set of preaching categories, units, and divisions of the text. For instance, in MS Mannanam Syriac 46, the oldest copy of the *Malabar Sermonary*, the scribes delimited the various *exempla* from the rest of the text of a sermon, by leaving a blank space between them and the rest of the text of the sermon as a reflection of this mindset.

All these common features and elements encapsulated in the sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary* are the expression of the transmission of knowledge from Europe to South India, and of the literary network connecting the South Indian Christian community with the rest of the Catholic world in the context of the early modern global Catholic missions. For this reason, to follow the chain of the transmission of European preaching knowledge to Malabar, besides source analysis, in this chapter I will focus on the centrality of *exemplum* as a reading and analytical key. This approach builds on the idea already formulated by Claude Bremond, according to which

“The [medieval] preacher who constructs [model] sermons does not do the work of an author in the modern sense of the term: he does not [necessarily] invent something new, but rather compiles elements received from all parts and he puts them one next to the other. His talent is rather reflected in the choice of the suitable



[preaching] material and in the skill to adapt it to the chosen topic, and most of all in the way how he chains such [elements] together.”<sup>333</sup>

*Mutatis mutandis*, this does not mean that the authors of the sermons belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary* lacked any originality or innovation in the composition of their sermons; the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle in the collection bears witness to this fact.<sup>334</sup> Yet, the compilation of *exempla*, *similia* and *auctoritates* are an essential part of the construction of these sermons; therefore, the *Quellenforschung* and the analysis of the methods and mechanisms of compilation are a *conditio sine qua non* for developing a scholarly discussion about the making of the *Malabar Sermonary* and for reconstructing the intellectual history of Syriac Catholic literacy from sixteenth and seventeenth century Malabar.

For this reason, while discussing the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* in this chapter, in addition to the source analysis of the biblical and Patristic references, I will look at the parallel reading of the same *exempla* in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* and in the sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites in the sermonary (number 6 in the synopsis), as the two sermons share common *exempla* of both European and East Syriac origin. I will also discuss how one passage from Pedro de Ribadeneyra’s *Treatise on Tribulation* has been reused in two different contexts in these sermons. To highlight the points of similarity and the contrast between the two redactions of the *Malabar Sermonary*, I will exemplify the textual changes that occurred in the Syriac Orthodox recension of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*; in the appendix, I have provided separate editions and translations of the two redactions of the text. This comparison offers important insights into the scribal and compilatory practice from early modern Malabar and is essential for further research in order to assess critically other sermons from the same corpus.

## 2. Structure of the sermon, date, and elements of authorship

The *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* is built around an inventory of biblical and Patristic common places about the spiritual benefits of suffering. The title implies that it was conceived as a sermon *ad status*, i.e., it does not seem to be connected to any specific liturgical context; the same is suggested by the fact that the text of the sermon develops the topic of suffering and afflictions systematically without connecting it to any specific Sunday Gospel reading. One should add that in the manuscripts of the *Malabar Sermonary*<sup>335</sup> many Sunday sermons are preceded by indications about their respective Gospel readings, while this specific sermon lacks any such indication. From a formal point of view, the text of the sermon seems to be a hybrid between a commentary and a

<sup>333</sup> Bremond et al., *L’ «Exemplum»*, 161.

<sup>334</sup> See Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*

<sup>335</sup> Such is the sermon against the *Pazhayakur* and the Portuguese discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. From the incipits collected in the synopsis, one can get an impression on this practice.



humanistic sermon. Thus, the introduction with its rhetorical questions based on biblical verses from the prophecy of Habakkuk and Psalm 72 (73) betrays the influence of the classical rhetoric and, in fact, is shaped as an *exordium ex abrupto* followed by a *gradatio*. The cumulation of biblical verses about the prosperity and welfare of the wicked as a matter of scandal and their imminent death as a retribution of their sins is meant to articulate the idea that “the kings are not true kings, but they show the likeness of kings and the riches are not riches, but a shadow of the true riches, [...] the worldly prosperity is not prosperity, but poverty and we see those prosperous descending all of a sudden to Sheol.”<sup>336</sup>

In fact, the cluster of biblical verses from the introduction of the sermon seems to have been reworked on the basis of a sermon for the Forth Sunday after Epiphany by Thomas Stapleton (1535-1598), an English Catholic theologian and professor of theology in Louvain and Douai, who wrote polemic literature against the Protestants (especially against Jean Calvin) and Queen Elisabeth I of England;<sup>337</sup> Stapleton’s collection of sermons entitled *Promptuarium Morale Super Euangelia Dominicalia Totius Anni*, in two volumes, was first published in Antwerp in 1591.<sup>338</sup> The author of the Syriac sermon did not translate/adapt Stapleton’s text into Syriac, but rather used bits and pieces, especially clusters of biblical quotations and interlinear comments from Stapleton’s *Promptuarium*.<sup>339</sup> Also, he seems to have used the interlinear commentary from Stapleton’s sermon

<sup>336</sup> MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 91vB.

<sup>337</sup> On Thomas Stapleton, see M. R. O’Connell, *Thomas Stapleton and the Counter Reformation*, (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1964).

<sup>338</sup> On Stapleton’s *Promptuarium morale*, see W. J. Sheils, “The Gospel, Liturgy and Controversy in the 1590’s: Thomas Stapleton’s *Promptuaria*,” in J. E. Kelly and S. Royal (eds.), *Early Modern English Catholicism: Identity, Memory and Counter-Reformation*, (Leiden: Brill, 2017): 193. Each sermon by Stapleton in this collection is divided in smaller commentaries.

The title of Stapleton’s commentary/ “excerpt” which was used in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* is: “2. *Ipse autem dormiebat*. Locus moralis de Dei apparente et uaria rerum humanarum, sed afflictionum, et tribulationum maxime, obliuione” (Thomas Stapleton, *Promptuarium Morale Super Euangelia Dominicalia Totius Anni*, vol. 1, (Venice: Apud Societatem Minimam, 1598): 231).

<sup>339</sup> The following fragment in which Stapleton comments on God’s apparent oblivion of human suffering seems to have been used and reworked in the exordium of the Syriac sermon:

“Laborauit in hoc genere unus Proph[eta] et dixit: *Mei pene moti sunt pedes, pene effussi sunt gressus mei. Quia zelaui super iniquos pacem peccatorum uidens (Psalms 72: 2-3)*<sup>339</sup>. Et post pauca: *Et dixi, Ergo sine causa iustificauit cor meum, etc (Psalms 72: 13). Si diceba[m], Narrabo sic (Psalms 72: 15). i[d est] si in ea s[e]n[tent]ia manere[m], ut p[ro]p[ter] prosperitate[m] p[raese]ntem impiorum, meam mortificationem uanam et inanem esse putarem: Nationem filiorum tuoru[m] reprobauit (Psalms 72: 15): id est, omnes electos damnaui stultitiae quasi frustra iustitiae studentes. Existimabam ut cognoscerem hoc labor est ante me (Psalms 72: 16). Inueni rem laboriosam, huius rei causam cognoscere, Donec intrem in sanctuarium Dei (Psalms 72: 17), id est, in secretam Dei prouidentiam: et intelligam in nouissimis eoru[m] (Psalms 72: 17); id est, considerem quis sit finis eoru[m]: de quo Apostolus, Quorum finis interitus (Philippians 3: 19). Hinc ergo dormire uidebatur Deus oculis clausis, quasi non uidens facinora impiorum: sed tandem, re melius introspecta, vidit cor Dei vigilare, et prouidentiam non dormire. Laborauit in hoc genere et alius Propheta; et in persona populi in captiuitate Babylonica conquerentis, et contra Dei iustitiam et prouidentiam murmurantis, sic loquitur: Vsquequo Domine clamabo, et non exaudies? (Habakkuk 1: 2) (quasi dormientem in nauis Christu[m] in clamat) uociferabor ad te, uim patiens, et non saluabis? (Habakkuk 1: 2) Quare ostendis mihi iniquitatem (persequentium nos) et laborem? videre praedam et iniustitiam contra me? (Habakkuk 1: 3) Quare respicis contemptores, et taces conculcante impio iustiore[m] se? (Habakkuk 1: 13) Et facies homines quasi pisces maris (ubi maiores et[iam] eiusde[m] generis deuorant minores) et quasi reptilia, non habentia ducem? (Habakkuk 1: 14)” (ibid., 231-232).*



concerning the prosperity of the sinners (*prosperitas praesens impiorum*) and their death (*finis*) in order to elaborate the introduction of the Syriac sermon. Then he reverted the order of the quotes starting with the prophecy of Habakkuk and continuing with Psalm 72 (73); the author of the Syriac sermon quoted more extensively from the Psalm 72(73) than Stapleton (he quoted from Psalm 73, verses 2-3, 5, 7-9, and 15-20). Yet, it is noteworthy that while quoting from Habakkuk, he preserved the sequence: Habakkuk 1: 2-3, 13-14, which appears in Stapleton's *Promptuarium Morale*, then he continued with the sequence Habakkuk 1: 3-4. Since to a great extent the biblical texts in the *exordium* of the Syriac sermon are the result of a memory quote, there are no clearer instances of intertextuality between the two sermons. Yet, Stapleton was one of the European authors whose work Francisco Ros knew; in a report from 1607 Ros refers to Stapleton's work.<sup>340</sup>

After proclaiming the imminent death of the wicked in the introduction, the author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* underlines that the prosperity of the world is not genuine: "the corporeal blessings are not true blessings, but they are gifts for mankind in general and for the irrational life."<sup>341</sup> He also asserts that the corporeal and spiritual blessings are mutually exclusive ("we cannot possess two blessings, that is [both] the earthly and the heavenly ones"<sup>342</sup>) and stresses the necessity of afflictions and their edifying function for attaining the heavenly beatitude, which "cannot be attained through the luxuries of the world, but through many afflictions."<sup>343</sup> An interesting interpretation on the slavery of the Israelites in Egypt is meant to show that "through the worldly afflictions our heart is elevated so as to earnestly desire the heavenly [things];"<sup>344</sup> according to this interpretation, if the Israelites would not have faced many afflictions in Egypt, then they would have remained slaves and would have had no desire for freedom, exodus, and the land of promise. The topic of afflictions as a means to correct one's behaviour is illustrated further through an *exemplum* about the glory, fall, and repentance of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. The last part of the sermon contains several *exempla* which deal with afflictions as punishment for sin: about David and the plague (based on 2 Samuel 24), Saul and the Gibeonites (based on 2 Samuel 21), the repentance of the Ninevites in the time of Jonah, and about how the East Syriac Christians

<sup>340</sup> The text of the report is preserved in ARSI Goa-Malabar 65: fol. 124r-137v, and it bears the title: "Reposta a hu[m]a apologia feita em favor do S[e]n[h]or Bispo de Cochim contra hum tratado feito en favor da iusto do q[ue] o S[en]h[or] B[is]po de Angamalle procedeo na prisao do Vigairo de Cranganor". The report is discussed by Mecherry (*Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation...*, 267-272). On fol. 131r, Francisco Ros refers to a "sermon" on Saint Thomas the Apostle by the same Stapleton, which must be his work: *Tres Thomae seu Res Gestae S. Thomae Apostoli, S. Thomae Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis et Martyris, Thomae Mori Angliae quondam Cancelarii*, consisting of the three *vitae* of the Apostle Thomas, Thomas Becket, and Thomas More (on this work, see W. J. Sheils, "Polemic as Piety: Thomas Stapleton's *Tres Thomae* and Catholic Controversy in the 1580s," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 60.1 (2009): 74-94). I am discussing the text of this report in detail in Appendix 7.

<sup>341</sup> MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 92rA.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., fol. 92rB.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid., fol. 92rA.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid., fol. 92vA.



were delivered from plague in the time of the Patriarch Sabrišo‘ I (d. 604). These topics are developed based on a plethora of *auctoritates*, both biblical and Patristic (mostly from Latin Church Fathers such as Cyprian of Carthage [c. 210-258] and Gregory the Great [590-604]).

One of the most fascinating parts of the sermon is the catalogue of the afflicted saints from Abel to Christ, which I am reproducing here in full, as it is conceived as an outline of the history of salvation and on this foundation is constructed the theological backbone of the sermon:

Again, are well-known the afflictions of those who are well-pleasing to God and who are His servants. [...] And the Holy Books show us this [fact] in many places: for, behold, the righteous Abel was killed by his brother Cain, and while Noah was making the ark, he was mocked by the lawless who perished through the flood. Abraham was persecuted by the Chaldeans, and Isaac by Ishmael, Jacob by Esau, Joseph by his brothers, and Moses together with all the sons of Israel by the Egyptians. The righteous Job was struck with leprosy<sup>345</sup> and with the loss of all his possession [...] And, alas, his wife was reviling him and urging him to curse God and die [...]. Likewise, the law-abiding Tobit, merciful towards the living and the dead, was blinded after [all] his good deeds, and he was reviled by his wife. [...] Again, David was persecuted by Saul, and despised by Absalom, his son, and reviled by Shimei.<sup>346</sup> The Prophet Isaiah was sawn in two by Manasseh, the King of Israel; Jeremiah was stoned by the Jews, Ezekiel was killed by the commander of the army of the Jews. Amos died because Jeroboam stabbed his temples with nails. Saint John the Baptist was thrown in prison by King Herod and beheaded. Again, Peter the Apostle was crucified for the true faith, Paul was killed by sword, and all the Apostles were scourged and persecuted. The martyrs delivered themselves up to death, the confessors [of the faith] were tempted, the virgin women were wearied and became victorious, and the Blessed Bearer of God suffered more than all holy men and women. For this reason, [Simeon] told her: *A spear* – that is to say indescribable suffering – *will pierce your own soul*.<sup>347</sup> For, through the death of her Son, she endured the [birth]-pangs that she did not feel while giving birth. Last [of all], we know how much Christ our Lord suffered for our salvation.<sup>348</sup>

The development of this genealogy of sanctity as a recapitulation of the history of salvation culminates in a Christocentric, participative interpretation of the vinegar that Christ tasted during the Crucifixion: “as a sign of this [matter], when our Lord was crucified, [the soldiers] offered Him vinegar to drink and He did not drink it, but just tasted from it, to indicate that He was leaving the rest of His Passion to His friends.”<sup>349</sup> The imitation of Christ understood as participation in His Passion by enduring afflictions and suffering is in fact the theological red thread of the sermon.

In the *Malabar Sermonary*, the taste for such genealogies of sainthood, which recapitulate the history of salvation and are endowed with a Christocentric interpretation is the unmistakable mark of authorship of the same Catholic missionary who composed the Sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle (number 22 in the synopsis) in the collection. In the latter sermon, its author (presumably Francisco Ros) relies on the Acts of Thomas, while recounting how the Apostle Thomas was assigned to build up a palace for the king of India; in this context, the author of the sermon uses Thomas’ craftsmanship as a means to develop a catalogue of craftsmen saints which again

<sup>345</sup> Literally, “ulcerations”.

<sup>346</sup> See 2 Samuel 16: 5-8.

<sup>347</sup> Luke 2: 35.

<sup>348</sup> MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 93rA-B.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid., fol. 94rA.



recapitulates the history of salvation; moreover, Thomas' humility as a craftsman is again endowed with a Christocentric value, being understood as a participation to the emptying (kenosis) of Christ:

Behold, my brothers, the eagerness of the Apostle's love! In the likeness of Christ, "he emptied himself, assumed the likeness of a slave" (Philippians 2: 7), and came to India, in the guise of a craftsman, in order to found the Indian Church, so as to save us in it, through baptism, just as Noah saved the human race from the devastation of the flood. [...] Take into account that also, Noah, the carpenter, made the ark according to the word of God, and he redeemed the world. God inspired Moses as well, with all craftsmanship, so as to build, according to it, the tabernacle, and the stupefying vessels which he put in it. And so, he saved Israel from the Egyptian slavery. Also, Solomon the King was a craftsman, who learned from God how to found, to build and to embellish the temple of God; and with his wisdom he illuminated the world. So, those who were well known and renowned saviours in the world, were craftsmen as well, in the likeness of the true Saviour, Christ our Lord. For this reason, Thomas, the saviour of the Indians, revealed himself in India, in the appearance of a carpenter.<sup>350</sup>

As I will show in the third chapter of the thesis, the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle was used as a source for newly composed liturgical poetry to be inserted in the Catholic revision of the East Syriac ritual after the Synod of Diamper (1599). Due to its link to the official cult, it is very likely that the sermon was indeed written by Francisco Ros, the first European Archbishop of the Malabar Syriac Christians after the Synod of Diamper, whose purpose was to bring into line preaching with the official cult. Moreover, the striking similarities between this sermon and a report written by Francisco Ros in 1607<sup>351</sup> provide convincing evidence that Ros authored the sermon on Saint Thomas. Both the sermon and the report rely on the distorted/erroneous reading of a canon from Abdišo' of Nisibis' *Nomocanon* and this kind of mistake/distortion could have only been authored by the same person, i.e. by Francisco Ros.<sup>352</sup>

While the name of Francisco Ros does not appear in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*, at the textual level, this composition features the same particularities as the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle: (1) a reliance on both the Latin and Syriac biblical versions, (2) the use of European preaching aids, of Latin Church Fathers and of other sources from medieval and late sixteenth-century Europe, and (3) the sporadic insertion of East Syriac sources intended to create a bridge of continuity between the East Syriac past of the Malabar Christians and the Catholic present of the community. In the introduction to the present thesis, I have already emphasized the literary connection between the *Malabar Sermonary* and the fourth and fifth volumes of Alonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*, two large volumes written in Spanish containing sermons and collections of *exempla*. The use of these Spanish collections for the production of new Catholic sermons in Syriac seem again to be the mark of Francisco Ros, as he was the only Spaniard Syriacist active in Malabar around the times of the Synod of Diamper. Besides Villegas' sermons and collection of

<sup>350</sup> Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 85-86.

<sup>351</sup> The text of the report is preserved in ARSI Goa-Malabar 65: fol. 124r-137v; for the relevant passage see *ibid.*, fol. 131r; the report is discussed by Mecherry (*id.*, *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation...*, 267-272).

<sup>352</sup> I have provided a detailed analysis of connection between these sources in Appendix 7.



*exempla*, there is more evidence on the use of Spanish sources in the sermonary: thus, both the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle and the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* used late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Spanish works authored by the Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneyra. Ribadeneyra's works were very much cherished in Jesuit circles, as among others he wrote a *Life* of Ignatius of Loyola. Thus, the sermon on Saint Thomas relies on the *Life* of the Apostle Thomas included in Ribadeneyra's *Flos Sanctorum*, a hagiographic collection first published in 1601,<sup>353</sup> while the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* made use of a "Treatise on Tribulation" written by the same Jesuit and first published in 1589; therefore, 1589 is a *terminus post quem* for dating the sermon. Since the name of Francisco Ros never appears in any of the Syriac texts produced in Malabar and authored by him, it is the use of such sources and the practice of *accommodatio* reflected in these sermons that point to his authorship.

### 3. Biblical and Patristic sources

Like the "Sermon on Saint Thomas the Beloved Apostle" from the same *Malabar Sermonary*, the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* relies on East Syriac sources belonging to the literary heritage of the Church of the East and on Catholic texts in Latin and vernacular languages from Europe. In what regards the biblical sources, its author was acquainted with both the Latin tradition of the Vulgate and the Syriac Peshitta version. Thus, for most quotes from the Psalms and the New Testament he mostly relied on the Syriac text of the Peshitta version. Occasionally his quotes are literal translations of the Latin text of the Vulgate; some of these quotes from the Vulgate are not to be found in the Syriac Scriptures (for instance, Siracides 17: 6 and Tobit 12: 13). The sermon contains as well biblical quotations which display a textual contamination of the Syriac text of the Peshitta with the Latin text of the Vulgate: in such instances the author often tries to translate literally the text of the Vulgate by making use of the vocabulary or syntax of the Peshitta. A few examples are provided below:

#### **Psalms 37: 35-36**

**Vulgata Clementina** (Psalms 36: 35-36): "I have seen the wicked highly exalted and elevated as the cedars of Lebanon; and I passed by, and, behold, he was there no more; and I searched for him and his place was found no more."

*Vidi impium superexaltatum, et elevatum sicut cedros Libani: et transivi, et ecce non erat; et qaesivi eum, et non est inventus locus eius.*

<sup>353</sup> See Mustafă, Sermon on Saint Thomas..., 30.







In this case, the author of the sermon has mostly relied on the Latin text of the Vulgate, while using excerpts from the biblical passage in the Peshitta. Thus, the sentence ( ܢܩܝܬܐ ܫܡܝܐ ܠܚܝܬܐ ܬܝܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ ) “I have seen a fool with a firm root and I cursed his beauty immediately” is a literal translation of the Latin: *ego vidi stultum firma radice, et maledixi pulchritudini ejus statim*; for the same passage the Peshitta reads: (ܐܝܬܝܢ ܫܡܝܐ ܠܚܝܬܐ ܬܝܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ) “I have seen the lawless who [was] prospering and his dwelling perishing all of a sudden”. The sentence: (ܝܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ) “his sons shall flee afar from salvation” preserves the reading of the Peshitta, but this part also coincides with the reading of the Vulgate: *longe fient filii ejus a salute*. The last part of the quoted fragment is again closer to the reading of the Vulgate: (ܝܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ) “they shall be crushed at the gate” translates: *conterentur in porta* from Latin, while the Peshitta reads: (ܬܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ) “they will be humbled at the gate”; (ܬܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ) “there shall be no escape [for them]” seems to be the result of a memory quote on the basis of the Vulgate, since the Latin text reads: *non erit qui eruat* (“there will be no one to bring [them] out”), while the Peshitta provides the reading: (ܬܕܝܬܐ ܬܕܝܬܐ) “there will be no one to save them”.

The two examples provided above illustrate the contamination of the Syriac and Latin Bible versions in the text of the sermon. The same amalgamation of the Latin and Syriac Scriptures appears in the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle from the *Malabar Sermonary*<sup>354</sup>. The Patristic authors quoted in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* are Latin Church Fathers such as Gregory the Great, Cyprian of Carthage, and Pseudo-Isidor (Isidorus Mercator). As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the preference for Latin Church Fathers pervades the whole sermonary. The following list contains the fragments quoted or paraphrased in the text of the Syriac sermon:

**Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book XXI, chapter 4. 8: 10-18<sup>355</sup>:**

*Nunc etenim flagellator iustus, uerbere disciplinae corrigitur, quia ad aeternae hereditatis patrimonium praeparatur. In suis autem uoluptatibus relaxatur iniustus, quia tanto ei temporalia bona suppetunt, quanto aeterna denegantur. Iniustus ad debitam mortem currens, effrenatis uoluptatibus utitur, quia et uituli qui mactandi sunt in liberis pastibus reliquuntur. At contra iustus*

<sup>354</sup> See Mustafă, *Sermon on Saint Thomas*..., 12-20.

<sup>355</sup> For the quotes from *Moralia in Iob* by Gregory the Great, I used the critical edition: Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, M. Adriaen (ed.), (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979-1985), vol. 1-3 (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum. Series Latina, vol.CXLIII-CXLIIIB).



*a delectationis transitoriae iucunditate restringitur, quia et nimirum vitulus ad laboris usum vitae deputatus sub iugo retinetur.*

“But let the Elect be chastened with a temporary infliction of the rod, that strokes may reformat from their wickedness those whom fatherly pitifulness keeps for an inheritance. For now the righteous man is scourged and corrected by the rod of discipline, because he is being prepared for the Father’s estate of inheritance. But the unjust man is let go in his own pleasures, because temporal good things are supplied to him in the same degree that eternal ones are denied him. The unjust man, whilst running to deserved death, enjoys pleasures unrestrained; in as much as the very steers too that are destined to be slaughtered are left in free pastures. But on the other hand the righteous man is restrained from the pleasantness of transitory gratification, because doubtless the steer too which is assigned to life for the purpose of labour, is held under the yoke.”<sup>356</sup>

**Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book VI, chapter 23. 40: 9-12:**

*Torpens quippe animus percussione tangitur ut excitetur, quatenus qui statum suae rectitudinis secures perdidit, afflicto consideret quo iacet. Hinc itaque ipsa asperitas correptionis origo fit luminis.*

“For the inactive soul is touched with the rod, so as to be stimulated, in order that he, that has lost, by being self-secure, the firm seat of uprightness, may mark, upon being afflicted, where he is laid prostrate; and thus to him the very sharpness of the correction becomes the source of light.”<sup>357</sup>

**Pope Pontian apud Isidorum Mercatorem** (Migne, PL 130: 142A-B):

*Quod mira omnipotentis Dei dispositione agitur, ut dum veritas per amorem vocat, mundus poenitens a se ipso animam vestram per tribulationes quas ingerit reiiciat. Tantoque facilius ab amore huius saeculi mens exeat, quanto et impellitur dum vocatur.*

“Through an extraordinary disposition of God almighty it happens that while the truth calls [your soul] by [making it] love [the truth], the world which causes dissatisfaction repels your soul from itself through the afflictions that it makes to fall upon [the soul]. And the more [the mind is driven back [by afflictions], while it is called [by the world], the easier it moves away from the love of this age.”

**Cyprian of Carthage, *Liber de mortalitate*, chapter 19** (Migne, PL 4: 595A-B):

<sup>356</sup> The translation is taken from: Saint Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, transl. Members of the English Church, vol. 2, (Oxford: J. Henry Parker, 1845): 520-521

<sup>357</sup> The translation is taken from: Saint Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, transl. Members of the English Church, vol. 1, (Oxford: J. Henry Parker, 1844): 342.



*Denique, ut manifestius divinae providentiae indicia clarescerent quod Dominus praescius futurorum suis consulat ad veram salute, cum quidem de collegis et consacerdotibus nostris, infirmitate defessus et de appropinquante iam morte sollicitus, comeatum sibi precaretur, adstitit deprecanti et iam pene morienti iuvenis honore et maiestate venerabilis, statu celsus et clarus aspect, et quem assistentem sibi vix posset humanus aspectus oculis carnalibus intueri, nisi quod talem videre iam poterat de saeculo recessurus. Atque ille non sine quadam animi et vocis indignation infremuit et dixit: 'Pati timetis, exire non vultis, quid faciam vobis?'*

“Finally, in order that the signs of divine providence might become more clearly manifest that the Lord, foreknowing the future, looks to the true salvation of His own, when one of our colleagues and fellow priests, exhausted by illness and alarmed in the face of approaching death, prayed for a respite for himself, there stood beside him, as he prayed and was now almost dying, a young man venerable in honor and majesty, noble in stature, shining in aspect, and upon whom as he stood before it the human sight could scarcely look with the eyes of the flesh, except that on the point of departing from the world it could already regard such a one. And he, not without a certain indignation of mind and voice, spoke angrily and said: ‘You are afraid to suffer, you do not wish to depart, what shall I do with you?’”<sup>358</sup>

At the end of the sermon there is another quote from a work by Cyprian of Carthage, but I was unable to identify the exact quoted passage.

#### **4. The use of the Bible and of other sources in *exempla***

As shown so far, when quoting from the Scriptures, the author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* used both the Syriac and the Latin versions of the Bible, and occasionally worked with the wording of the Syriac version in order to retranslate from Latin corresponding passages. Research on the biblical *exempla* inspired from the Old Testament shows the same tendency: the *exempla* based on Job 1: 2, 2: 9-10 and Ezekiel 9: 1-6 contain a paraphrase of the biblical accounts mostly based on the Vulgate, with a few lexical choices which betray the use of the Syriac text of the Peshitta. Yet, there are instances when the compilation of *exempla* (both biblical and non-biblical) is based on non-biblical sources and tracing them back offers insights in the way the author of the sermon worked with other sermon collections and preaching aids. Analysing these instances is especially important for understanding how the author of the sermon read synchronically various sources and put them together through bricolage and paraphrase. Deciphering various elements and textual layers allows one to get a more accurate picture on the making of the *Malabar Sermonary* at

<sup>358</sup> Translation by Roy J. Defferari in: Saint Cyprian, *Treatises*, (Washington D.C.: The University of America Press, 1958): 214-215.



the crossroads between the European medieval and early modern tradition of preaching, and the Syriac literature circulating from the Middle East to the Malabar Coast.

### The *exemplum* of Nebuchadnezzar from Daniel 4: 26-31

[illegible]

<sup>359</sup> The Greek versions of the text were published by Th. Schermann (ed.) in: *Prophetarum Vitae Fabulosae Indices Apostolorum Discipulorumque Domini Dorotheo, Epiphanio, Hyppolito Aliisque Vindicata*, (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907); on a more recent contribution to the pseudepigraphon, see David Satran, “The Vita of Daniel: An Early Byzantine Legend” in *Biblical Prophets in Byzantine Palestine: Reassessing the “Lives of the Prophets,”* (Leiden: Brill, 1995): 79-96.

<sup>360</sup> Satran, *Biblical Prophets...*, 14-15.

<sup>361</sup> I use here the published text by Eberhard Nestle, in the chrestomathy of his *Syrische Grammatik, mit Litteratur, Chrestomathie und Glossar*, (Berlin: H. Reuther's Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1888): 93 (ܐܝܢܐ), lines 155-157; on the Syriac version of the “Lives of the Prophets”, see Sebastian Brock, “The *Lives of the Prophets* in Syriac: Some Soundings,” in Charlotte Hempel and S. N. C. Lieu (eds), *Biblical Traditions in Transmission: Essays in Honour of Michael A. Knibb*, (Leiden: Brill, 2006): 21-37.



Greek text of the *Vita* of Daniel which reads: “for his forepart together with his head were like those of an ox, and his hinder part together with his feet [were] like [those of] a lion” (ἦν γὰρ τὰ ἐμπρόσθια αὐτοῦ ὡς βοῦς σὺν τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ σὺν τοῖς ὀπισθίοις ὡς λέων).<sup>362</sup> Yet, the reading of the sermon is closer to the Latin version of the “Life of Daniel” which was used by Peter Comestor in his *Historia Scholastica*. This work was described by J. H. Morey as:

“a biblical abridgment and gloss for students at the cathedral school of Notre Dame in Paris. Translated into every major western European vernacular, it became a widespread resource for biblical material until the Reformation. Because of its comprehensive assembly of apocryphal and legendary elements, and because of its frequent translation and paraphrase, the *Historia* was the single most important medium through which a popular Bible took shape, from the thirteenth into the fifteenth century, in France, England, and elsewhere.”<sup>363</sup>

In Peter Comestor's work, the fragment under scrutiny reads: *et videbatur ei quod bos esset in anterioribus*<sup>364</sup>, *at in posterioribus leo*<sup>365</sup> ("and it seemed to him [i.e. to Nebuchadnezzar] that he is an ox in his foreparts, but a lion in his hinder parts").

However, the rest of the text of this exemplum about Nebuchadnezzar in the sermon is a paraphrase based on the reading of the Vulgate, while for the most part the Peshitta version shows a different word choice; I will give further two relevant examples.

## Daniel 4:27

*Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (92vB): “Behold! Is it not this the great Babylon, which I have built up as the house of the kingdom through the power of my own strength and in the splendour of my magnificence?” ( لَئِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ دِينَكُمْ فَاتَّبَعُوا حُجَّتِي الَّتِي بَنَيْتُهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمِعُوا بَصِيرَتِي الَّتِي مَكَّنَّيْتُهَا بِالْكَرَامَةِ ).

**Vulgata Clementina** (Daniel 4: 27): “Is this not the great Babylon, which I have built up as the house of the kingdom through the power of my own strength and in the splendour of my magnificence?” (*Nonne haec est Babylon magna, quam ego aedificavi in domum regni, in robore fortitudinis meae, et in gloria decoris mei?*)

<sup>362</sup> Schermann, *Prophetarum Vitae...*, 14: lines 13-15.

<sup>363</sup> James H. Morey, "Peter Comestor, Biblical Paraphrase and the Medieval Popular Bible," *Speculum* 68.1 (January 1993): 6.

<sup>364</sup> Migne in PL 198: 1452B mistakenly reads “in interioribus” instead of “in anterioribus”; however, other medieval authors who have made use of the Comestor’s *Historia Scholastica* provide the correct reading “in anterioribus”; this is, for instance, the case of Peter de Natali, Bishop of Equilio (d. between 1400–1406), author of a hagiographical collection entitled “The Catalogue of Saints” (*Catalogus Sanctorum*); Peter de Natali is one of the authors mentioned in the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle from the *Malabar Sermonary* (see R. Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 24–30). In Peter de Natali’s life of the Prophet Daniel included in his “Catalogue of Saints”, the following is written about Nebuchadnezzar: *ut et uidebatur ei quod bos esset in anterioribus et posterioribus leo* (“so that it would seem to him to be an ox in his foreparts and a lion in his hinder parts”); for the present reference, I used: Petrus de Natalibus de Venetiis Episcopus Equilinus, *Catalogus Sanctorum Omnium ex Diversis ac Doctis Voluminibus Congestus*, (Venice: 1521); Book 7, chapter 126 (*De Sancto Daniele Propheta*); the used edition does not provide any kind of foliation.

<sup>365</sup> Migne, PL198: 1452B; the correspondence between the “Life of Daniel” and this fragment from Peter Comestor’s *Historia Scholastica* is mentioned by Satran, *Biblical Prophets...*, 82, footnote 8.







**Peter Comestor's Historia Scholastica** (Migne PL 198: 1452A): “It is said to you, Nebuchadnezzar: ‘The kingdom will pass from you and you will dwell with the wild beasts for seven [periods] of time until you will know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men.’” (*Tibi dicitur Nabuchodonosor: Regnum transibit a te, et cum feris habitabis septem temporibus, donec scies quod dominetur Excelsus in regno hominum.*)

[illegible]

In this instance, Peter Comestor’s account is considerably shorter, and it is again clear that the text of the sermon mostly relies on the reading of the Vulgate; the word choice in the Peshitta is often different, although there are cases of synonymy between the texts of the sermon and the reading of the Peshitta. Thus, (ܠܗ ܕܝܥܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܢܒܚܕܢܝܙܐܪ) “it is said to you, King Nebuchadnezzar” is a literal translation of: *tibi dicitur, Nabuchodonosor rex*; in contrast to the ETHPEEL participial form (ܡܕܝܬܐ) meant to translate the passive *dicitur* from Latin, the Peshitta uses the plural PEAL participle (ܡܕܝܬܐ) with an impersonal value (which literally means “they say”). In the sentence: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ) “the kingdom will pass from you”, the future verbal form (ܡܠܟܐ) is meant to translate *transibit* from Latin, while the Peshitta uses the perfect tense of the same verb: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ) “your kingdom has passed from you”. Further on, the Peshitta reads: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ) “and they will make you eat grass like an ox”; the causative value of the APHEL form with object pronoun (ܡܠܟܐ) “they will make you eat” does not have a correspondent neither in the Vulgate, nor in the text of the sermon, which read instead: “you will eat” (*comedes*, ܡܠܟܐ). In the last part of the quote, the sermon reads: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ) “until you would know that the Most High [One] has the power over the kingdom of men” which replicates the reading of the Vulgate: *donec scias quod dominetur Excelsus in regno hominum*; the reading of the Peshitta for the same fragment is slightly different:



(ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ) “until you would know that the Most High God has power over the kingdom of men.”

### **East Syriac and European *exempla* shared with other sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary***

While the story about the metamorphosis of Nebuchadnezzar illustrates the use of preaching aids embedded in the compilation of *exempla* in the sermonary, there are three *exempla* that the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* shares with a sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis) in the *Malabar Sermonary*. All three of them are related to divine punishment, plague, and atonement: an East Syriac story about the institution of the feast day of the Rogation of the Ninevites, and two other accounts of biblical origin based on 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 21 (about a famine caused by Saul killing the Gibeonites) and on 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24 (about a plague determined by David’s desire to count the people of Israel and Judah). However, the accounts based on 2 Kings 21 and 24 can be traced back to a common Spanish source.

Discussing the three accounts together shows how the same *exempla* were compiled by using common sources and how one Catholic missionary – presumably Francisco Ros – adopted different strategies regarding the connection of the Malabar Christians with their East Syriac past before and after the Synod of Diamper. The presence of the same *exempla* in the two sermons brings further evidence on the art of compilation involved in the composition of these sermons and on European preaching aids used in the process of compilation. The *exempla* based on 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 21 and 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24 have been compiled by primarily using the “Treatise on Tribulation” written by the Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneyra.<sup>366</sup> As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the author of the *Sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle* in the *Malabar Sermonary* (presumably Francisco Ros), used another work written by Ribadeneyra<sup>367</sup> in that sermon.

### **The *exemplum* about Sabriš‘o and the plague, and the feast-day of the Rogation of the Ninevites**

The only noticeable East Syriac element in the text of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* is the *exemplum* about Mar Sabriš‘o and the plague. This story which is placed in the end of the sermon is intriguing, as it celebrates an East Syriac saint, Sabrišo‘ I, Patriarch of the Church of the East (d. 604).<sup>368</sup> The account in itself is a literal quote from the *Cause* of the feast day of the Rogation of the Ninevites (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ) which precedes the service for the same feast day in the

<sup>366</sup> According to Wilkinson’s catalogue, the first edition of the work was published in 1589, in Madrid. See Wilkinson, *Iberian Books...*, 619 (number 15855).

<sup>367</sup> The sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle relies on Ribadeneira’s *Life of Saint Thomas* included in his *Flos Sanctorum*, see Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 30.

<sup>368</sup> See S. P. Brock, “Sabrišo‘ I,” in id., A. M. Butts et al. (eds.), *The Gorgias Encyclopaedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage*, (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011): 355.



*Ḥudrā*. The *Ḥudrā* is an East Syriac ritual book containing services for feast-days and commemorations of saints in the East Syriac tradition.<sup>369</sup> This account should not be confused with the homonymous piece written by Ḥnānā of Ḥadiab (d. 610) which was published by Addai Scher in the seventh volume of the *Patrologia Orientalis*.<sup>370</sup> In the sermon for the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*, the text of this story runs as follows:

Therefore, when we are afflicted by God because of our sins, let us do what Jeremiah the prophet said, that is to say: *Let us examine our ways, let us pray and return to the Lord!* (Lamentations 3: 40). For the Eastern Christians of the bishop Mar Sabrišo‘ have done this way; in that time, due to the multitude of the sins of men a pestilence almost decimated the men of Beth Garmai, Assyria and Nineveh. And it happened that while this holy man, Mar Sabrišo‘, was praying to God [to cease] the punishment of [divine] wrath which was ravaging his flock, he heard the voice of an angel saying: ‘Proclaim a fast, and make a rogation and the pestilence will be removed from you!’ Immediately the holy man ordered that the people of the Lord should be gathered in the church and would observe the fast. And in the first day of intercession, which was Monday, it happened that the Angel of the Lord withdrew his hand, and nobody was afflicted [94vB] anymore by the plague. And when the sixth day of the week, which is Friday, came, the people took the Holy Sacraments and they were sanctified, and since then nobody died. It is from this [event] that this three-day fasting has been transmitted [to us].<sup>371</sup>

The name “Sabrišo‘” appears as well in a collection of ‘Nestorian’ saints’ lives condemned by the Synod of Diamper (Third Action, chapter XIV, decree 14):

Item o livro a modo de *Flos Sanctorum*, que contem em sy muytas vidas de hereges Nestorianos, a que chama Sanctos, assi o dito livro junto, como qualquer das vidas, que andar escripta em particular, em special as de Abraham que chama magno, George Abbade, Cardeg, que chamão martir, Jacob, Abbā, **Saurixo**, Ocama [...] <sup>372</sup> os quaes todos são hereges Nestorianos, e principaes seguidores de sua maldita seita, como consta de suas vidas, as quaes estão cheias de muitas heregias, blasfemias, e milagres fabulosos e falsos, com que pretendem acreditar sua seita.<sup>373</sup>

“Again, [is to be condemned] a book in the manner of *Flos Sanctorum*<sup>374</sup>, which contains many lives of Nestorian heretics, whom it calls saints. So [is to be condemned] the aforementioned book in its entirety, as well as some *Lives (vitae)* written separately, especially the lives of Abraham called “the Great”, George the Abbot, Qardag who is called a martyr, Jacob, Abbā, **Sabrišo‘**, Okāmā [...], who are all Nestorian heretics, and main followers of his cursed sect [i.e. the sect of Nestorius], as it is clear from their *Lives [vitae]* which are filled with many heresies, blasphemies, and many fabulous and false miracles, by means of which they intend to legitimize their sect.”

<sup>369</sup> For the Syriac original of the *Cause* of the Rogation of the Ninevites, see T. Darmo (ed.), *Ḥudrā*, vol. 1, (Trichur: Mar Narsai Press, 1960): 275-276.

<sup>370</sup> See A. Scher (ed.), “Traité d’ Išāī le Docteur et de Ḥnana d’Adiabène sur les martyrs, le Vendredi d’Or et les Rogations,” in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 7, (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1911): 68-81. W. F. Macomber translated six pieces from the same literary genre in: Id., *Six Explanations of the Liturgical Feasts by Cyrus of Edessa, an East Syrian Theologian of the Mid Sixth Century*, CSCO 356, (Louvain: Imprimerie Orientaliste, 1974). On *causae festorum* as a literary genre, see A. Baumstark, “Die nestorianischen Schriften *de causis festorum*,” *Oriens Christianus* 1 (1901): 320-342; and T. Hainthaler, “The Causes of the Feast, a Literary Genre of the East Syriac Church, in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century,” *The Harp* 23 (2008): 383-400.

<sup>371</sup> *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*: fol. 94vA-B.

<sup>372</sup> The list continues with many other names.

<sup>373</sup> Da Cunha Rivara, *Arquivo Portuguez...*, fasc. 4, 335-336.

<sup>374</sup> The reference to *Flos Sanctorum* in the quoted decree refers to the fact that many collections of saints’ lives from the Iberian Peninsula bore this title; therefore, the quoted decree prescribes a new collection of saints’ lives for the Malabar Christians, and not a collection of sermons. The inclusion of sermons in the fourth volume of Villegas’ *Flos Sanctorum* can be rather regarded as an exception from this rule, but generally collections called *Flos Sanctorum* contain lives of saints and not sermons.



According to J.-B. Chabot, the envisaged collection of Saints' lives is the "Book of Chastity" by Išo'dnaḥ of Basra (ninth century A.D.).<sup>375</sup> Since the Diamperitan canon condemns a homonymous East Syriac saint, it is noteworthy that the Catholic author of the *Sermon on afflictions of the righteous* did not find problematic the insertion of this exemplum in the end of the sermon. In the East Syriac *Hudrā*, the cause (ܐܬܬܝܬܐ) of this feast-day begins with the repentance of the Ninevites from the Book of Jonah as the first reason for celebrating this feast day. Immediately afterwards, the ritual book starts retelling the story about Sabrišo' and the plague reproduced in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*. In the *Hudrā*, this story begins in the following manner:

بِلَايَةِ دِيْمَ اِهَبْ اَسَدِيَّةً دِيْمِيكِيَّةً. دُوْجَتَا اَتَا فَم مِيْمِيكِيَّةً قَلَمِيَّةً دِيْمَدُوْهِيَّةً اَتَا لِيْم: مَقَهَاتَا لِيْمِيَّةً اَسَدِيَّةً  
 اَتَا دِيْمِيْمِيَّةً كَلَمَاتَا جَنَدِيْمِيَّةً. اَتَا دِيْمِيَّةً حَبْد مِي وَجَتَا فَمَلَحَمِيَّةً دَقَقِيْمِيَّةً دِيْمَدُوْهِيَّةً اَتَا لِيْم: كَمَقَهَات  
 مَقَدُ فَعْدِيْمِيَّةً اَقِيْمِيَّةً مِيْمَدُوْهِيَّةً دِيْمِيَّةً هَلَمَر. اَتَا دِيْمِيَّةً فَمَلَحَمِيَّةً سَكِيَّةً دِيْمِيْمِيَّةً: دُوْجَتَا اَتَا  
 حَبْد فَمَلَحَمِيَّةً اَقِيْمِيَّةً اَقِيْمِيَّةً حَلَمَر. دِيْمِيَّةً اَقِيْمِيَّةً مِيْمَدُوْهِيَّةً دِيْمِيَّةً. هَجْد مِيْمِيَّةً اَتَا مَقَدُ فَعْدِيْمِيَّةً  
 لِيْمِيَّةً: مِيْمِيَّةً دِيْمِيَّةً دِيْمِيَّةً: دُوْجَتَا اَتَا لِيْم: اَقِيْمِيَّةً. اَقِيْمِيَّةً لِيْم دِيْمِيَّةً فَمَلَحَمِيَّةً دِيْمِيَّةً. اَقِيْمِيَّةً  
 كَلَمَاتَا حَلَمَر اَقِيْمِيَّةً مَقَهَاتَا مَقَهَاتَا.

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["There is also another reason why a rogation is made in these places at this time: there was a pestilence, which in the world is called "plague"; it happened once upon a time in the kingdom of the Persians, in these places which belong to us, in the days of Mar, the Metropolitan Bishop of Beth Slok. Due to the multitude of the sins of men in that time [the pestilence] almost killed and exterminated all men of Beth Garmai, Assyria, and Nineveh. When Mar Sabrišo' was praying to God because of the punishment of wrath that was ravaging his flock, he heard the voice of an angel saying: 'Proclaim a fast, and make a rogation, and the pestilence will be removed from you!']

It is noteworthy that when, in the end of the seventeenth century, the Chaldean Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* was done in the Middle East, under the agency of the Patriarch Joseph II of Amid [1667-1712],<sup>377</sup> the name of Mar Sabrišo‘ was erased from the account preceding the service. This revision of the ritual was reproduced in Paul Bedjan’s *Breviarium Chaldaicum*:

[illegible]

“There is also another reason why a rogation is made in these places at this time: there was a pestilence which in the world is called “plague”; it happened once upon a time in the kingdom of the Persians, in these places which belong to us: due to the multitude of the sins of men in that time, [the pestilence] almost killed and exterminated all men in Beth Garmai, Assyria, and Nineveh. And while they were praying to God because of the punishment of wrath that was ravaging their flock, the voice of an angel was heard saying: ‘Proclaim a fast, and make a rogation, and the pestilence will be removed from you!’”

<sup>375</sup> J.-P. Chabot, “L’autodafé des livres syriaques au Malabar,” in *Florilegium ou recueil de travaux d’érudition dédiés à Monsieur le Marquis Melchior de Vogüé*, (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1909): 618-619.

<sup>376</sup> Darmo, *Hudrā*, vol. 1, 275.

<sup>377</sup> On the Chaldean revision of *Hudrā* and *Gazzā*, see H. Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 149-152, 341.

<sup>378</sup> P. Bedjan, *Breviarium Chaldaicum*, vol. 1 (*Pars Prima Ab Adventu ad Quadragesimam*), (Paris: De Sèvres 95, 1886): 161 (ܡܡܠ).



A similar approach is reflected in the way how the same story is presented in the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis) from the *Malabar Sermonary*; the cause of the feast is inserted in the beginning of this sermon, immediately after the initial prayer following the *prothema*:

جِلْجِلْ دِجْرَس دِهْلَه؛ لِيْجِلْس حَوْدَتْ، مَقْعَدْ، بَهْب دِهْلَه؛ تَحْبَبَتْس دِجْس بَقْبَل دِگْ مِيْت مَبِهْ <sup>379</sup>. مَهْل دِهْلَه  
 يَاقَعْد مِ قَلْعَدَا دِمْ مِ رَمَل دِهْلَه مَقَم لَجِلْس بَقْبَل؛ مِيْجَلِك مَقْعَدْس. هَلْفَس بِيْجَتَبَتْس يَاقَعْبَه  
 حَلْسَف، حَقْمَدِيْمَهْلَه؛ فُجْجَهْب لَدِيْ جِلْجِلْ. مَلْجُوْحَدَنْ دِجْجَهْلَه؛ دِهْلَه سَج دُجْجَهْلَه؛ مِ اَتْ فُلْجَلْ حَلْسَف  
 جِلْجِلْ مَقْعَدْ مَعْقِدِيْجَلْ بَقْبَل رَمَل اَتْ دِهْلَه. <sup>380</sup>

“The cause of the three-day fasting is the disease of a terrible pestilence that occurred in the East so that uncountable people died because of it. For this reason, the prelate of that place imposed a three-days fasting to all the people, and the pestilence was removed. And on Thursday all of them cleansed themselves through confession and by receiving the mysteries [i.e. the Eucharist] in the church. And from that time onwards, for the commemoration of such a great grace all the Chaldeans, Greeks<sup>381</sup> and Syrians are observing this three-day fasting.”

In the context of the Syriac Catholic literature of Malabar, the reference to this story and Sabrišo‘ as a holy man – in the text of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* he is referred to as “this holy Mar Sabrišo‘” (ܡܪ ܫܒܪܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ) <sup>382</sup> – points to the efforts of the Catholic missionaries to accommodate Catholic doctrine to a Christian community very fond of its East Syriac tradition. Yet, the author of the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites in the same corpus obliterated the name of Sabrišo as a holy man from his text, referring to him simply as “the prelate of that place”.

Therefore, the emerging questions are: (1) whether the two sermons were written by different authors with a different view about the limits of accommodating their preaching to an East Syriac audience, or by a single author; and (2) provided that both sermons were written by the same author, which sermon was written before the Synod of Diamper and which one was written afterwards. The evidence gathered so far suggests that both sermons were composed by the same author, presumably Francisco Ros. A sound hypothesis would be that initially Ros, while preparing the path for the Synod of Diamper, obliterated the ‘Nestorian’ identity of Sabrišo and wrote the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites, while later after the synod, he developed a more inclusive, accommodative approach by including the story about the ‘Nestorian’ holy man in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*. In support of the single author hypothesis, one should mention that the *exempla* based on 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 21 and 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24 have been compiled in both Syriac sermons by using directly, independently, and in a different manner the same source: a short paragraph in Pedro de Ribadeneyra’s *Treatise on Tribulation*. I will discuss further the textual

<sup>379</sup> Sic! Instead of (مس).

<sup>380</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 206r.

<sup>381</sup> In fact, the Greeks do not celebrate the Rogation of the Ninevites.

<sup>382</sup> *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*: fol. 94vA.



entanglement between Ribadeneyra's text and the two *exempla* as they appear in the two Syriac sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

While writing the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*, it is possible that its Catholic author perceived fasting, repentance, and the miraculous removal of the plague as proofs of the sanctity of the East Syriac holy man. In this sermon, the *exemplum* about the institution of the Rogation of the Ninevites is added to a range of other biblical *exempla* about plague and redemption, giving its audience the impression that, at the level of salvation history, there is a bridge of continuity between the biblical accounts from the Old Testament and the Rogation of the Ninevites, between the East Syriac tradition imprinted in the past of the South Indian Christian community and the Catholic presence in Malabar. It is interesting that later, when the text of the sermon was re-edited in Syriac Orthodox milieu, the West Syriac compiler removed this story from the newly re-edited text. The Rogation of the Ninevites is celebrated as well in the Syriac Orthodox Church, but it ascribes its institution to Marutha, the Metropolitan of Tagrit (d.649).<sup>383</sup>

### **The *exempla* based on 2 Kings (Samuel) 21 and 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24, between European preaching aids and Pedro de Ribadeneyra's *Treatise on Tribulation***

Besides the story about the Patriarch Sabrišo' and the plague, the other two *exempla* which the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* shares with the sermon for the Rogation of the Ninevites in the *Malabar Sermonary* seem to have been inspired from Pedro de Ribadeneyra's "Treatise on Tribulation" (*Tratado de la tribulación*). Known among others for his *Life of Ignatius of Loyola* and his *Flos Sanctorum*, a collection of saints' lives in two volumes,<sup>384</sup> Ribadeneyra (1527-1611) composed the "Treatise on Tribulation" in 1589, after Philip II's plan to invade England in 1588 had failed.<sup>385</sup> In this context, the *Treatise on Tribulation* was written as a consolatory work, although it is also regarded as an ascetic work.<sup>386</sup>

The two biblical *exempla* based on 2 Kings (Samuel) 21 and 2 Kings (Samuel) 24 appear in the Second Book of *Treatise on Tribulation*, Chapter 1:

Conforme á esta dotrina, habemos de entender que la guerra, la sequedad, la hambre y pestilencia, los incendios y todas las otras calamidades que Dios nos envia son para castigo de los pecados que comunmente se hacen en la comunidad. Aunque tambien leemos que por el pecado de uno castiga Dios temporalmente á muchos, como castigó al pueblo de Israel con la hambre de tres años, en tiempo del Rey David<sup>387</sup>, por haber

<sup>383</sup> See Ignatius Aphrem I Barsoum, *The Scattered Pearls: A History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003): 322.

<sup>384</sup> On Ribadeneyra's *Flos Sanctorum*, see J. Greenwood, *Readers, Sanctity and History in Early Modern Spain: Pedro de Ribadeneyra, the "Flos sanctorum", and Catholic Community*, unpublished MA thesis defended at the Carleton University, Ottawa (Ontario), in 2011, available online: <https://curve.carleton.ca/16b7ce10-6b74-45e0-9da9-c8a19a079470>.

<sup>385</sup> See Miguel Mir S.J., "Introduccion," in Pedro de Ribadeneira, *Tratado de la tribulación*, (Madrid: M. Tello, 1877): XIV-XV.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid., XVI.

<sup>387</sup> II, Reg., XXI. I am reproducing the references to the Spanish text, as they appear in the quoted edition.



quebrantado el Rey Saul su juramento y palabra que habia dado Josué á los gabaonitas<sup>388</sup>. Y asimismo castigó Dios á todo el reino por el pecado del Rey David<sup>389</sup>, quando mandó contar y empadronar el pueblo, y se desvaneció. Y aún algunas veces, queriendo nuestro Señor castigar al pueblo por otros pecados, permite que peque el Rey para con esta ocasion castigar al Rey y al reino, como lo vemos en este hecho de Davis, del cual dice la Sagrada Escritura que habiéndose enojado el furor del Señor contra Israel, movió al Rey David, ó permitió, como se escribe en el libro del *Paralipomenon*<sup>390</sup>, que Satanas le tentase para que mandase contar el pueblo, y el uno y el otro fuese por ello castigado<sup>391</sup>; sobre el qual lugar dice el gran Gregorio, y lo trae la glosa ordinaria, que segun los merecimientos de los súbditos endereza y dispone Dios los consejos de los que gobiernan, y que por la culpa de las ovejas permite que peque el buen pastor. Porque hay tanta unio y correspondencia entre los merecimientos del pueblo y de los que le rigen, que muchas veces por la culpa del pastor se empeoran las costumbres del pueblo, y por la culpa del pueblo se tuerce y desfallece la vida del gobernador; que es un grande aviso para entender que de los castigos públicos que Dios envia son causa los pecados, y que conforme á los merecimientos del pueblo dispone y encamina el Señor los consejos de los que le gobiernan, como lo dice san Gregorio. Y aún algunas veces levanta Dios á los malos, y les da el cetro y señorío para castigo del pueblo, como lo dice Job<sup>392</sup>: “Yo haré que reine reine el hipócrita, el que parece bueno y no lo es, por los pecados del pueblo.” Y Isaías dice<sup>393</sup>: “Yo les daré príncipes muchachos, y los afeminados y disolutos los señorearán.” [...] Pero, volviendo á lo que íbamos tratando, no es maravilla que peque el Rey, que es la cabeza, y sea castigado el pueblo, que es el cuerpo que se rige por ella.<sup>394</sup>

[“According to this teaching we must understand that war, drought, famine and pestilence, fires and all other calamities that God sends over us, are in order to punish the sins which are committed by the community as a whole. However, we also read that for the sin of a single person God temporarily punishes many [others], as He punished the people of Israel with three years of famine in the times of King David, because King Saul broke the oath and the promise which Joshua made to the Gibeonites. And likewise [God] punished the whole kingdom because of the sin of King David, when [the king] commanded to count and register the people, and was filled with vanity. And sometimes, when our Lord wants to punish the people for other sins, He allows a king to sin, so that through this He would punish [both] the king and the kingdom, as we see in the following deed of David. About him the Holy Scripture recounts that when the anger of God had been stirred up against Israel, [God] determined King David, or rather (**as it is written in the Book of the Chronicles**) [God] allowed that Satan would tempt [David] with commanding the counting of the people, so that both [David] and [the people] would be punished by [God]. Concerning this [biblical] passage, the great Gregory says and the *Glossa Ordinaria* transmits further that: it is according to the merits of their subjects that God adjusts and predisposes the counsels of those who rule, and that [God] allows a good shepherd to sin because of the sins of [his] sheep. For, there is such great unity and correspondnce between the merits of the people and [the merits] of those who rule them, that often the conduct of the people gets worse for the fault of [their] shepherd, and because of the fault of the people the life of the one who governs them] twists and falters. This is an important warning to [make us] understand that the sins are the cause of the public punishments that God sends [to humankind], and that the Lord disposes and sets the path for the guidance of those who govern according to the merits of the people. And sometimes God even raises up the wicked, and grants them the scepter and the ruling [power] so as to punish the people, as Job says: “Because of the sins of the people, I will make a man who is a hypocrite, who seems to be good, but is not, [I will make him] reign”<sup>395</sup>. **And Isaiah says: “I will give children to be their princes, and the effeminate and the depraved shall rule over them”**<sup>396</sup>. However, turning back to what we were discussing, there is no wonder that the king, who is the head, commits a sin and that the people, who is its body and is ruled by [the head], gets punished.”]

As I will show further, the quoted passage of Ribadeneyra’s work has been used for the compilation of the two *exempla* based on 2 Kings (Samuel) 21 and 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24 in both the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* and the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites. The author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*, reverted the order of the two juxtaposed *exempla* in the

<sup>388</sup> Josue, IX.

<sup>389</sup> II, Reg., XXIV.

<sup>390</sup> I, Paral., cap. XXI.

<sup>391</sup> II, Reg., XXIV.

<sup>392</sup> Job., XXXIV.

<sup>393</sup> Isaf., III.

<sup>394</sup> For the present reference, I have used the edition from 1877: Pedro de Rivadeneira, *Tratado de la tribulación...*, 257-259.

<sup>395</sup> Job 34: 30.

<sup>396</sup> Isaiah 3: 4.



text of the sermon: in this Syriac sermon the *exemplum* about David and the plague is followed by the one about Saul and the Gibeonites. While making use of the quoted passage of Ribadeneyra's treatise, the author of the same Syriac sermon reworked and conflated Ribadeneyra's text with the Latin and Syriac versions of the Bible, Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, and Nicholas of Lyra's *Literal Postill* (which could have been consulted either directly in Latin, or through the intermediary of a Spanish sermon for the *Septuagessima* Sunday in the fourth volume of Alonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*). In the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites, the two *exempla* based on 2 Kings (Samuel) 21 and 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24 were not quoted one after the other, but dispersed through the sermon;<sup>397</sup> yet, as I will show further, the main source on which they were compiled is again the quoted passage of Ribadeneyra's treatise.

Since in both Syriac sermons the *exemplum* on Saul and the Gibeonites (based on 2 Kings (Samuel) 21) has been compiled by using the text of the Vulgate, while occasionally preserving words of the Syriac version of the Peshitta<sup>398</sup>. Yet, it is noteworthy that the same *exemplum* was not mechanically reproduced from one sermon to another, but rather developed distinctly by using the same textual tools. In the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites, the text of this *exemplum* runs as follows:

[illegible]

“The bad and good [deeds] of men are not forgotten before God, but they last. Saul, the first king of the sons of Israel, oppressed the pagan Gibeonites. Because of the sin of Saul, after his death there was famine in all the land of Israel until David made justice and delivered Saul’s seven sons to the Gibeonites for slaughter, and [the Gibeonites] killed them.”

The parallel reading of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* is the following:

[illegible]

<sup>397</sup> In the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites (MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 206r-209r), the *exemplum* on David and the plague is to be found *ibid.*, fol. 206v-207v, while the *exemplum* about Saul and the Gibeonites is to be found on fol. 208r-v.

<sup>398</sup> For the technique of translation/paraphrase while compiling the Malabar sermonary, see above.

<sup>399</sup> Em. (𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏); T (𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤏).

<sup>400</sup> Em. (عمد); T (عمد).

<sup>401</sup> Em. (الحَمْدُ); T (الحَمْدُ).

402 Em. (هميد); T (هميد).

<sup>403</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 208r-v.



["Again, in the Second Book of the Kingdoms we read that in the days of David there was famine for three years. And David asked the counsel of the Lord on this matter and [the Lord] answered him that this famine happened because of Saul who had already died, and his house of blood, since he killed the Gibeonites. Because they were the remnant of the Amorites, the sons of Israel had sworn that they would not be killed, but Saul, out of ignorant zeal, killed many of them. And David handed over and gave them seven men who were from the house of Saul and [the Gibeonites] hanged them, and the wrath of God over the people ceased."]

However, a close look at the details of the *exemplum* about David and the plague (based on 2 Kings (2 Samuel) 24) in the two Syriac sermons of the *Malabar Sermonary*, and in Ribadeneyra's *Treatise on Tribulation* reveals the dependency of the sermons on the Spanish treatise by Ribadeneyra. For this reason, I will show how in each of the two Syriac sermons their author used Ribadeneyra's treatise as a starting point, eventually conflating it with other auxiliary sources.

### **David and the plague in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous***

In the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*, its author juxtaposed the two exempla about (1) Saul and the Gibeonites (based on 2 Samuel 21) and (2) David and the plague (based on 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21) upon the model provided by Ribadeneyra, and he falsely indicated 1 Chronicles 21 as his source for the *exemplum* on David and the plague, while in fact he used the account of 2 Samuel (Kings) 24. While the juxtaposition of the two *exempla* is tributary to Ribadeneyra's treatise, the author of the Syriac sermon reverted their order: in the sermon, the *exemplum* about Saul and the Gibeonites follows the one about David and the plague. In the Syriac sermon, the misattribution of the *exemplum* on David and the plague to the *Book of Chronicles* can be traced back to Ribadeneyra's treatise.

Actually, the *exemplum* about David and the plague appears in two biblical accounts: 2 Samuel (Kings) 24 and in 1 Chronicles 21. As I will show, all the lexical details of this *exemplum* in the Syriac sermon are based on the account of 2 Samuel (Kings) 24 and not on 1 Chronicles 21, although the author of the Syriac sermon claims to have used the account of 1 Chronicles 21 as his source. Thus, in the Syriac sermon, the sentence: "And the story of David shows us this fact. **The First Book of the Chronicles** recounts that David told Joab..." is in fact a reminiscence of the same reference in the Spanish treatise which reads: "when the anger of God had been stirred up against Israel, [God] determined King David, or rather (**as it is written in the Book of the Chronicles**) [God] allowed that Satan would tempt [David]".

The same biblical account about David and the plague in 2 Samuel (Kings) 24 and 1 Chronicles 21 is divergent in several places. The name of Areunah the Jebusite is spelled differently in the two accounts: thus, 2 Samuel 24 spells his name as (ܐܪܘܢܐ) in the Peshitta version, and as *Areuna* in the Vulgate; the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* follows this spelling of the Peshitta version: (ܐܪܘܢܐ). In contrast to this, the relation of 1 Chronicles 21 refers to the Jebusite as *Ornan* in the Vulgate, and as (ܐܪܢܐ) in the Peshitta. Another striking difference between the two biblical accounts is that, in both the Latin and Syriac versions of the Bible, 2 Samuel 24: 9 states the number of the counted people as eight hundred thousand men in Israel and five hundred thousand men in Judah: *inventata sunt de Israel octingenta millia virorum fortium qui educerent gladium, et de Iuda*



*quingenta millia pugnatorum*, in the Vulgate, and: ( אַחֲמָסָא מֵיְהוּדָה וְאַחֲמָסָא מִלְּבָנָם קֳדָם ה' ) in the Peshitta.  
The *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (94rA) follows this account stating: “and there were  
in Israel eight hundred thousand warriors able to draw a sword, and the men of Judah were five  
hundred thousand” ( חֲמִישָׁה עָשָׂר מֵיְהוּדָה וְאַחֲמָסָא מִלְּבָנָם קֳדָם ה' ). In contrast to this, 1 Chronicles 21: 5 speaks about eleven hundred  
thousand warriors in Israel and four hundred seventy thousand warriors in Judah: in the Vulgate: *et  
inventus est omnis numerus Israel, mille millia et centum millia virorum edudentium gladium: de  
Juda autem quadringenta septuaginta millia bellatorum*; in the Peshitta: ( אַחֲמָסָא מֵיְהוּדָה וְאַחֲמָסָא מִלְּבָנָם קֳדָם ה' ). Again, while referring to the divine punishment over David for  
counting the people, 2 Samuel 24: 13 mentions seven years of famine, while 1 Chronicles 21: 12  
speaks about three years of famine. The text of the sermon (94rB) follows again the reading of 2  
Samuel 24: 13: “Either there will come a famine in your land for seven years” ( אוֹתָן שָׁנָה יָבוֹא רָעָב בְּאַרְצְךָ ).

Considering its length, a full analysis of this exemplum in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* is not possible, but two relevant examples suffice to show how the author of the sermon used both the Syriac and the Latin versions of 2 Samuel 24 for its compilation.

***Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*** (94rA): “David told Joab, the commander of his army: ‘Go and count for me Israel and Judah, walking through every tribe from Dan to Beersheba; and count the people, so that I would know its number!’” ( دَلِمْد دِهْد كَمَل ذت بِلِس دُك دُمب ك )  
(لَعْدَل: مَسَدْنُ اَلْعَل كُك كُكَل مِ دُ، مَدَمَل لِيذ كُك مَمَّه لَكَل دَلِد مَمَكِي)

**2 Samuel 24: 2:** “And the king told Joab, the commander of his army: ‘Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people so that I know its number.’” (*Dixitque rex ad Ioab principem exercitus sui: Perambula omnes tribus Israel a Dan usque Bersabee, et numera te populum, ut sciam numerum eius.*)

**1 Chronicles 21: 2:** “And David told Joab and the leaders of the people: ‘Go and count Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring me its number so that I know [it].’” (*Dixitque David ad Ioab et ad principes populi: Ite, et numerate Israel a Bersabee usque Dan: et afferte mihi numerum ut sciam.*)

**Peshitta** (2 Samuel 24: 2): “David told Joab and the generals of the army of his people: ‘Walk through all the tribes of Israel and in Judah, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people for me,







*Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (94rA): “And Joab answered to the king: ‘May the Lord, your God, add [to the number] of your people one hundred times more! Why does my Lord seek this?’” (وَلِمَ يَسْأَلُ لِحَالِكَ تَعْمَقُ مَذْنُ الْبَلَاءِ بِحَقِّكَ قُلُوبًا وَتَحْتَ مَتْنِ حَتَّى مَذْنُ الْبَلَاءِ).

**Vulgata Clementina** (1 Chronicles 21: 3): “And Joab answered: ‘May the Lord multiply His people one hundred times more than they [already] are. My lord the king, are they not all your servants? Why my lord seeks this thing, so that it might be considered a sin for Israel?’”  
(*Responditque Ioab: Augeat Dominus populum suum centuplum quam sunt: nonne, domine mi rex, omnes servi tui sunt? quare hoc quaerit dominus meus, quod in peccatum reputetur Israeli?*)

**Vulgata Clementina** (2 Samuel 24: 3): “And Joab told the king: ‘May your Lord God add to your people as much as it is now, and, again, may [He] multiply it one hundred times in the sight of my lord the king; but why my lord the king wishes such a thing?’” (*Dixitque Ioab regi: Adaugeat Dominus Deus tuus ad populum tuum, quantus nunc est, iterumque centuplicet in conspectu domini mei regis: sed quid sibi dominus meus rex vult in re huiuscemodi?*)

[illegible][illegible]

The first part of this quote in the text of the sermon is almost a literal quotation of 2 Samuel 24, according to the Peshitta version: “And Joab answered to the king: ‘May the Lord, your God, add [to the number] of your people one hundred times more!’” (**ܐܡܝܢ ܥܠ ܗܘܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܪܒܐ ܕܟܨܕܝܩܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܕܢܓܕܐ ܕܥܦܪܐܝܬܐ**) (**ܐܡܝܢ ܥܠ ܗܘܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܪܒܐ ܕܟܨܕܝܩܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܕܢܓܕܐ ܕܥܦܪܐܝܬܐ**); the only lexical difference between the sermon and the reading of the Peshitta is that the Peshitta reads “may the Lord [...] add [to the number] of your people one hundred times once more [than they are]” (**ܐܡܝܢ ܥܠ ܗܘܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܪܒܐ ܕܟܨܕܝܩܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܕܢܓܕܐ ܕܥܦܪܐܝܬܐ**). In contrast to this, though similar with respect to the lexical choice, 1 Chronicles 21:3 according to the Peshitta reads: “may the Lord, your God add to His people twice (**ܐܡܝܢ ܥܠ ܗܘܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܪܒܐ ܕܟܨܕܝܩܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܕܢܓܕܐ ܕܥܦܪܐܝܬܐ**) one hundred times”. The second part of the







hell, of purgatory, and of this world; in this sense, the plague of 2 Samuel 24 is equated with punishment in this world as a retribution for sin. Although the author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* did not allegorize the interpretation of 2 Samuel 24: 13, the sentence through which he introduced the *exemplum* about David and the plague suggests that he was aware about this tropological interpretation, since he writes: “again, the afflictions are given to us **as a retribution on account of our sins, so that we would not be judged in the world to come**. And the story of David shows us this fact.”<sup>405</sup>

The source of this tropological interpretation is the *Literal Postill* written by the Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra (1270-1349), considered to be “the greatest biblical exegete of the fourteenth century and perhaps the greatest in the West since Jerome.”<sup>406</sup> There is increasing evidence that the *Malabar Sermonary* relied many times on Nicolas of Lyra’s *Postill* for tropological and allegorical interpretations; for instance, the *Sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle* in the *Malabar Sermonary* concludes with a story about the slaughtering of the Ephraimites based on Judges 12 which is presented as an allegory of the corrupt life of the clergy;<sup>407</sup> again, this story is dependent on Nicholas of Lyra’s interpretation of the same biblical passage.<sup>408</sup>

Yet, the interpretation of the three types of punishment of 2 Samuel 24:13 as the punishment of hell, of purgatory, and of this world, was inserted as well in a Spanish sermon for the Septuagesima Sunday in the fourth volume of Alonso de Villegas’ *Flos Sanctorum*.<sup>409</sup> While there is no clear instance of intertextuality between the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* and the Spanish sermon by Villegas, it is possible that the author of the Syriac sermon used Villegas’ sermon as a

<sup>405</sup> *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*, fol. 94rA.

<sup>406</sup> P.D. W. Krey and L. Smith (eds.), Nicholas of Lyra: *The Senses of Scripture*, (Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 2000): 1. While commenting 2 Samuel 24: 12-13, Nicholas of Lyra writes the following: “*Trium tibi datur optio. Sequitur: Aut septem annis veniet tibi fames in terra. Per hoc autem quod Dauid praelegit pestilentiam trium dierum persecutioni trium mensium, et fami septem annorum, significatur, quod poena pro peccatis sustinenda in vita praesenti magis est eligenda, et acceptanda, quam in purgatorio, quae longior est: aut in inferno, quae a parte post est [a]eterna*” (*Biblia Sacra cum Glossa interlineari...*, fol. 124v).

<sup>407</sup> See Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 89-90.

<sup>408</sup> For the corresponding passage in Nicholas of Lyra’s *Literal Postill*, see *Biblia Sacra cum Glossa interlineari...*, fol. 48r.

<sup>409</sup> The relevant passage from Villegas’ sermon is the following: *De Dauid cuenta la Diuina Escritura en el segundo libro de los Reyes, y en el primero del Paralypomenon*<sup>409</sup>, que auiedo ofendido a Dios en contar el pueblo, el qual fue pecado de soberuia, porque tomo Dauid grande presumpcion y entonamiento, viendose obedecido de tanta gente: enojase Dios con el por esto, y determina de castigarle con riguroso castigo [...] [Dauid] pecho de soberuia contando el pueblo, embiale Dios a que escoja de tres penitencias vna: o hambre de siete años, o guerra de tres meses, o pestilencia de tres dias. Estas tres penas ofrecidas a Dauid por su pecado figuran tres penas a que por qualquier pecado mortal se obliga el que le comete. Por la ha[m]bre de siete años, se denota la pena del infierno: por la guerra de tres meses, se denota la pena de purgatorio: por la pestilencia de tres dias se denota la pena desta vida (Alonso de Villegas, *Flos Sanctorum: Quarta y ultima parte. Y discursos o sermons, sobre los Euangelios de todas las Dominicas del año, ferias de Quaresma, y de Sanctos principals: en que contienen exposiciones literales, dotrinas morales, documentos espirituales, auisos y exemplos prouechosos, para todos estados*, (Barcelona: Gotard, 1590): fol. 36r). For the the entire text of the sermon in Villegas, see *ibid.*, fol. 34r-38r.



source of inspiration.<sup>410</sup> In support of this, one must point out that the oldest manuscript of the *Malabar Sermonary* (MS Mannanam Syriac 46) contains the Syriac translation of a collection of *exempla* on Marian miracles by the same Villegas, in the fifth volume of the same collection (*Flos Sanctorum*); I have provided a description and analysis of this Syriac translation in the appendix.

The entanglement between the various sources used for the compilation of the *exemplum* on David and the plague shows how the author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (presumably Francisco Ros) read synchronically and compiled through bricolage and paraphrase biblical sources in Latin and Syriac, as well as European medieval preaching aids, such as Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica* and Nicholas of Lyra's *Literal Postill* (possibly mediated through Alonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum*). Perhaps one of the most interesting features of this bricolage is the reliance of the *Malabar Sermonary* on Iberian printed books from the end of the sixteenth century, such as Pedro de Ribadeneyra's *Treatise on Tribulation*. As I will show, the *exemplum* on David and the plague in the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis) is again dependent on the same fragment from Ribadeneyra's *Treatise on Tribulation*, being subsequently developed with Latin and Syriac biblical sources.

## David and the plague in the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites

**Text** (MS Thrissur Syriac: fol. 206v-207v):

[illegible]

<sup>410</sup> Villegas' sermon in its turn indicates Nicholas of Lyra as its source for this tropological interpretation; see *ibid.*, fol. 36r.

<sup>411</sup> Em. (عَجَبًا); T (عَجَبًا).

<sup>412</sup> Em. (𐤀𐤌𐤌𐤍); T (𐤀𐤌𐤌𐤍).

<sup>413</sup> Em. (عند); T (عند).

414 Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎴 𐎠𐎡𐎴); T (𐎠𐎡𐎴 𐎠𐎡𐎴).

<sup>415</sup> Em. (دخدا); T (دخدا).

<sup>416</sup> Legi nequit propter cariem.







and [Joab] together with the commanders of the armies departed from before the king, so that they would count the people of Israel. After nine months and twenty days they returned to Jerusalem, and Joab gave the king the sum of the record of the people.<sup>425</sup> And there were found of Israel eight hundred thousand men sword bearers, and of Juda five hundred thousand. And David got struck in his heart after he had counted the people, and David said to the Lord: ‘I have greatly sinned on account of what I did, but I beseech You, Lord, remove this iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly!’ And David arose in the morning and the word of God was [spoken] to Gad the prophet, and [the Lord] told him: ‘Go to David and tell him: “Thus says the Lord: «Of three [things] choose one that I shall do to you: either [there will be] seven years of famine in all your land, or for three months you will flee from before your enemies, or for three days [fol. 207r] there will be a pestilence in your land.»”’ And Gad the prophet went and told these [things] to David, and David answered him: “I am in great strait/I am greatly afflicted, but it is better for me that I fall in the hands of the Lord – for His mercies are many – than to fall in the hands of men.” And the Lord sent pestilence over Israel from daybreak unto the appointed time<sup>426</sup>, and seven thousand men died from among the people. And the angel of the Lord extended his hand over Jerusalem in order to destroy it. And the Lord was moved with mercy over the people and told the angel who was striking [the people]: ‘It is enough; now withdraw your hand!’ And when David saw the angel who was striking the people, he said: ‘I am the one who sinned, I am the one who transgressed [Your law], but these ones are [guiltless like] sheep, what did they do? I beg You, let Your hand turn upon me and upon the house of my father!’ After these, David bought a threshing floor with fifty shekels of silver and built there an altar to the Lord and sacrificed [on the altar] offerings and holocausts, and the pestilence was removed from them. Thus, from this story we understand the chastisement of God on account of our sins. For God chastised David on account of [his] pride, and also [chastised] the people who together with the king had partaken in the rest of the sins. For at times God chastises the people for the sins of their rulers. And as when the head of a body is in pain, the entire body is in pain, likewise for the wickedness of the people’s ruler, the [people] is chastised. **For this reason, Isaiah the prophet says: “Woe to the land whose king is a child and whose princes eat bread in the morning!”**<sup>427</sup> However, we should know that as when a worm crawls around the root of a tree, [and] all its branches dry out, likewise because of the sins of those who rule the people, at times [fol. 207v] all people is also chastised by God on account of partaking in [the sins] together with [their ruler], as [God] did in the story that we have just said.”

<sup>425</sup> Apparently, a literal translation of *numerus descriptionis populi* from the Vulgate (II Samuel 24: 9).

<sup>426</sup> Apparently, a literal translation of *tempus constitutum* from the Vulgate (II Samuel 24: 15).

<sup>427</sup> In fact, a memory quote of Ecclesiastes 10: 16 confounded with Isaiah 3: 4.



The same *exemplum* about David and the plague in the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites (number 6 in the synopsis) follows and paraphrases the biblical account of 2 Samuel (Kings) 24. For instance, the number of the counted people follows 2 Samuel 24: 9: “and there were found of Israel eight hundred thousand men sword bearers, and of Juda five hundred thousand.”<sup>428</sup> At the lexical level, the text of the *exemplum* is filled with both words borrowed from the Syriac text of the Peshitta and with literal translations of words and expressions from the Vulgate. As I have shown several times in this chapter, this is one of the basic compilation techniques used in the *Malabar Sermonary*.

However, there are two elements which the Syriac text took from Ribadeneira’s treatise. The first one is the analogy between body and the people, the head and the king. In Ribadeneira’s treatise the topic is articulated as follows: “turning back to what we were discussing, there is no wonder that the king, who is the head, commits a sin and that the people, who is its body and is ruled by [the head], gets punished”<sup>429</sup>; the same idea appears in the Syriac sermon: “as when the head of a body is in pain, the entire body is in pain, likewise for the wickedness of the people’s ruler, the [people] is chastised.”<sup>430</sup>

Furthermore, a clear instance of intertextuality between the treatise by Ribadeneyra and the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites is provided by the following passage from the Spanish text and especially by its quote from Isaiah 3: 4: *Y aún algunas veces levanta Dios á los malos, y les da el cetro y señorío para castigo del pueblo, como lo dice Job*<sup>431</sup>: “Yo haré que reine reine el hipócrita, el que parece bueno y no lo es, por los pecados del pueblo.” *Y Isaías dice*<sup>432</sup>: “Yo les daré príncipes muchachos, y los afeminados y disolutos los señorearán.”<sup>433</sup> (“And sometimes God even raises up the wicked, and grants them the scepter and the ruling [power] so as to punish the people, as Job says: “Because of the sins of the people, I will make a man who is a hypocrite, who seems to be good, but is not, [I will make him] reign”<sup>434</sup>. **And Isaiah says: “I will give children to be their princes, and the effeminate and the depraved shall rule over them.”**”).

The biblical verse from Isaiah 3:4 quoted by Ribadeneyra (in the Vulgate: *et dabo pueros principes eorum et effeminati dominabuntur eis*) is very similar to another biblical verse from Ecclesiastes 10: 16 (in the Vulgate: (*vae tibi terra cuius rex est puer et cuius principes mane comedunt*<sup>435</sup>)). Due to

<sup>428</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 206v.

<sup>429</sup> Pedro de Rivadeneira, *Tratado de la tribulación...*, 259.

<sup>430</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 207r.

<sup>431</sup> Job., XXXIV (the reference belongs to the text edition).

<sup>432</sup> Isaf., III (the reference belongs to the text edition).

<sup>433</sup> Pedro de Rivadeneira, *Tratado de la tribulación...*, 258.

<sup>434</sup> Job 34: 30.

<sup>435</sup> “Woe to you, land, whose king is a child and whose princes eat in the morning”.



the similarity between the two biblical texts, when the author of the Syriac sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites used Ribadeneyra's treatise for his sermon, he replaced the quote from Isaiah 3:4 with a memory quote of Ecclesiastes 10: 16, but he misattributed the quote from the Ecclesiastes 10:16 to Isaiah: "And as when the head of a body is in pain, the entire body is in pain, likewise for the wickedness of the people's ruler, the [people] is chastised. **For this reason, Isaiah the prophet says: "Woe to the land, whose king is a child and whose princes eat bread in the morning!"**"<sup>436</sup>

The only logical explanation for this misattribution of the biblical verse from Ecclesiastes 10: 16 to Isaiah is that the author of the Syriac sermon indeed used Ribadeneyra's text and reworked it, sometimes quoting from memory. In the Syriac sermon, the reference to "bread" is most likely the result of a memory quote, as the reference to "bread" does not appear either in the Vulgate, or in the Peshitta, which reads for the corresponding passage from Ecclesiastes: "Woe to you, city, whose king is a child, and whose chiefs eat in the morning" (ܐܠܡܢܬܝܟܝܢ ܕܡܠܚܝܩܝܗܘܢ ܥܝܢܝܢ ܒܫܪܝܢ).<sup>7</sup>

Since the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites used the Spanish text, one must add that the textual history of Ribadeneyra's treatise with its variations also provides a *terminus post quem* for the composition of the Syriac sermon; thus, the quoted passage with the biblical verse from Isaiah 3:4 is missing from the first editions of Ribadeneyra's treatise<sup>437</sup>; the first time it appears is in the edition of 1593<sup>438</sup>; this means that the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites must have been written after 1593.

As shown so far in this chapter, at the textual microlevel, the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* illustrates very well the literary networks of the *Malabar Sermonary* with both the European preaching culture based on preaching aids and collections of sermons and *exempla*, and the East Syriac culture from Iraq. The reception of all these elements in the *Malabar Sermonary* was meant to introduce and build up a common language of preaching to the audience of the Malabar Syriac Christians. While the exegetical and theological universe of this collection was predominantly Catholic in scope and content, occasional East Syriac elements used as means of *accommodatio* supported the idea of continuity with the East Syriac past of the same Christian community.

<sup>436</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 207r.

<sup>437</sup> The fragment is missing from the editions from 1589 and 1591; for comparison, see Pedro de Ribadeneyra, *Tratado de la tribulación, repartido en dos libros*, (Madrid: Pedro Madrigal, 1589): fol. 139r; see as well id., *Tratado de la tribulación, repartido en dos libros*, (Barcelona: Iayme Cendrat, 1591): fol. 89v.

<sup>438</sup> See id., *Tratado de la tribulación, repartido en dos libros*, (Alcala [de Henares]: Juan Íñiguez de Lequerica, 1593): 177r.



As can be inferred from the sermons belonging to the initial Catholic redaction of the corpus, the sermonary assumed a preliminary didactic aim; among others it was meant to introduce Old Testament erudition and biblical exegesis, as it was practiced in Europe in medieval times. It is interesting that in the Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermonary which was done after 1653, the Syriac Orthodox reviewer felt that there were other elements worthy to be preserved and eventually reused from these sermons. In what follows, I will discuss and illustrate the main textual changes that occurred in the Syriac Orthodox recension of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*.

## 5. The Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermon

In its Syriac Orthodox revision, the text of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* has been considerably reduced (to approximately one third of its initial length). All the biblical *exempla* inspired from the Old Testament and the story about Mar Sabrišo and the plague have been removed from the text. With one exception (Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book XXI, chapter IV.8), all the Patristic quotes have also been eliminated. In this way, the text of the sermon has been basically reduced to a collection of biblical *testimonia* on the suffering of the righteous, and it rather resembles a sketch of a sermon to be eventually filled in with new *exempla* which would be more appealing for a Syriac Orthodox audience. There are few biblical additions into the text: the most noteworthy is the insertion of the parable of the weeds (Matthew 13). In order to highlight the main transformations which were at interplay in the Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermon, I will provide an example, which encapsulates the major changes that occurred in the text from its initial redaction to its Syriac Orthodox revision.

### Initial Syro-Catholic redaction of the sermon (MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 91vB-92rA):

Therefore, let us consider the end of the lawless and let us know the truth! For, as the blessed David says, *they boast and exalt themselves like the trees of the woods, but all of a sudden, they perish and are not to be found in their place* (Psalms 37: 35-36). *For all deceitful men are like a breath; because the man walks [only] in appearance* (Psalms 39: 6-7). And so, the kings are not [true] kings, but they show the likeness of kings, and the riches are not riches, but a shadow of the true riches and so on. Thus, the worldly prosperity is not prosperity, but poverty and we see those prosperous suddenly descending to Sheol. For, this world is like a field in which one finds tares among the wheatears and the Head of the house waits for the harvest and expects the conversion of the lawless. And when He harvests, He throws the straw into the fire and puts the wheat into the barn of heaven.<sup>439</sup> Take a look, my brothers, to the pleasantness of God! Mar Gregory the Pope [says]: “the righteous [one] is scourged in order to be corrected, as he is preserved for glory; and the wicked succumbs to his own luxury, because he benefits entirely from the worldly blessings, while being deprived of the heavenly ones; for this is how are fattened the calves which are to be slaughtered, and the one who labours under a yoke is brought into subjection.”<sup>440</sup> In fact, since God knows that the lawless ones will return to Sheol and will be tormented there

<sup>439</sup> Allusion to Matthew 13: 24-30.

<sup>440</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book XXI, chapter IV. 8.











Patriarch” (ܡܪ ܩܪܝܬܐ ܩܝܫܐ) instead of “Mar Gregory the Pope” (ܡܪ ܩܪܝܬܐ ܩܝܫܐ), as he was named in the initial Syro-Catholic version of the text. This is the only instance in which the Syriac Orthodox compiler preserved a Catholic authority in his redaction of the sermon. As mentioned above, all the other quotations and references to Latin Church Fathers have been removed from the Syriac Orthodox redaction of the sermon.

The parallel analysis of the two versions is important, because it gives an insight in the art of compilation and in the transformation of the Syro-Catholic literary heritage from Malabar in Syriac Orthodox milieu after the revolt from 1653. At the level of preaching, the abridgement of the Syro-Catholic sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* in Syriac Orthodox context reveal the elements which the preachers might have considered relevant for the Syriac Orthodox audience from Malabar. For the history of the *Malabar Sermonary*, studying in parallel sermons from the two redactions, is essential. As mentioned before, the only dated piece from the corpus is a “Sermon on the one who makes a vow and on vowing” (ܫܡܥܝܐ ܕܝܚܝܐ ܕܝܚܝܐ) <sup>443</sup>; the sermon is dated on the 11<sup>th</sup> of Elul (September), 1567 AD<sup>444</sup>, which is the earliest dated Syro-Catholic compositions from Malabar. Due to an accident in textual transmission, only the second half of this sermon survives in its initial Syro-Catholic version. It was copied together with the first half of another sermon for the feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross<sup>445</sup>; the fragmentarily preserved sermon on vowing is comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 35vA-37vB. However, MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1 contains the complete text of the Syriac Orthodox revision of this sermon, between fol. 68v and 75r. In order to understand and analyze this composition, one needs to get to the initial Syro-Catholic version only by making use of the Syriac Orthodox revision of the text. In this context, philology and analysis of textual traditions (in Latin, Syriac and European vernacular languages) are the main instruments for decoding the various layers of meaning of the text.

## Conclusion

The *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* of the *Malabar Sermonary* illustrates the literary connection of this collection with the European medieval and early modern tradition of preaching, and with the East Syriac culture from Iraq which was imprinted in the theology and liturgy of the South Indian Syriac Christians. As shown in this chapter, the structure, sources, and rhetoric strategies used in the text of the sermon suggest that it must have been written by Francisco Ros, the first European Archbishop of the Malabar Christians after the Synod of Diamper (1599), who also authored the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle in the same corpus. The technique of compilation

<sup>443</sup> I took the title of the sermon from MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 68v.

<sup>444</sup> The composition is dated on fol. 37v; see I. Perczel, “Description and Cataloguing of Codex Mannanam Syriacus 46,” in Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 98.

<sup>445</sup> The first half of the Sermon on the Elevation of the Cross is comprised between fol. 33rB-35vA.



in the two sermons is primarily based on the contamination of the Syriac and Latin biblical versions, eventually conflated with other sources through bricolage and paraphrase. Source analysis suggests that the author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* drew and reworked his preaching material by making use of European sermon collections and preaching aids such as Peter Comestor's *Biblia Scholastica*, and Nicholas of Lyra's *Literal Postill* (eventually quoted through the Spanish intermediary of a sermon on the *Septuagesima* Sunday by Alonso de Villegas), and a *Promptuarium Morale* written by Thomas Stapleton, a sixteenth-century English theologian. The author of the Syriac sermon also used a *Treatise on Tribulation* written in Spanish by the Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneyra, and first published in 1589; the use of Spanish sources by Ribadeneyra is again a feature shared by the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* and the sermon on the Apostle Thomas from the sermonary.

The insertion of the story about a plague, Patriarch Sabrišo' I, and the institution of the feast day of the Rogation of the Ninevites was meant to illustrate the continuity between the East Syriac past of the South Indian Christians and their Catholic present. Since the protagonist of this story was an East Syriac saint, the Catholic author of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* adopted an accommodative approach and referred to Sabrišo' as a holy man. It is interesting that at an earlier stage, perhaps before the synod of Diamper, the same author, presumably Francisco Ros, while writing the sermon on the Rogation of the Ninevites of the corpus (number 6 in the synopsis) obliterated the 'Nestorian' identity of the holy man. The hypothesis that both sermons were written by the same author (Francisco Ros) is supported by the fact that both sermons used the same small fragment about David and the plague from Ribadeneyra's *Treatise on Tribulation* directly and independently of each other.

Thus, the entangled textual elements and layers of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* and the comparison with other sources from both the *Malabar Sermonary*, and other European and Syriac sources allows one to reconstruct the mechanisms of compilation and offers an incursion into the intellectual history of Syro-Catholic literature in early modern Malabar. Furthermore, the two redactions of the sermon and its use among the Syriac Orthodox circles of the Malabar Christians, after 1653, stresses again the importance of the sermonary for the South Indian Syriac Christians irrespective of their Christian confession. The prominence of the corpus is again emphasized by the influence that it exerted on newly created liturgical poetry which was inserted in the Catholic revision of the East Syriac ritual of Malabar, after the Synod of Diamper. In the next chapter of the thesis, I will focus on the intertextuality between sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* and Syro-Catholic liturgical poetry.







### Chapter 3: The Reception of the *Malabar Sermonary* into liturgical poetry

#### 1. Introduction

In this chapter I will focus on one aspect of the reception history of the *Malabar Sermonary*, namely on the intertextuality between sermons from this corpus and newly emerging Catholic poetry inserted into the Catholic revision of the East Syriac ritual in Malabar, after the Synod of Diamper (1599). The entanglement between compositions from the *Malabar Sermonary* and the ritual highlights the importance of the former, suggesting that far from being just a marginal collection of sermons, the sermonary played an important role in the effort undertaken by Francisco Ros and his circle of Syriacist disciples so as to align both the cult and the preaching to Tridentine Catholic doctrine. Occasionally sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* have been used as sources for the composition of new liturgical hymns. This part of the reception history of the *Malabar Sermonary* enables one to distinguish its prominent role within the Syriac “Kulturkampf”<sup>446</sup> created in Malabar by the Catholic missionaries since the second half of the sixteenth century. By presenting the relationship between the sermons and the newly emerging Catholic hymnography, my aim is also to emphasize that like the Middle East, which was better documented in secondary literature,<sup>447</sup> Malabar was a fertile place for the creation of new hymnography in Classical Syriac in the early modern times.<sup>448</sup>

#### 2. The Canticles of Glorification for the Night Service and the Malabar Catholic Revision of the *Ḥudrā*

In order to unravel the entanglement between Syro-Catholic sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* and pieces of Syriac liturgical poetry from Malabar, on the basis of a compared manuscript analysis, in this chapter I will mainly show how a newly discovered group of hymns belonging to the genre of “canticle of glorification” (ܬܝܫܒܘܚܬܐ) [Syr. *tešboḥtā*<sup>449</sup>] were composed in Malabar and how they circulated both in anthologies and liturgical manuscripts. I will also explain the relationship of these new compositions to the already existing Syriac liturgical poetry belonging to the literary heritage of the Church of the East. I will define the place of this type of poetry within the ritual: the stanzas of these new hymns from Malabar were inserted as propers (=distinctive elements for every feast day) in the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* under the title “anthems” (ܬܝܫܒܘܚܬܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*], according to a pattern which already existed in the Middle East, but has

<sup>446</sup> The coinage belongs to István Perczel, see, for instance, id., *Accommodationist Strategies...*, 195.

<sup>447</sup> For a comprehensive picture on this topic, see H. Murre van-den Berg, “Chapter 4: The Texts of the Ritual” in *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 154-183. See as well, A. Pritula, “East Syriac Life in the Mid-16<sup>th</sup> Century: ‘Abdīš’ō of Gāzartā and Older Contemporary Poets,” *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Asian and African Studies*, 11.1 (2019): 89-107.

<sup>448</sup> A pioneering study on Syriac poetry in early modern Malabar is: I. Perczel, *Alexander of the Port...*

<sup>449</sup> Like in the previous chapters, whenever I transliterated Syriac words in this paper, I did not mark the initial and final *ālap*, the spirantisation of the consonants and the doubling of the consonants within the words (except for words which are well known in this form, such as *Gazzā*).



been little documented so far in secondary literature; the *Hudrā* and the *Gazzā* are two complementary collections and can be seen together as a breviary, a collection of hymns and services, for the main festivals of the liturgical year.

The most important question that I will try to answer is: what is the relationship of these hymns to the *Malabar Sermonary* and to the Latin hymnography of the Roman Breviary approved by the Council of Trent? I will illustrate the textual entanglement between Syriac sermons from the sermonary and these pieces of poetry by analyzing the canticles of glorification for three feast days: the Transfiguration of Christ, the commemoration of Saint Thomas the Apostle and the feast of *Corpus Christi*. By bringing forward these three textual examples, I will attempt to reconstruct the history of these texts from ritual books back to the workshop of their skillful author(s) and show the sources and chains of transmission of Syriac erudition in Malabar, after the Synod of Diamper (1599). I will also discuss as a working hypothesis the putative authorship of the Indian Syriacist poet and priest, Alexander of the Port/Kadavil Chandy Kattanar (1588-1673), author of religious and humanistic erudite poetry and a disciple of Francisco Ros.

In a pioneering study from 2014, István Perczel reported about the discovery of seven *memrē* by Alexander of the Port (Kadavil Chandy Kattanar) comprised in a South Indian manuscript: MS Mannanam Syriac 63.<sup>450</sup> The name of the poet does not appear in the manuscript, but the manuscript comprises among others a *memrā* on the Eucharist, which the Indian poet sent to Pope Alexander VII in 1657. The poem on the Eucharist is also preserved under Kadavil Chandy's name in another manuscript (MS Mannanam Syriac 99: fol. 149r-160v)<sup>451</sup>. Perczel established that out of the eight poems of similar structure and style comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 63, seven are by Kadavil Chandy, while the eighth poem is written by a medieval East Syriac poet from the thirteenth century, Gabriel Qamša of Mosul;<sup>452</sup> the poem by Gabriel of Mosul served as the model for the poetry of Kadavil Chandy.<sup>453</sup> While analyzing the content of a *memrā* on the Syriac language by Kadavil Chandi, Perczel showed its reliance on an untitled Catholic treatise against heresies in Syriac, which is comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 123v-135r.<sup>454</sup> As I mentioned earlier in the thesis, this manuscript is the oldest copy of the *Malabar Sermonary*. In order to show the intertextuality between liturgical hymns from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā* and *Gazzā*, and sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary*, I am following Perczel's analysis.

<sup>450</sup> Perczel, *Alexander of the Port*....

<sup>451</sup> Ibid., 32-34.

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., 42-43.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid., 36-40.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid., 42-43.



I will begin this inquiry with a manuscript preserved in the library of the Metropolitan Palace of the Church of the East in Thrissur. MS Thrissur Syriac 62 is an interesting anthology (a pocketbook) containing Syriac and Garshuni Malayalam material.<sup>455</sup> The manuscript, which does not contain any colophon or date, can be dated to the eighteenth/early nineteenth century on paleographical grounds.<sup>456</sup> It is written in a special type of Indian East Syriac script, which does not seem fully developed as a local Indian variant of the East Syriac script, when compared to other Syriac Indian manuscripts from the nineteenth century.<sup>457</sup> For the sake of the present discussion I have divided its contents into five main sections/parts:

- 1) fol. **1r-11r**: A fragment from the Eucharistic celebration (according to the revised rite of Francisco Ros) and other liturgical fragments;
- 2) fol. **11v-33r**: A short catechetical work in Garshuni Malayalam, in the form of questions and answers;
- 3) fol. **33v-99v**: Poetical works by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar/Alexander the Indian, a Syriacist Indian poet, disciple of the Jesuits and other pieces of poetry which resemble in style the compositions of the same poet;
- 4) fol. **99v-110r**: A couple of anthem-like canticles which seem to be part of the ritual for various feast days.
- 5) fol. **110v-120v**: The Litany of the Saints, the Marian Litany (translated from Latin) and other hymns and liturgical fragments.

The third part of the manuscript (fol.33v-99v), which is important for the present discussion consists of poems written by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar (1588-1673), an Indian priest and Syriacist poet (a disciple of Francisco Ros), and other religious pieces of poetry similar in style, which have been taken out of their liturgical context in an anthological manner. An important figure in the general revolt of the Malabar Christians against their Jesuit bishops and the Portuguese from 1653,<sup>458</sup> Kadavil Chandy Kattanar became one of the four advisors of the newly consecrated Archdeacon Thomas Pakalomattam,<sup>459</sup> who later joined the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and became Mar Thoma I, the metropolitan of the so-called “New Faction/New Allegiance” (in Malayalam, *Puthankūru*) among the Malabar Christians.<sup>460</sup> Further on, in 1663, a part of the

<sup>455</sup> See Mar Aprem, *Assyrian Manuscripts...*, 28; the manuscript contains 236 pages (size: 15.3x9.8 cm; written surface: 12.5x6 cm); as I worked with a digital copy of the manuscript, I took the size of the manuscript from Mar Aprem’s description. I have provided previously a less detailed description of this manuscript for the Reading Room of the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, Collegeville (MN); see <https://www.vhmmml.org/readingRoom>.

<sup>456</sup> As I worked with digital copy, I have not seen the paper watermark of the manuscript.

<sup>457</sup> On this type of script, see Briquel-Chatonnet and Desreumaux, *A Study and Characterization...*

<sup>458</sup> On the revolt from 1653, see J. Kollaparambil, *The St. Thomas Christians’ Revolution...*; J. Thekkedath, *History of Christianity...*, 91-109; P. Pallath, *The Grave Tragedy of the Church of St Thomas Christians and the Apostolic Mission of Sebastiani*, (Changanassery: HIRS Publications, 2006).

<sup>459</sup> J. Thekkedath, *History of Christianity...*, 92.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid., 100-102.



Malabar Christians who had previously revolted against the Portuguese and the Jesuit Archbishops, returned to the fold of the Catholic Church. As mentioned in the previous chapters of the thesis, this happened as an outcome of the fact that Parambil Chandy, the cousin of Archdeacon Thomas, was consecrated as the first indigenous Catholic bishop of this Christian community. In this context, Kadavil Chandy Kattanar became Parambil Chandy's Vicar General.<sup>461</sup> Perczel who discovered five hymns composed by the same Kadavil Chandy has described his poetry as "a synthesis of Indian, East Syriac, and post-Tridentine Latin Christian elements along with humanistic erudition which the poet acquired from his Jesuit teacher."<sup>462</sup> In this manuscript (MS Thrissur Syriac 62), the name of the poet is absent, but I was able to identify three of his hymns on the basis of Perczel's pioneering work. This section of the manuscript comprises the following items:

**fol. 33v-58r:** Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā* on the Eucharist. The title and the tune of the anthem is missing; it begins with the first verse under the heading *ālap* (2) of the acrostic.

Incipit: (❖. ٲَافْ يَهْلُفْ ❖).<sup>463</sup>

The scribe copied the tune of the anthem, which usually follows the title of the poem, only at the end of the *mēm̄rā* (on fol. 57v-58r).

**fol. 58r-69v:** Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā* on the Syriac language. Title and incipit: ( **ܡܡܪܐ** )

دَجْدٌ مَعَكُمْ لِيَتَّعِيَهُمْ ذُنُوبُهُمْ فَبِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

**fol. 69v-71r:** Canticle of glorification in praise of St. Mary. Title and incipit: ( **مَدْحُهَا** )

(دَفْعُهُ، مُدْفِعٌ، خَذِعَ سَتًّا دَحِجَمَةً، فَذِيعَ بَسْرَ خَسِيمَةً، ❖

**fol. 71r-72r:** Intercession before the altar. Title and incipit: ( **ܬܠܥܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ** )

(جملہ احادیث ۱۴۱۵ھ تا ۱۴۱۶ھ کے تحت جمع کیے گئے۔)

**fol. 72v-74r:** Untitled hymn about the Crucifixion of Christ. In the first part of the hymn the Greek *Tris hágion* hymn is meant to be repeated after some of the stanzas, while after other stanzas the words of Christ “My people, what have I done to thee?” are to be repeated.

Incipit: **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ** 464 **كَلِمَةٍ: حَسْبُ نَفْسٍ يُجْزَى دَمٌ بِذَلِكَ دَمِيرٌ ذِي: إِبْرَاهِيمَ**  
**(كَلِمَةً).**

<sup>461</sup> I. Perczel, *Alexander of the Port...*, 32; A. Toepel, "A Letter from Alexander Kadavil to the Congregation of St. Thomas at Edapally," in Burnazhnov, Grypeou et al. (eds.), *Bibel, Byzanz und Christlicher Orient...*, 389.

<sup>462</sup> Perczel, *Alexander of the Port...*, 40.

463 Sic!

464 Sic!







*Sermonary* and, therefore, they are an important witness to the various redactions of Syriac texts in Malabar during the times surrounding the Synod of Diamper; due to the interconnectedness between various literary genres of Syriac compositions they also invite to an incursion into the intellectual history of the time.

Whereas a systematic study on the history and development of the East Syriac *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* in itself is a desideratum, the same is true about the structure, development and use of their Malabar Catholic revision, which was prescribed by the Synod of Diamper. Decrees 14 and 15 from the fourteenth chapter of the Third Action of the synod provide a list of “Nestorian” saints whose services are to be purged from this type of liturgical books, as well as a list of doctrinal “mistakes” to be corrected<sup>466</sup>. Up to the second half of the nineteenth century such ritual books of the Catholic revision circulated in Malabar only in manuscript form.<sup>467</sup>

According to Juan Mateos who studied the services for the night (ܠܝܠܐ) [Syr. *lēlyā*] and morning (ܫܦܪܐ) [Syr. *šaprā*] in the Chaldean tradition from Iraq, the difference between the manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* and those of the *Gazzā* is that “*Gazzā* contains only compositions belonging to the night vigil; such pieces are not to be found in the *Ḥudrā*; the two books are therefore complementary to each other.”<sup>468</sup> The same scholar asserts that

“*Ḥudrā* is the book which contains the oldest services for all days of the ecclesiastical year. Later compositions have been reunited in another volume, namely the *Gazzā*. The content of the *Gazzā* is exclusively dedicated to the night vigil. Actually, this vigil is the last one to have been organized among the liturgical hours. Being an anthology, *Gazzā* shows notable variations with respect to contents from one volume to another. Basically, in each monastery, the poet monks could add new pieces of poetry according to their own will.”<sup>469</sup>

Be this as it is, the liturgical manuscripts containing the Malabar Catholic revision of these two collections usually form a single corpus combining both parts in a single codex, and the manuscripts

<sup>466</sup> Da Cunha Rivara (ed.), *Arquivo Portuguez...*, fasc.4, 337-339.

<sup>467</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century two editions of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* are known to have been published. First, Elias Kuriakose Chavara (1805-1871) prepared a revised edition of it, which he tried to simplify and uniformize based on the existing manuscripts; he is also said to have added some other prayers translated from the Roman Breviary. This edition, usually known as ‘Chavara’s Breviary’, was sent to the head of the Congregation *De propaganda fide* in Rome for approval in 1862, but, apparently, the authorities in Rome did not answer this petition during Chavara’s lifetime; however, Chavara published an edition of his breviary in India (without approval from the authorities in Rome) in Koonammavu (nowadays a Northern suburb of Cochin), perhaps in three volumes, according to A. Vallavanthara (out of which only the first volume is still known to have survived in the library of the Mannanam library, but it is not even clear whether the other two volumes have ever been published). The content of this printed volume has been discussed by Fr. Vallavanthara (see Vallavanthara, *Liturgical Contributions of Blessed Chavara*, available online: <http://christianmusicologicalsocietyofindia.com/chavara-vallavanthara> (last time accessed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December, 2019). Another “breviary”/another version of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* “greatly different from the one [Chavara] organized”, is said to “have been introduced in the Malabar Church on the 4th February 1876” (ibid.). I have consulted for the present study a handwritten copy of Chavara’s Breviary, MS Mannanam Syriac 30 (initial shelf mark: 090-248-3-BRE-S; I owe the correspondence between the old and new shelf marks of the manuscript to Prof. István Perczel): on this MS, see Thelly, *Syriac Manuscripts in Mannanam...*, 266 (Liturgical III/8).

<sup>468</sup> J. Mateos, *Lelya - šapra: Essai d’interpretation des matins chaldéennes*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 156, (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1959): 11.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid., 12.



do not display a clear division between *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*. Occasionally, the scribes would group the temporal section (services for Sundays) in a volume and the sanctoral section (commemorations of saints and feast days with fixed date) in another one, but even this is inconsistent, since feast-days such as the Ascension of Christ and the Pentecost (which belong to the temporal section of the liturgical year) usually end up in the sanctoral part. Therefore, whenever I will refer in this chapter to the “Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*” it is only a convention in order designate manuscripts combining both the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*; I prefer to use the term *Ḥudrā* over *Gazzā*, as I have not encountered the term *Gazzā* in any manuscript containing this Catholic revision of the ritual from Malabar. Also, for comparison I have used three other manuscripts for the analogous East Syriac ritual, from the Middle East, namely MS Thrissur Syriac 27<sup>470</sup> and MSS Vatican Syriac 86 and 87; MSS Thrissur Syriac 27 and Vatican Syriac 86 bear the title *Ḥudrā*, while MS Vatican Syriac 87 begins directly with the services without a generic title.<sup>471</sup>

In order to determine the liturgical place of the canticles of glorification,<sup>472</sup> one might look into the services of various feast-days and commemorations of saints from several South Indian liturgical manuscripts (ranging from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries) and from a few sixteenth century manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* from the Middle East. In fact, the beginning of the service of the night (ܠܝܠܬܐ) [Syr. *lēlyā*] was a (liturgical) place of relative freedom in the ritual, where unsystematically various pieces of liturgical poetry could be inserted as propers; most of the hymns inserted in this place of the ritual are abridged versions of the *mēmre* (metrical homilies) composed in dodecasyllabic meter (4+4+4) by Narsai of Nisibis (5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries),<sup>473</sup> but the name of the poet is always omitted from the manuscripts. In the East Syriac tradition, Narsai is considered to be the most important East Syriac poet from late antiquity after Ephrem the Syrian and a champion of Nestorian theology. As the founder of the School of Nisibis and due to his dependence to the

<sup>470</sup> On this MS, see J. Othottil, “Detailed Notes on Two *Hudra* Manuscripts,” in Mar Aprem, *Assyrians Manuscripts in India*, (Thrissur: Mar Narsai Press, 2011): 71-84.

<sup>471</sup> On the two *Ḥudrā* MSS from the Vatican Library, see S. E. Assemani and J. S. Assemani, *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae Codicum Manuscriptorum Catalogus in Tres Partes Distributus. Partis Primae Tomus Secundus Complectens Codices Chaldaicos Sive Syriacos*, (Rome: Apud Haeredes Barbiellini ad Forum Pasquini, 1758): 476-482; see as well, Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas...*, 196-197.

<sup>472</sup> In scholarly literature, the existence of the series of (ܡܦܬܚܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] for the night service has been already mentioned in two articles by Sr. Jincy Othottil. When referring to the differences between the services for the commemoration of the Virgin Mary in two East Syriac MSS of the *Ḥudrā* from the Library of the Metropolitan Palace of the Church of the East in Thrissur, i.e. MSS Thrissur Syriac 27 and 29, Sr. Othottil mentions that, from MS Thrissur Syriac 29, “in the night prayer are missing the long (ܡܦܬܚܐ) hymns and four (ܡܕܪܫܐ) *madraše* with (ܡܕܪܫܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ) and its (ܡܕܪܫܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ)” (J. Othottil “Descriptive Study of the *Hudra* Manuscripts in the Metropolitan’s Palace of Trichur,” in F. Briquel – Chatonet and M. Debié (eds.), *Manuscripta Syriaca: Des sources de première main*, (Paris: Geuthner, 2015): 438. In another article, the same author has provided an edition and the English translation of the series of (ܡܦܬܚܐ) “anthems” for the commemoration of the Saints Peter and Paul, which she ascribes to Narsai (ead., “A Study of the Commemoration of Saints Peter and Paul: Based on *Ḥudra* MS. TCR. 27,” *The Harp* 29 (2014): 296, 298-299, 319-324).

<sup>473</sup> On the most recent scholarly contribution to Narsai, see A. Butts et al. (eds.), *Narsai: Rethinking His Work and His World*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020).



theology of the ‘Three Greek Doctors’ – Diodore of Tarsus (d. 390), Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428) and Nestorius (d. 450) – Narsai “ultimately became the most foundational theologian articulating a dyophysite Christology in Syriac.”<sup>474</sup> These abridged poems have been inserted in manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* under the title “anthems” (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) [Syr. *hpākātā*];<sup>475</sup> however, this type of poetry is missing from the printed editions of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*.<sup>476</sup> It is also missing from the Chaldean revision of the *Gazzā* done in the Middle East in the end of the seventeenth century by the Chaldean Patriarch Joseph II of Amid.<sup>477</sup> While in some East Syriac manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* this type of poetry is missing,<sup>478</sup> it is found in three manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* from the fifteenth and sixteenth century Middle East. It is present in MS Thrissur Syriac 27, a *Ḥudrā* manuscript copied in Alkaye, in Urmi (Iran) in 1598 A.D.<sup>479</sup> and in MSS Vatican Syriac 86 and 87.<sup>480</sup> The two *Ḥudrā* manuscripts from the Vatican Library are particularly important for the Indian context, as they might have belonged to Mar Joseph Sulaqa, the brother of the first Chaldean Patriarch, Yohannan Sulaqa.<sup>481</sup> In the 1550s and 1560s Mar Joseph was active in Malabar, where he was sent as Metropolitan Bishop of India by his Patriarch, ‘Abdišo’ of Gazarta.<sup>482</sup>

Alongside with the poetry of Narsai, in the same liturgical context, new “canticles of glorification” were composed and introduced as *propers* in the services belonging to the Malabar Catholic

<sup>474</sup> Butts, “Introduction,” in *ibid.*, 4.

<sup>475</sup> This type of poetry inserted in the service of the night under the title “anthems” (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] before the session (ܡܘܬܒܐ) [Syr. *mawtbā*] should not be confounded with another series of “anthems” (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] belonging to the vigil (ܫܗܪܐ) [Syr. *šahrā*]. In his work, Mateos describes the “anthems” (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] for the vigil as follows: “**Hepakta**, *h<sup>e</sup>paḳtā* (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) retour, *peut-être* alternance: 1. – Distiques, empruntés aux memre de Narsai, qu’on intercale aux qale d-šahra festifs entre le psaume avec refrain (šubbaha ou qanona) et la tešbohta qui le suit. Leur nombre varie selon les mss. 2. – Distiques de même origine qu’on intercale entre les trois psaumes qui forment les qale d-šahra, à la fête des apôtres Pierre et Paul, au Dimanche de Nusardel et à d’autres jours de la même période. Les distiques des apôtres sont les mêmes, à peu près, pour tous ces jours” (Mateos, *Lelya - Šapra...*, 483). However, it is noticeable that, in the East Syriac tradition, the practice of introducing couplets excerpted from Narsai’s poetry into the ritual received the generic title of “anthems” (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) [Syr. *hakpātā*]; this phenomenon is mentioned by Sr. Othothil (Othottil, *A Study of the Commemoration...*, 296); the same practice is also mentioned by Macomber who, in his study on the manuscripts of Narsai’s *mēmre*, mentions the fact that in the Middle East circulated manuscripts containing collections of (ܐܢܬܡܝܢ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] excerpted from the poetry of Narsai; Macomber mentions the existence of five such manuscripts ranging from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries (W. F. Macomber, “The Manuscripts of the Metrical Homilies of Narsai,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 39.2 (1973): 278).

<sup>476</sup> I.e. P. Bedjan (ed.), *Breviarium Chaldaicum*, vol. 1-3, (Paris: Via dicta de Sèvres 95), 1886-1887, and Mar Thoma Darmo (ed.), *Ḥudrā* [*Ktābā da-qdām wa-d-bātar wa-d-ḥudrā wa-d-kaškōl wa-d-gazā u-qālā d-‘udrānē ‘am ktābā d-mazmurē*], vol. 1-3, (Trichur: Mar Narsai Press, 1960-1962).

<sup>477</sup> On this revision, see Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 149-152, 341; I have also consulted for comparison, two manuscripts of the Chaldean revision of the *Gazzā*: MSS Thrissur Syriac 13 and 14 (on these manuscripts, see Mar Aprem, *Assyrian Manuscripts...*, 14-15).

<sup>478</sup> For instance, MS Thrissur Syriac 29, a manuscript of the *Ḥudrā* copied in Alqosh in 1681 A.D. (see Othottil, *Descriptive Study of the Ḥudra Manuscripts...*, 438).

<sup>479</sup> The MS is described in Othottil, *Detailed Notes...*, 71-84.

<sup>480</sup> These two manuscripts do not contain a colophon, but Assemani dates MS Vatican Syriac 86 to the sixteenth century and MS Vatican Syriac 87 to the fifteenth (see Assemani *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae Codicum...*, 476-482; Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas...*, 196-197).

<sup>481</sup> Van der Ploeg, *ibid.*

<sup>482</sup> On Mar Joseph, see G. Beltrami, *La Chiesa Caldea...*, 35-59; and Thekkedath, *History of Christianity...*, 40-47.



revision of the *Hudrā*, under the same title “anthems” (ܐܢܬܝܡܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*]. Just like the poetry of Narsai, such poems usually precede the session (ܡܡܬܒܐ) [Syr. *mawtbā*] of the service of the night and are meant to be read or chanted<sup>483</sup> as insertions at Psalm 82: 1 (“God stood in the assembly of angels”) in the beginning of the twelfth (ܠܐܠܡܐ) *hulālā*<sup>484</sup>, during the reading of the Psalter within the night service.<sup>485</sup> All newly added poems are using the dodecasyllabic metre of Narsai, but, similarly to late medieval Syriac poetry, they also use rhyme.<sup>486</sup> The rhyme pattern suggests that some of the newly created poems are divided in couplets, while others might be divided in quatrains; the division of some of the canticles into quatrains is suggested by the fact that occasionally, in the ritual, a canticle is divided into shorter “anthems” resembling stanzas, each of four verses. The scribes introduced each such stanza/anthem with the word (ܐܢܬܝܡܐ) [(')*hrētā*] “another- one”. The rhyme pattern is either *aaaa* or *aabb*, but there are also instances when isolated verses do not present any rhyme. However, some of the newly composed canticles do not appear divided in quatrains even in liturgical context; this is, for instance, the case of the canticle for the feast-day of the Transfiguration of Christ discussed below. Also, unlike their Middle Eastern peers, the Indian scribes do not always mark verses or hemistichs in Syriac poetry with two oblique dots (.) and little crosses (\*). Since the use of punctuation in manuscripts seems to reflect the choice of the scribe, punctuation does not always help to understand the structure of these canticles.

Upon a systematic search through Syriac liturgical manuscripts from several South Indian libraries, to which I have added the evidence of an Indian manuscript preserved in Paris, I have collected twenty-one canticles of glorifications for the service of the night from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā*. Around half of the canticles are abridged versions of Narsai’s poetry showing continuity with the East Syriac liturgical tradition from the Middle East. Other canticles present in both the Iraqi and South Indian manuscripts might be pieces of poetry composed by medieval East Syriac poets and the identification of their author(s) requires further study. A third group of canticles are newly created Syro-Catholic poems composed in the meter used by Narsai, in India. Occasionally, such newly created pieces of Syro-Catholic poetry were meant to replace the existing pieces belonging to Narsai. The majority of the manuscripts testifying to this tradition are nineteenth-century copies (which is not an exceptional case, if one considers the general situation of

<sup>483</sup> I did not find any indication in the manuscripts concerning any tune (*qālā*) to which this type of poetry should be sung/chanted.

<sup>484</sup> A *hulālā* is a division of the East Syriac Psalter in liturgical context.

<sup>485</sup> For their place in the ritual, see, for instance, Bedjan (ed.), *Breviarium Chaldaicum...*, (vol. 3), 278\*.

<sup>486</sup> On the peculiarities of late medieval Syriac poetry, see S. Brock “Later Syriac Poetry” in Daniel King (ed.), *The Syriac World*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2019): 327-338; see also A. Pritula (ed.), *The Wardā: An East Syriac Hymnological Collection. Study and Critical Edition*, (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015): 72-116 with an emphasis on the Wardā collection; on the continuity and changes between medieval and early modern Syriac poetry in the Middle East, see Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 156-183.



the Syriac manuscripts preserved in Malabar). Since most of these manuscripts do not contain a colophon, it is difficult to determine their precise date.

Among the manuscripts that can be safely dated and help one to trace back the origin of these Syro-Catholic poems to the decades following the Synod of Diamper, one should mention MS Paris Syriac BnF 25, the prayer book of Parambil Chandy, the first indigenous Catholic bishop of the Malabar Christians after the general revolt of 1653. The manuscript which is a *Kaškūl* (i.e., to be used for the ferial section of the liturgical year) contains some services for feast days and commemorations of saints (i.e., belonging to the temporal and sanctoral sections of the liturgical year) copied as an appendix to the ferial section.<sup>487</sup> Among the manuscripts preserved in India, one of the most complete collections of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* is MS Mannanam Syriac 99, dated to the year 1734 AD.<sup>488</sup> The canticles of glorification survive in collections of varying length depending on the aim of the scribe: in most of the cases, they are copied in manuscripts of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* (combining both the temporal and the sanctoral sections of the liturgical year), but services for a few feast-days might have been added as a small appendix to other liturgical books such as the *Kaškūl*, or to the “Book of Before and After” (*Ktābā da-qdām wa-d-bātar*) containing the standard services of the days of the week, corresponding to the *šhimō* in the West-Syriac tradition.

In South Indian manuscripts, these poems appear sometimes in non-liturgical context, in anthologies, bearing the title “canticle of glorification” (ܬܝܫܒܘܬܐ) [Syr. *tešbohtā*]; in such case, the text of the poems runs continuously and there is no stanzaic division (such is the case of MS Thrissur Syriac 62 discussed above). In most of the manuscripts (which are liturgical manuscripts), the canticles are inserted under the title “anthems” (ܚܦܟܐܬܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*], as propers, in the beginning of the service of the night (ܠܝܠܐ) [Syr. *lēlyā*] for various feast-days; such series of anthems are usually organized in units of four verses. Occasionally, even the canticles based on Narsai’s *mēmre* (i.e., those inherited from the East Syriac liturgical tradition) do not appear in their liturgical context, but are rather isolated, usually in the end of a liturgical manuscript, preceding the colophon. When in the second half of the nineteenth century, Elias Kuriakose Chavara reorganized the liturgical material from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* for his breviary, he

<sup>487</sup> This manuscript has been discussed in detail by Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas...*, 231-244; more recently, it was revisited by Perczel 2016, “Prayer Book of Mār Parambil Āndi Kuriyātu,” in A. Chong (ed.), *Christianity in Asia. Sacred Art and Visual Splendour*, (Singapore: Asian Civilisations Museum, 2016): 50-52, 264-265.

<sup>488</sup> On this MS, see Perczel, *Alexander of the Port...*, 32; Thelly, *Syriac Manuscripts in Mannanam...*, 261-262, 267.



sometimes suppressed some of the verses of the canticles or he reorganized their verses into units (anthems) of uneven length.<sup>489</sup>

The following list comprises an inventory of the canticles of glorifications for the night service from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā*, ordered according to their incipit. Since the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā* displays a hybridization between the Roman Catholic and the East Syriac liturgical calendars, I have chosen to list the feast-days in the order in which they appear in MS Mannanam Syriac 99; the manuscript is one of the most complete collections of this type and was copied in 1734 A.D.:

1. The Nativity of Christ (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
2. Commemoration of St. Steven (ܕܝܢܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܕܝܢܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
3. The Circumcision of Christ (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
4. The Epiphany of Christ (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
5. The Ascension of Christ (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
6. The Pentecost (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
7. Corpus Christi (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
8. Commemoration of Virgin Mary (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
9. One of the Apostles (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
10. One of the Evangelists (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).
11. One of the Martyrs (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܬܠܝܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ ܕܡܨܝܚܐ).

<sup>489</sup> This is the case of MS Mannanam Syriac 30 identified by Fr. Emanuel Thelly as Chavara's Breviary; in Thelly's checklist, the manuscript is registered under the shelf-mark: 090-248-BRE-S (Thelly, *Syriac Manuscripts*..., 266); I owe to István Perczel the correspondence between the old shelfmark and the new call numbers of the manuscript in the collection.



12. The Bishops Confessors [of the faith] (ܐܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܐܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ).
13. Commemoration of the Virgin Holy-Women (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
14. Commemoration of the Holy Women (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
15. The Birth of St. John the Baptist: (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
16. Commemoration of St. Peter and Paul (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
17. St. Thomas the Apostle (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
18. The Transfiguration of Christ (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
19. Elevation of the Holy Cross (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
20. The Feast of St. Michael (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).
21. Commemoration of the departed (ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ): inc.: ( ܡܪܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ܡܡܝܬܐ ).

The list does not strictly follow the liturgical calendar, because the canticles for the Marian festivals, one of the Apostles, one of the Evangelists, one of the Martyrs, the Bishops Confessors [of the faith], the Virgin Holy Women, and Holy Women (not Virgins) rather belong to the category of *commune sanctorum*, that is to say, they are used whenever a commemoration of a saint from such a category is celebrated.

From the items listed above, the following canticles are abridged versions of Narsai's *mēm̐rē*:<sup>490</sup> the cantic for the Nativity of Christ,<sup>491</sup> the one for the commemoration of St. Steven,<sup>492</sup> the one for the

<sup>490</sup> The references in this list are based on the following works: A. Mingana (ed.), *Narsai Doctoris Syri Homiliae et Carmina*, vol. 1-2 (Mosul: Typis Fratrum Praedicatorum, 1905); Eshai Shimon XXIII, Catholicos Patriarch of the East



Epiphany,<sup>493</sup> the one for the Ascension of Christ,<sup>494</sup> the one for Pentecost,<sup>495</sup> the one for the commemoration of the departed,<sup>496</sup> and the one for the commemoration of the Evangelists;<sup>497</sup> they are attested by both manuscripts from the Middle East and the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*. The canticles for the feast of the Birth of St. John the Baptist and for the commemoration of St. Peter and Paul belong as well to the hymnography of the Church of the East, but I could not identify their author; Sr. Othottil who edited and translated the service of the commemoration of the Saints Peter and Paul attributes it to Narsai.<sup>498</sup> However, if Narsai is truly the author of a *sogitā* “On Nero and the Workers and Peter”,<sup>499</sup> then the author of the canticle of glorification for the night service for the commemoration of St. Peter and Paul must be a different one; this is suggested, for instance, by the fact that the canticle of glorification spells Nero’s name as (ܢܪܘܫ) [*Nē’roš*], while the *sogitā* provides the spelling (ܢܪܘܢ) [*Nē’ron*]. There is need for further study in order to establish with accuracy which of the remaining hymns from the list are original creations from Malabar; such a study should also take into account the hybrid structure of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*, at the crossroads between the liturgical tradition of the Church of the East and the Roman Catholic tradition of the Roman Breviary. Some feast days mentioned in the list, such as *Corpus Christi*, are of distinct Roman Catholic origin, without any parallel in the East Syriac tradition. The *Malabar Sermonary* also seems to have had an important share in the composition of the newly created hymnography for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*. This liturgical revision from Malabar also predates and is distinct from the Chaldean revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* which was done in the Middle East by the Chaldean Catholicos Patriarch Joseph II of Amid at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century; this Chaldean revision was the main source for Paul Bedjan’s *Breviarium Chaldaicum*.<sup>500</sup>

While the preservation of the canticles based on Narsai’s *mēmre* in the beginning of the service of the night witnesses to the continuity between the Malabar liturgical tradition and that of the Church of the East, sometimes the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* contains newly created hymns

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(ed.), *Homilies of Mar Narsai*, vol. 1-2, (San Francisco: Patriarchal Press, 1970); Macomber, *The Manuscripts of the Metrical Homilies*....

<sup>491</sup> See Macomber, no. 4; Eshai Shimon, vol. 1, 77-98.

<sup>492</sup> See Mingana, vol. 1, 90-100.

<sup>493</sup> See Macomber, no. 6; Eshai Shimon, vol. 1, 134-157.

<sup>494</sup> See Macomber, no. 45; Eshai Shimon, vol. 1, 546-563.

<sup>495</sup> See Mingana, vol. 2, 72-84.

<sup>496</sup> See Macomber, no. 18; Eshai Shimon, vol. 1, 743-766.

<sup>497</sup> This canticle has been identified as being based on Narsai’s *mēmre* on Saints Peter and Paul (see Eshai Shimon 1970, vol. 1, 191-220) by Sr. Othottil (Othottil 2014, 337, footnotes 59 and 60).

<sup>498</sup> Othottil, *A Study of the Commemoration...*, 296; these two hymns (for the feast of the Birth of St. John the Baptist and for the commemoration of St. Peter and Paul) are present as well in MS Vatican Syriac 86, between fol. 31r-v and 35r-v.

<sup>499</sup> See Mingana, vol. 2, 391-396.

<sup>500</sup> See Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 148-152, 341.



meant to replace East Syriac compositions. One such example seems to be the canticle for the Marian feasts fashioned according to the pattern of *Ave Maria* (no. 8 in the list above). This canticle is preserved in both liturgical manuscripts and in MS Thrissur Syriac 62: fol. 89v-91v (the anthology containing poetry by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, which I described above). The canticle was composed to replace a canticle for the commemoration of the Holy Virgin, which in the Church of the East was celebrated on the Friday preceding the feast of the Epiphany of Christ. The East Syriac canticle begins with the words: (ܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܕܐܡ ܕܬܪܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܥܥܝܢܐ) [*emā-(h)i maryam d-ādām da-trēn u-law d-(')itutā*] “Mary is the Mother of the Second Adam and not of the Essence.” Although the printed version of the *Hudrā* published by Mar Thoma Darmo does not contain the canticles of glorification for the service of the night, in this peculiar case the edition preserves the first four verses of this canticle in the service:

ܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܕܐܡ ܕܬܪܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܥܥܝܢܐ  
ܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܕܐܡ ܕܬܪܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܥܥܝܢܐ  
ܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܕܐܡ ܕܬܪܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܥܥܝܢܐ  
ܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܕܐܡ ܕܬܪܝܢ ܘܠܐ ܕܥܥܝܢܐ.<sup>501</sup>

“Anthems: Mary is the mother of the Second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45) and not of the Essence:  
And in the likeness of the earth, she also gave birth without intercourse.  
The same commandment that gave a sign to the earth to give birth to Adam,  
that formed His image in her limbs in the likeness of Adam.”

These verses belong in fact to a *mēmra* on the Nativity of Christ (ܡܡܪܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ) [*mē'mrā d-'al yalde(h) d-māran*] by the same Narsai.<sup>502</sup> It is noteworthy that the decree which prescribes the correction of the East Syriac ritual books at the Synod of Diamper<sup>503</sup> specifically condemns this piece of religious poetry:

No Breviario maior, que chamão *Hudre e gaza*, ou teouro de rezar, se diz a cada passo que em Christo ha dous supostos, e huma representação do Filho de Deos, que he a imagem do Verbo, e templo do mesmo Verbo; que o suposto divino alumiou o suposto humano, e Christo pouco a pouco creceo em graça, e em sciencia infusa; que Nossa Senhora não gerou, nem trouxe no ventre a Deos<sup>504</sup>, como dizem os hereges, mas Christo, hum homem semelhante aos outros; que se não hade chamar Mãy de Deos, senão Mãy de Segundo Adão.<sup>505</sup>

In the great breviary which is called “Hudra and Gaza”, or “Treasure of Prayers”, it is said very often that in Christ there are two *hypostaseis* and one manifestation of the Son of God, which is the image of the Word and the temple of the same Word; [it is also said] that the divine *hypostasis* illuminated the human *hypostasis*, and that Christ gradually grew in grace and in instilled knowledge; [it is also said] that Our Lady did not give birth,

<sup>501</sup> Mar Thoma Darmo (ed.), *Hudrā*, vol. 1, 603.

<sup>502</sup> The *mēmra* is to be found in Eshai Shimon XXIII (ed.), *Homilies of Mar Narsai*, vol. 1, 77-98; the stanza printed under the title “anthems” in Darmo’s *Hudrā* is to be found on p. 96.

<sup>503</sup> Acts of the Synod of Diamper, Session III: chapter XIV, decree 15.

<sup>504</sup> In Cunha Rivara “Doos” is a typo for “Deos”.

<sup>505</sup> Da Cunha Rivara, *Arquivo Portuguez...*, fasc. 4, 338.







Catholic sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* have been used by the hymnographer as sources for the composition of liturgical poems. I will also discuss the evidence available for claiming the authorship of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar for this type of poetry as an open question. For this purpose, I am providing semi-diplomatic editions of texts on the basis of one manuscript.<sup>510</sup>

### 3. The Roman Breviary, the *Malabar Sermonary* and the canticles of glorification: the hymns for the Transfiguration of Christ and for the Commemoration of St. Thomas the Apostle

The canticle of glorification for the Transfiguration of Christ

Text (MS Mannanam Syriac 33<sup>511</sup>: fol. 137r-v):<sup>512</sup>

ܬܠܬܐ ܕܝܡ ܡܬܬܬܬܝܡ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ<sup>513</sup>

1. ܬܠܬܐ ܕܝܡ ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

2. ܕܬܠܬܐ ܕܝܡ ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

3. ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ

ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ ܕܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ<sup>514</sup>

<sup>510</sup> All the interventions in the text have been recorded in the critical notes; I did not correct the misuse of *rukkākhā* and *quššāyā*. The abbreviations used in the critical notes are those recommended in *Règles et recommandations pour les éditions critiques. Série latine*, (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003): em.= emendau; a.c.= ante correctionem; p.c.= post correctionem; con.= coniec; mg.= in margine; om. = omisit; s.l.= supra lineam. I used square brackets [ ] to mark interpolations and angle brackets < > to mark editorial additions.

<sup>511</sup> I have abbreviated it in the critical notes as M. The manuscript contains the Malabar Catholic revision of the Ḥudrā and is a nineteenth century copy.

<sup>512</sup> I have conventionally divided the text into stanzas to be easier to follow its analysis. However, in the manuscript the text is not divided and the rhyme pattern is generally *aabb*.

<sup>513</sup> Em. (ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ); M (ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ).

<sup>514</sup> Em. (ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ); M (ܡܬܬܬܬܝܢ).







3. Our Lord Jesus has shown His glory to three of His friends  
so that He may attract men to His divinity, the source of His blessings, because it was about Him  
that had declared and said beforehand through His saints  
[i.e., the prophets],  
the adored Father who also commanded with His own voice: “Listen to Him, all my people!”<sup>519</sup>
4. If the service of death, the tyrant, was in glory,  
so that the sons of Israel were not able to gaze at the face  
of Moses – the resplendent one – as it was glowing, and he was hiding his rays,  
then, how much more will the place of salvation be in glory?<sup>520</sup>
5. How beloved are the tents [of] glory, [oh,] mighty Lord!<sup>521</sup>  
My wretched soul desired the comprehension of our Lord,  
Day and night my tears<sup>522</sup> became my daily bread ,  
When they were telling the whole day long:<sup>523</sup> “Where is your Lord, [your] salvation?”<sup>524</sup>
6. As the blind man awaits for [the sight of his] eyes<sup>525</sup> and the thirsty one for the [springs of]  
waters  
so is the soul awaiting to see Your splendid Person,<sup>526</sup>  
and since this vision of yours is hindered by corporality,  
You sent the Spirit so that it may see You spiritually.

Because of its fragmented structure, one understands better the content of this canticle of glorification after reading the sermon which the poet seems to have taken as his model. The sermon on the Transfiguration of Christ (ܣܘܘܐܕܐ ܕ-ܐܠ ܓܝܠܝܐܢܐ) [Syr. *suwādā d-‘al gelyāne(h) d-māran*], is preserved in two nineteenth century manuscript collections of sermons: MS Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 257r-274r,<sup>527</sup> and MS Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 1r-10v.<sup>528</sup> The sermon is focused on a long and detailed description of the Heavenly Jerusalem based on the Revelation of John and the works of Augustine (of approximately ten folios). The main purpose of the author is to emphasize

<sup>519</sup> See Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36.

<sup>520</sup> See 2 Corinthians 3:7-8.

<sup>521</sup> See Numbers 24:5.

<sup>522</sup> In the original is used the singular number, “my tear”.

<sup>523</sup> That is, continuously, without respite.

<sup>524</sup> See Psalm 42:1-3 and Matthew 6:11.

<sup>525</sup> See Luke 18, 35-43.

<sup>526</sup> See Psalm 63:1-3.

<sup>527</sup> See Thelly, *Syriac Manuscripts...*, 268; the MS is registered under the number: 090-252-SCA-S.

<sup>528</sup> See the description of the MS in Mustăță, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 103-112.







the transfiguration in Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36 and its interpretation in strophe 3 of the canticle).”

After the quoted passage the author establishes a typological relation between the fruits of Canaan and the pleasantness of the Kingdom of heaven, a relation which is described as (ܬܠܢܝܬܐ ܘܬܦܫܐ ܕܫܒܗܐ) [Syr. *ṭelānitā u-ṭupsā d-šubḥā*] “a shadow and a *týpos* of glory”, and this is the prelude for the long description of the blessings (ܬܒܐ) [Syr. *ṭubē*] of the Heavenly Kingdom mentioned above. According to the author of the sermon, the fruits of Canaan brought by the spies were meant to determine the Israelites fight for the promised land, and they are a *týpos* for the experience of glory by the Apostles on mount Tabor, during the moment of Transfiguration. I would emphasize the fact the poet rather alludes to the context of the homily from which he took the initial imagery, and what he writes down afterwards is a sort of personal reflection on the basis of the Psalms and biblical readings connected to the feast-day. The reference to Christ as (ܬܒܟܘܢ) [Syr. *ṭubkun*] “your blessing” in the first verse of the canticle again alludes to the blessings (ܬܒܐ) [Syr. *ṭubē*] of the Heavenly Kingdom on which the sermon is centered.

Yet, the first stanza of the poem is an adaptation of the first part of a hymn from the vespers of the feast day of the Transfiguration of Christ in the Roman Breviary, which in its turn is the abridged version of Hymn XII, entitled *Hymnus Epiphaniae*, from *Liber Cathemerinon* by Prudentius.<sup>533</sup> The text of the Latin hymn in the Roman Breviary runs as follows:

*Quicumque Christum quaeritis/ Oculos in altum tollite:/ Illic licebit visere/ Signum perennis gloriae./ Illustre quiddam cernimus./ Quod nesciat finem pati/ Sublime, celsum, interminum/ Antiquius coelo, et chao./ Hic Ille Rex est Gentium/ Populique Rex Iudaici/ Promissus Abrahae patri./ Eiusque in aevum semini./ Hunc et prophetis testibus./ Iisdemque signatoribus./ Testator et Pater iubet./ Audire nos et credere./ Iesu, tibi sit gloria./ Qui te revelas parvulis./ Cum Patre et almo Spiritu./ In sempiterna saecula. Amen*<sup>534</sup>.

All of you who are seeking Christ/ Lift up your eyes in the height!/ There you will be able to see/ The sign of the enduring glory./ We can discern something bright,/ Which knows no end./ Sublime, elevated, limitless,/ Older than the heaven and the chaos./ He is the King of the nations/ And the King of the Jewish people, / [He] Who was promised to father Abraham,/ and to his seed for eternity./ Through His prophets as witnesses/ and attestants,/ The Witness-Bearer and Father commands us/ To listen to Him and believe [in Him]./ Glory be to You, Jesus,/ Who reveal Yourself to the infants,/ [Glory to You] together with the Father and the Nurturing Spirit,/ To the everlasting ages! Amen.

It is noticeable that verses from the Latin hymn have been adapted and inserted especially in the first and, to a certain extent, third stanzas of the Syriac canticle of glorification. The reference to Christ as (ܬܒܟܘܢ) [Syr. *ṭubkun*] “your blessing” in the first verse of the canticle (but absent from

<sup>533</sup> For the critical edition of the text, see Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, *Carmina*, M. P. Cunningham (ed.), CCSL 126, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966): 65-72.

<sup>534</sup> *Breviarium Romanum Ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini Restitutum*. Pars Aestiva, (Naples: Ex Typographia Dantis, 1854): 511; the part of the hymn starting with *Iesu, tibi sit gloria*... does not belong to the original hymn by Prudentius, but it is an addition in the Roman Breviary.



the Latin hymn) is the lexical element meant to connect Christ as *antítypos* to the blessings from the Land of Promise; these motifs were incorporated into the canticle through the mediation of the sermon quoted above. However, the contribution of the Roman Breviary to the composition of Syriac canticles of glorification is quite limited; after a systematic search through it, the only example analogous to this one that I found is the Syriac canticle for the feast-day of Archangel Michael (no. 20 in the list above); it was composed by adapting a Latin vespers hymn for the feast day of the “Apparition of Saint Michael the Archangel” (*Apparitio Sancti Michaelis Archangeli*); the Latin hymn begins with the words: *Te splendor, et virtus Patris/ Te via, Iesu, cordium,/ Ab ore qui pendent tuo,/ Laudamus inter Angelos.*<sup>535</sup>

Here I have presented a structural connection detected between the canticle of glorification of the Transfiguration written for the night service of the feast on the 6 August and the sermon in the *Malabar Sermonary* for the same feast day. The same structural connection can be observed between the Canticle of glorification of St Thomas the Apostle written for the night service of the feast of the Commemoration of Thomas on the 3 July and the sermon in the *Malabar Sermonary* for the same feast day.

## The canticle of glorification for the Commemoration of St. Thomas the Apostle

**Text** (MS Paris Syriac BnF 25<sup>536</sup>: fol. 218v-219v):

## تلك في مضمون لسان الله ❖

1. **سَفَحًا**<sup>537</sup> هَـ حَتَّ حَبَدَه حَتَّ اُذُنِيْكَ بِتَكْلِيبِ ؕ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

❖<sup>538</sup> مَلِكٌ جَدِّهِ هَلْ يَصْطَفِي حَمَلًا ذَاتًا

فَإِنْ جَاءَكَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ فَارْجِعْ بَيْنَهُمَا بِقِسْطٍ حَقِّهِمَا

2. **የሥነ ልቦና ምርመራ** ለሥነ ልቦና ምርመራ ማድረግ ይገባል፡፡<sup>540</sup> የደህና ምግብ

وَجَاءَ بِذَلِكَ مَقَامًا ۖ ذَاكُمُ الْمَقَامُ ۚ

<sup>535</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*..., 324.

<sup>536</sup> I have abbreviated the MS in the critical notes as P. For a detailed description of this manuscript, see Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas*..., 231-244; the manuscript was revisited by Perczel, see id. *Prayer Book of Mār Parampil Āndī*.... I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. István Perczel for first signaling me the connection between the anthems from the service for the feast of Saint Thomas from this manuscript, and *the Sermon on Saint Thomas* from the *Malabar Sermonary*.

<sup>537</sup> Em. (عق); P (عق).

<sup>538</sup> Em. (دانت); P (دانت).

<sup>539</sup> Em. (எனக்காக அன்பு); P (எனக்காக அன்பு).

540  $P^{ac}$  (حِصْمِي);  $P^{pc}$  (حِصْمِي).



❖ בְּיָדֵי מַלְאָכָיו מְחַבְּדֵי הַלֵּל כְּתִלְבָּא.  
❖ מַעֲלָלֵי בְּחֻמְלָא חֲלָסֵי שְׂדֵה אֲדֻמִּים דִּיכָא.

3. **לסדא** חֲבֻצְבוּתָא וְמַעֲבָדָא דְּכָא מִיָּה מַלְאָכָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲלָסֵי אֲדֻמִּים מְחַבְּדֵי.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>541</sup> לְבַד דְּרִישָׁא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ מַעֲבָדָא דְּכָא אֲדֻמִּים חֲבֻצְבוּתָא מִיָּה מַלְאָכָא.

4. **לסדא** חֲבֻצְבוּתָא מַעֲבָדָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ מַעֲבָדָא דְּכָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא מִיָּה מַלְאָכָא.  
❖ מַעֲבָדָא חֲלָסֵי מַלְאָכָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא מִיָּה מַלְאָכָא.  
❖ לְבַד מַעֲבָדָא <ד> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא דְּכָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <❖>

5. **לסדא** דְּכָא אֲדֻמִּים חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>542</sup> אֲדֻמִּים <sup>543</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>544</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>545</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.

6. **לסדא** חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.

7. **לסדא** חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>546</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>547</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>548</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.  
❖ חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>549</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא <sup>550</sup> חֲבֻצְבוּתָא.

<sup>541</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>542</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>543</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>544</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>545</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>546</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>547</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).

<sup>548</sup> Em. (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא); P (חֲבֻצְבוּתָא).



**Translation:**

1. Come, sons of India, pupils of the apostle Thomas:  
the light of the world, the shepherd of the Church, its great treasure,  
whose history is sublime and cannot be comprised in the speech of men,  
and comely is the beauty of his history, which is wonderful.
2. Through a sign of the Spirit, Thomas came to the country of India,  
And he built up a palace according to a craft which cannot be comprehended.  
The king rejoiced, got baptized by his hand and venerated the Apostle,  
And many peoples in all India obeyed.
3. Through his humility and ineffable renunciation,  
Thomas the Apostle preached the word in the whole earth;  
he diligently subjected kings under the yoke of the Cross,  
and they dismissed [their] crowns, renounced [their] scepters, and venerated the Cross.
4. A leopard killed the assailant miraculously  
and a dog brought his right hand in front of the wedding feast.  
All the guests were astounded and chanted praises, while the king believed,  
according to the *typikón* of the resplendent Church of India.
5. The hand of the one who took the sacraments unworthily got dried;  
Thomas healed it in the waters of mercy and rendered his heart to contrition.  
He fell before the blessed-one and his word [i.e., of Thomas] vivified him.  
[And] with abundant love he offered gifts to the one who brought him the tidings [of the Gospel].
6. Powerfully, the Apostle, the mighty one, pulled down the likeness [i.e., idol] of the Sun  
and casted out from it the accursed Satan and sent him to roam around.  
They threw the holy man in the furnace but suffered no injure,  
they pierced him with a spear, killed his flesh and delivered him to the blessings.
7. In order to save the servants, Thomas assumed the likeness of a servant;

<sup>549</sup> Em. (ܡܬܝܬܐ); P (ܡܬܝܬܐ).

<sup>550</sup> Coni. quid ni (ܡܬܝܬܐ)?; P (ܡܬܝܬܐ).



in the likeness of his Lord he sold himself and freed the servants,  
a faithful servant who bestowed a way<sup>551</sup> to his fellows,  
and his Lord waited for him, he entered His gladness, and gave life to the dead.

A similar type of connection is to be noted between the canticle of glorification for the feast-day of Saint Thomas the Apostle and the corresponding sermon from the *Malabar Sermonary*. Preserved into two Syriac manuscripts from Malabar, the text was written for an Indian audience sometimes after 1601.<sup>552</sup> The sermon presents an interesting fusion of scriptural, Patristic and early modern literary sources, in Latin and Syriac, pointing to the literary networks of the Malabar Christians with both the Syriac literary heritage of the Middle East and the Latin culture from Europe. The text focuses on the quasi-messianic role of Saint Thomas (called “the Saviour of the Indians”, ܐܕܗܡܐ ܕܝܗܝܢܕܝܐ [Syr. *pāroqā d-hendwāyē*]). Moreover, Saint Thomas is depicted as a missionary – the itinerary of his preaching combines the metropolitan sees of the Church of the East with the itinerary of the Portuguese expansion in Asia<sup>553</sup>. In the older manuscript, the list of peoples among whom Saint Thomas is said to have proclaimed the Gospel runs as follows: “For Mar Thoma preached to and taught the Persians, and among the people of Herat, and of Merw, and of Rayy, and of Parthia, to the Bactrians, to the Babylonians, to the Soqotri, to the Indians, to the Chinese, to the Ethiopians, and also to the Magi, who were worshipers of our Lord. He baptized and confirmed them.”<sup>554</sup>; in the later manuscript the list of peoples and places has been augmented: “For Mar Thoma did not only preach to Israel, but in person or through his disciples, [he also preached] to the Persians and among the people of Herat, and of Merw, and of Rayy, and of Parthia, and of Media, to the Bactrians and to the Hyrcanians, to the Babylonians and the people of Smarkand, to the Socotrans, to the Indians, to the Chinese, and to the inhabitants of Mahācīna, to the Ethiopians, and also to the Magi who were worshipers of our Lord in His infancy. He baptized and confirmed them. And through his disciple, whose name is Thaddaeus (ܬܕܝܐ) [*Tadai*], he also converted to our Lord Abgar, the king of Edessa, and the subjects of his kingdom, after Thaddaeus had healed the king of his illness through the sign of the Cross.”<sup>555</sup>

By comparing the canticle with the text of the sermon, it appears that:

<sup>551</sup> The Syriac (ܐܕܗܡܐ) [*pursā*] from the Greek πόρος, “way” – eventually a linguistic calque on the basis of the Malayalam *mārgam* (മാർഗ്ഗം), “way”, “path”, but also with the sense of “religion” – suits better this context than the manuscript-reading (ܐܕܡܐ) [*prāsā*] “cover”, “veil”, as there is no account in the *Acts of Thomas* or anywhere else about St. Thomas bestowing a veil to the Indians.

<sup>552</sup> For the edition and study of this text, see Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*

<sup>553</sup> See the introduction to this text in *ibid.*, 11-46.

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*



1) the first stanza of the poem is meant to repeat a passage from the exordium of the sermon<sup>556</sup>:

“Although this commemoration of Saint Mar Thoma, the beloved Apostle, is extolled in all the churches, most of all it is fit for us to celebrate, to sanctify, to praise and to chant this feast-day, since this apostle belongs to us, he taught our fathers, he founded, established and completed our Church. And if others are also celebrating him today, it is above all right for us to praise him. But what are we going to say about the one whose history surpasses all discourse? And with what shall we compare the one to whom there is no likeness, whose stories are amazing, whose miracles are admirable, whose deeds strike fear, whose actions are grand, whose conduct is sublime, and whose life vivifies and makes us divine, who is a seraph in the body and a cherub in the flesh, an altar of wisdom and a throne of the Divinity?”<sup>557</sup>

[illegible]

2) the typological link between the emptying of Christ and the humility of St. Thomas in the last stanza of the poem constitutes in fact the theological backbone of the sermon:

“And although the holy apostle is great, he did not resist becoming the slave of Ḥabban, the steward of the King of India, who had been sent [by the king] to Jerusalem, so as to bring for him from there a learned and experienced craftsman to build in India a palace for the king and his heirs. And so, Thoma obeyed our Lord, committed himself to Ḥabban, and came together with him to India. [...] Behold, my brothers, the eagerness of the Apostle’s love! In the likeness of Christ, “he emptied himself, assumed the likeness of a slave”, and came to India, in the guise of a craftsman, in order to found the Indian Church, so as to save us in it, through baptism; just as Noah saved the human race from the devastation of the flood. Consider, my beloved, this mystery which I am telling you – that is to say, that of the Wisdom of God, who is the Word, the Son of God! She is the craft of everything, and as Solomon says in the *Proverbs*, “She built a house and hewed seven pillars,” that is to say, the Catholic Church, and secured it on the seven sacraments. And since She revealed and showed Herself to the world in the guise of a woodworker – as it is written in the divine Gospels: “is this not the carpenter?” – he sent afterwards the blessed one in the same appearance towards us. Take into account that also, Noah, the carpenter, made the ark according to the word of God, and he redeemed the world. God inspired Moses as well, with all craftsmanship, so as to build according to it, the tabernacle, and the stupefying vessels which he put in it. And so, he saved Israel from the Egyptian slavery. Also, Solomon the King was a craftsman, who learned from God how to found, to build and to embellish the temple of God; and with his wisdom he illuminated the world. So, those who were well known and renowned saviors in the world, were craftsmen as well, in the likeness of the true Savior, Christ our Lord. For this reason, Thomas, the savior of the Indians, revealed himself in India, in the guise of a carpenter.”<sup>559</sup>

[illegible]

<sup>556</sup> I have already mentioned the connection between the poem and the sermon in the introduction to *Sermon on Saint Thomas*..., but I did not realize that the series of anthems is in fact a poem by itself (see *ibid.*, 31-32).

<sup>557</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>558</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., 85-86.



560. **بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ** الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا رَحْمَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا لَكُنَّا مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

3) it is the use of little lexical details that suggest that the poet took the sermon as a model in composing his poetry and it was not the other way round. For instance, the reference to the leopard (ܢܡܪܐ) [Syr. *nemrā*] who killed the cupbearer who slapped St. Thomas is missing from all the traditions and versions (Eastern and Western) of the *Acts of Thomas* (who speak instead of a lion), but the mentioning of the leopard has an internal function in the text of this sermon: the author delves into a long comparison between St. Thomas and the lion (on the basis of the tradition of the *Physiologus*) and for this reason feels uncomfortable with the fact that a lion (i.e. St. Thomas) killed the cupbearer and so, he invents a leopard<sup>561</sup>. It is noteworthy that both the sermon and the canticle of glorification are centered on the extraordinary role of Saint Thomas in India, whereas the liturgical tradition of the East Syriac *Hudrā*, as reflected in the service of the feast-day, ascribes to the Indian mission of the Apostle only a marginal role. The promotion of the cult of Saint Thomas as founder of the Indian Church and the insistence on the ancient prestige of the Malabar Church seems to have been parts of the agenda of Francisco Ros in order to restore the metropolitan status of Angamaly, after the Synod of Diamper. This was due to the fact that the synod decided the reduction of the Malabar Church to a simple suffragan diocese subjected to the Archbishop of Goa.<sup>562</sup>

The connection between the collections of sermons and this type of poetry is important because it helps tracing back the composition of undated sermons (usually preserved in nineteenth century manuscript copies) to the decades immediately following the synod of Diamper. For instance, the sermon for the commemoration of Saint Thomas must have been written after 1601, as it made use of Pedro Ribadeneira's *Flos Sanctorum* which was first published by that time.<sup>563</sup> Since the sermon is the main source for the analogous canticle of glorification and since the Malabar Catholic revision of the Ḥudrā was done in the first decades of the seventeenth century (being prescribed by the Synod of Diamper), it is very likely that the sermon was composed during the times of Francisco Ros. The correspondence between sermons and the canticles is also an expression of the attempt to create an unitary ideology, encompassing both the cult and the preaching. The intertextuality between the sermons and the liturgical poetry illustrates the fact that a new stream of

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., 69-70.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid. 21.

<sup>562</sup> On this matter, see Mecherry, *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation...*, 183-278.

<sup>563</sup> See Mustată, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 24-31.



Syro-Catholic literature was added to the East Syriac literary tradition from Malabar and it was read and used as source of inspiration for the Catholic revision of the liturgy.

Moreover, the author(s) of the canticles of glorification relies/rely on the information provided by the corpus of Catholic sermons in the same way as some pieces of poetry by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar rely on Syriac Catholic compositions arguably composed by European Catholic missionaries.<sup>564</sup> In his study on the poetry of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, István Perczel emphasizes the fact that in Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā On the Syriac Language*, the poet made use of an untitled treatise on the refutation of heresies preserved in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 123v-135r,<sup>565</sup> the same codex mostly consists of sermons belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary*.

#### 4. The canticles of glorification and the poetry of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar

As shown so far in this chapter, the composition of the canticles of glorifications for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* is quite complicated; the author(s) used both the Roman Breviary and Syriac Catholic sermons belonging to the *Malabar Sermonary* as sources for newly created hymns. Yet, MS Thrissur Syriac 62 with which I began this inquiry contains a part consisting of religious poetry taken out from its liturgical context in an anthological manner, which is mixed with poems written by the Indian priest and Syriacist poet Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, a disciple of Francisco Ros. In the following paragraphs I will discuss on which grounds one can ascribe to Kadavil Chandy the authorship of newly composed canticles of glorification. First, I will compare the canticle for the feast day of *Corpus Christi* with other works on the Eucharist from the same literary context: two sermons on the Eucharist from the *Malabar Sermonary* and Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā* on the Eucharist. Again, it is important to note that this canticle of glorification does not have any parallel/model in the hymnography for the same feast-day in the Roman Breviary.

Another reason why I have chosen to discuss this canticle is that the service for the feast day of *Corpus Christi*, which is a specific Roman Catholic feast day, from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* seems to be older and is different from the service for the same feast day as it appears in the Chaldean recension of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*. The Chaldean recension was done in the Middle East later (in the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century), by the Chaldean Patriarchs Joseph I and Joseph II.<sup>566</sup> For comparison, I have used the service for the feast-day of *Corpus Christi* from the Chaldean recension, as it is contained in a late eighteenth century (?) manuscript,<sup>567</sup> MS Thrissur Syriac 13: fol. 61v-69r.<sup>568</sup> The services for the same feast-day in

<sup>564</sup> On the sources of Kadavil Chandy, see Perczel, *Alexander of the Port...*, 40-43.

<sup>565</sup> Ibid.

<sup>566</sup> See Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures...*, 149-150.

<sup>567</sup> The manuscript does not contain a colophon and therefore the date is uncertain.



Malabar and the Middle East are different; even the title of the feast day is different in the two traditions: the Chaldean manuscript reads “Order for the Holy Feast of the Adoration of the Body of Our Lord” (ܐܰܕܰܡܰܪܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܥܰܡܰܪܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܒܰܕܰܢܰܐ ܕܰܕܰܡܰܪܰܬܰܐ) [*taksā b-‘ē’dā qadišā d-(‘)iqār pagrē(h) d-māran*] (fol. 61v), while in the Malabar ritual books this service always bears the title “Service Which [is] for the Feast of the Holy Sacraments/Mysteries” (ܐܰܬܰܡܰܫܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܐܰܕܰܡܰܪܰܬܰܐ ܕܰܒܰܕܰܢܰܐ ܕܰܕܰܡܰܪܰܬܰܐ) [*tešmeštā da-b-‘ē’dā d-(‘)rāzē qadišē*]<sup>569</sup>. As the intertextuality between the canticle of glorification and the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* suggests, the former is another piece of poetry belonging to the local development of Syriac Catholic literature in Malabar.

The canticle of glorification for the feast-day of *Corpus Christi*

**Text** (MS Mannanam Syriac 59<sup>570</sup>, fol. 86r-87r):

## حلیتہ میٹمبہ : ڈکٹہ : بقہ : فقہہ :

1. هَ مَقْعُهُ حَيْثُ مُنَّتْ لِيهِ دُمُوذَاهُ:

فَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ يُنَادِي بِمَدْحِكَ <sup>571</sup> لَهُ ذَمُّهُ:

**وہ پوزیشن، ہجیمو، ڈیگرس:**

كَمَمَلْ دَكْ سَوَسْ خَمِيَقْ دَحْ هَتَمَلْ

2. **مسألة**: كل من بنى في بيته حائطا من حديد أو غيره من المعادن، فإنه يفتن به ويضل عنه.<sup>572</sup> يجب إزالته<sup>573</sup> ❖

مذاتہ دفعہ فہرستہ فہرستہ:

يَحْضِي زَكَاةً وَمَوْلًا أَحَبَّ 574 لِنَفْسِهِ: 575:

ۛه بَخِيتْ<sup>576</sup> حَقْدُوبْ لِكْ وَهَبْه مِدْه

3. **مَدَنِيَّةٌ** بِحَمْدِهِ [ب] فَسَوِّهُ بِخَمْسٍ مَلَكَةً وَسَلِّمْ<sup>577</sup> مَعَ خَلَدٍ:

<sup>568</sup> On this MS, see Mar Aprem, *Assyrian Manuscripts...*, 14; the Chaldean service is basically the same as the one provided by Bedjan, *Breviarium Chaldaicum...*, vol. 3, 102-111 (ܡܕ - ܡܡ).

<sup>569</sup> For the present reference, MS Mannanam Syriac 59: fol. 85v. This MS contains the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā*; the original shelf mark of the manuscript is 090-264-X2-S (see Thelley, *Syriac Manuscripts in Mannanam...*, 266, [Breviaries III.11]) and it is datable to the first half of the eighteenth century; I owe this information to István Perczel.

<sup>570</sup> I have abbreviated it in the critical notes as M.

571 M<sup>ac</sup> (مَدِجْ); M<sup>pc</sup> (مَدِجْ).

<sup>572</sup> Em. (عزك); M (عزك).

<sup>573</sup> Em. (٢٩٢); M (٢٩٢).

574 Em. (حَدَّثَ); M' (حَدَّثَ).

<sup>575</sup> Em. (كَنْتَمَصَّةٌ); M (كَنْتَمَصَّةٌ).

<sup>576</sup> Em. (مُتَعَدِّ); M<sup>ac</sup> (مُتَعَدِّ); M<sup>pc</sup> (مُتَعَدِّ) (s.l.).

577  $M^{ac}$  (مَسَدِي);  $M^{pc}$  (مَسَدِي).







1. Come, mortals, and gather the manna, the bread of wonder,  
What is this, what kind of food? Oh, the greatness,  
Oh, the beauty and the pleasantness of Divinity,  
The great depth, the deep abyss of all things made.

2. Everyone who wants to be joined to God, let him take  
The divinizing and outstandingly life-giving Sacraments that are full of riches.  
The wisdom of God invites all of us to the supper.  
Come, my beloved ones, with innocent heart and get replete from it!<sup>586</sup>

3. Taste [from it] and see that the Word is pleasant and sweeter than all,<sup>587</sup>  
Why are you erring in a pathless desert more troublesome than all?  
Why are you digging broken cisterns in which there is no water,  
and have abandoned the spring of life from which the chosen [ones] are drinking?<sup>588</sup>

4. Oh, sweetness is pouring out now from the mighty one,  
And nourishment rose from the Eater as a burning fire,<sup>589</sup>  
The God of gods offered Himself as nourishment to mankind,  
To raise the poor, strengthen the sick, and lift up the fallen ones.

5. The Lord fed twelve tribes with the stupendous manna,  
And led them through the frightening desert for forty years.<sup>590</sup>  
Those who ate it and drank [water] from the rock died in their sins,<sup>591</sup>  
Although they received endlessly exquisite *spolia*, a *týpos* of the blessings [to come].

6. Through the bread from the gridiron Elijah was traveling for forty days,  
And he mounted on Horeb, the mountain of God, and saw visions.  
Likewise, the *Artos*, Jesus our Lord, who vivifies the minds  
And appeases the sufferings, gets the spiritual hunger replete.

7. The [people] of old observed the sacrifice of the lamb in the evening of the Passover

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<sup>586</sup> See Proverbs 9:1-6.

<sup>587</sup> See Psalm 34:9.

<sup>588</sup> See Jeremiah 2:13.

<sup>589</sup> See Judges 14:14.

<sup>590</sup> See Exodus 16.

<sup>591</sup> See 1 Corinthians 10:3-5.



And ate its meat mixed with bitter herbs and with azymes.<sup>592</sup>

Behold, today, the Lamb of God Who removes our iniquities<sup>593</sup>

Is sanctifying us all through the sacrifice of His body and blood!

Two sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* seem to be the source for the composition of this canticle of glorification. For instance, one of the Eucharistic sermons comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 46:<sup>594</sup> fol. 196ra-199ra and entitled “Sermon on the [Eucharistic] offering” (ܣܡܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܪܒܐܢܐ) [Syr. *suwādā d-qurbānā*] contains the following digression on the manna as Eucharistic *typos*:

[illegible]

<sup>592</sup> See Exod. 12:3-8.

<sup>593</sup> See John 1:29.

<sup>594</sup> I have abbreviated it in the critical notes as M.

<sup>595</sup> Em. (عَم); M (عَم).

596 Sic!

<sup>597</sup> Em. (مُضَمَّت); M (مُضَمَّت).

<sup>598</sup> Em. (مختلوف); M (مختلوف).

599 Em. (يوم د); M (يومد).

<sup>600</sup> Em. (ذوہب سدوہ); M (ذوہسسدوہ).

<sup>601</sup> Em. (خَصَّةٌ); M (خَصَّةٌ).

602 Em. (مُذَكِّ); M (مُذَكِّ).

<sup>603</sup> Em. (حَقَّة); M (حَمَّة).

<sup>604</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣); M (𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣).

<sup>605</sup> Em. (فَتَحَ وَفَتَحَ مَاحِدَةً); M (فَتَحَ وَفَتَحَ مَاحِدَةً).

<sup>606</sup> Em. (دَحَفَل); M (دَحَفَل).

<sup>607</sup> Em. (عَفَّ); M (عَفَّ).

<sup>608</sup> Em. (لَحْظَه); M (لَحْظَة).

<sup>609</sup> Em. (تَعَفُّبًا); M (تَعَفُّبًا).



“Similarly the soul of the Christian who does not take this divine bread gets quickly ill and dies into various sins. And the Holy Spirit has prefigured this for us in the Holy Scriptures, through the *týpos* of the manna, with which God has nourished the sons of Israel all the days they were lingering in the desert. As that heavenly bread was nourishing them [i.e., the Israelites] and was making them strong, valiant and joyful, likewise whilst we are in the desert of this world full of thorns, thistles and snakes, we should manducate this divine bread. We should be mindful of the fact that, as in the case of this angelic manna all the pleasantness of delightful and dainty victuals was present according to the desire of the eater, likewise in this divine and divinizing bread is comprised all pleasure. And it comprises all the sweetness of the spiritual virtues, when are tasting from it those who approach [it] in the purity of their heart and in [a state of] repentance of the soul, in order to receive it with love.

Again, as when the Hebrews were collecting the manna, [each of] them had had one measure [of it] and it did not lessen for those who collected less [than that], and it did not multiply for those who collected more [than that] – likewise it happens with these sacraments, since all their receivers are

<sup>611</sup> Sic!; quid ni (میس سید)?

<sup>613</sup> Em. (متخذ); M (متخذ).

<sup>615</sup> Em. (خذ); M (حد).

<sup>617</sup> Em. (تخذت); M (تخذ).

<sup>618</sup> Em. (خَفِذْ); M (تَخَفِذْ).

<sup>619</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol.197vA-198rB.



eating the body of Christ according to one measure, perfectly and fully. And in a crumb and in one small morsel of these accidents of the bread, Christ is entirely united and received; but all this divine bread is better than the manna, as the Creator is greater than His creation, and He is not limited by a bit of dust, nor is the infinite God [limited] by a grain of mustard. For, this nourishment was satiating the body of the one eating [it only] for a little while, and in the heat of the sun it was spoiled by creeping worms; but this food and divine bread satiates our souls incorruptibly and provides the one receiving [it] with strength and roborating vigor, and it fills one with all the blessings. It never gets spoiled, it is consumed completely and if we wish, it lasts inside us forever. On this [matter] our Lord says: *This is the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert and died. If anyone eats from this bread, he will never die* (John 6:50). For, Christ calls this bread “the bread of life”, not only because those who receive it become worthy of grace and heavenly blessings through it, but also because those approaching and manducating it must by all means live a new life thenceforth and show a good conduct and hold fast to the good deeds.”

Since the interpretation of the manna as a *týpos* of the Eucharist is a commonplace in the Patristic and medieval exegesis, the literary connection between the two texts remains an open question. However, in MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 1r-12v, there is another sermon entitled “Sermon on the Eucharist” (ܣܡܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܠܐ ܕܥܘܟܪܝܫܬܝܐ) [Syr. *suwādā d-‘al ewkaristiyā*] which does not survive in its initial Catholic version, but only in its West Syriac revision. Its text seems to be the source for at least the fourth and sixth stanzas of the canticle of glorification for the feast of Corpus Christi. Thus, regarding the riddle of Samson (Judges 14: 14) from the fourth stanza of the canticle, the sermon writes the following:

كسڤه دسقه س كسمه ديسه يسمه. سح س دتاه بكم. حسمه كسڤه ك سيت يسمه.  
سسمه كسڤه يسمه س دسقه يسمه: دسمه كسڤه ك سسمه سسمه سسمه سسمه  
سسمه.

“In the end of His life [i.e. of Christ], in the day of Easter – as it is written in the Gospel – it was shown that He loved them [i.e. His disciples] until the end (John 13:1); and thus was truly fulfilled that [riddle] which was said by Samson, [namely] that food came out from the one who eats, and the sweet came out from the bitter (Judges 14:14).”<sup>620</sup>

The *týpos* about Elijah and the bread from the gridiron (from the sixth stanza of the poem) is again present in this sermon:

<sup>620</sup> MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 8r.



The same sermon discusses as well the manna and the lamb of Pesach which was eaten with bitter herbs as Eucharistic *týpoi*, but in those instances the connection between the sermon and the canticle of glorification is not conclusive.<sup>622</sup>

Another instance where some of the Eucharistic motifs from the canticle of glorification for the feast day of Corpus Christi appear is Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā* on the Eucharist, an acrostic poem which the poet sent to Pope Alexander VII in 1657.<sup>623</sup> Under the letter *he* of the acrostic, the poem runs as follows:

٦٦٦ ❖ ❖ اَمَّ كَسَمَ ذِيهِ مَجَّ ذَمَّ يَكُنْ.  
 وَصَلَّ دَهْهِي حَتَّ بَعْدَكَ لَهْقَمَتْنِ.  
 هُذْلَهْه دَلَقَ دَهْهَ حَكَّ قَهْهْ ذَ صَوْدَجَتْنِ:  
 هِيَمَذَّ دِيِيَسَ دَلَسَ لَسَ مِيَمَذَّ<sup>624</sup> يِلَّتْ<sup>625</sup>.  
 هِيَجَتْنِ هَلَذِي سَتِيِيَرِي هَتْتِيِيَرِي دَقِلَذَتْنِ:  
 هَصَوْدَجَتْنِ سَتَ وَصَلَتْلِي دِيَهْدَتْنِ:  
 وَتَكَلَّهْ دَهْقَمَتِي اَمَّ مَجَّ يَكُنْ:  
 اَلِي حَلَسَ<sup>626</sup> دِيَتَمَمَهْه خُجَّتْنِ:  
 لَهْقَمَ لَتَمَ دَهْمَذَتْنِ دَمَمَ مَذَتْنِ:<sup>627</sup>

<sup>627</sup> MS Mannanam Syriac 99: fol. 151r.



“This is the bread that descended from the exalted heaven,  
and the manna that fed the sons of Israel in a *typos*,  
and the shewbread (*ártos*) placed before on the table of consecration,  
and the faultless Passover lamb foreshadowing [the truth].  
And the sacrifices and the beautifully arrayed mysteries of the corporeal,  
and the rational living offerings of the fleshly [things],  
and the oblations which were commanded by the Most High,  
All these which are [prescribed] in the old Law  
Are a *týpos* of the wonderful offering of our Lord.”

The use of unusual, small lexical details, such as the reference to the Eucharistic bread as (ܐܪܬܝܬܐ) [Syr. *ar̥tos*] from the Greek ἄρτος – present in the Greek version of the New Testament, but not that often attested in Syriac texts,<sup>628</sup> though repeatedly used in Kadavil Chandy’s hymn on the Eucharist – might suggest a possible connection between the two poems. As the similarities between the language of the canticles of glorification and the poetry of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar generally consist of small lexical choices scattered throughout his poems – without repetition of entire verses – it is difficult to take such fragmented evidence as a proof for claiming his authorship over the canticles of glorification. Yet, the same observation is valid for other compositions of the same Kadavil Chandy: there is a predilection for certain words, but not for premade formulas.<sup>629</sup> To make things even more complicated, the poetry of Kadavil Chandy uses sometimes Syriac words which seem to be tributary to the language of *Malabar Sermonary*. It is not possible to provide here an inventory of words and expressions shared by the canticles and other poems by Kadavil Chandy, as this would require systematic philological work on the whole corpus: the edited work of the poet will shed more light on this complicated matter. The fact that pieces of poetry by Kadavil Chandy might have been used for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā* might not be as surprising, if one takes into account that he was apparently appointed “to complete the Syriac translation of the Roman Pontifical, which was begun by Francisco Ros”<sup>630</sup>. This information comes from the account of Giuseppe Maria Sebastiani O.C.D., Apostolic Commissary in Malabar in 1656-58 and in

<sup>628</sup> I did not find the word in Aaron Butts’ book on Greek loanwords in Syriac (A. Butts, *Language Change in the Wake of Empire. Syriac in Its Greco-Roman Context*, (Winona Lake IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016)); however, the term is recorded in *Thesaurus Syriacus*, and seems to be first attested in the Syriac translation of the Festal Letters of Athanasius of Alexandria (see Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, vol. 1, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), s.v. ܐܪܬܝܬܐ); the word is also listed in the *Lexicon of Bar-Bahlul*, which means that it was used in Syriac texts at least since medieval times (see, Hassan Bar Bahlul, *Lexicon Syriacum*, R. Duval (ed.), vol. 1, (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901) s.v. ܐܪܬܝܬܐ; for the present reference: [from sedra.bethmardutho.org, accessed on Jun. 03, 2021]).

<sup>629</sup> The three *mēm̄rē* on Syriac, Hebrew and Arabic are an exception from this point of view, as the poet uses the similar arguments to praise any of these languages.

<sup>630</sup> C. Kaniaparambil, *The Syrian Orthodox Church in India and Its Apostolic Faith*, (Tiruvalla: Rev. Philips Gnanasikhamony, 1989): 90-91.



1661-63, which is the most important source of information on Kadavil Chandy's life.<sup>631</sup> After recounting the appointment of Parambil Chandy as the first indigenous bishop of the local Catholic Christian community in 1663, Sebastiani mentions the fact that the poet has been appointed as a vicar of the newly elected bishop and that he was in charge with the completion of the Syriac translation of the Pontifical:

*Donai anco 400. Fanos del mio al Padre Alessandro de Carò<sup>632</sup> per translate molte cose del Pontificale Romano in Siriano, hauendone già le forme tradotte da D. Francesco Ros, primo Arcivescouo della Compagnia in quella Christianità; il chè detto Padre fece con aiuto de' Sacerdoti Portoghesi, e di altri, che sapeuano benissimo Malauare, essendo egli perfettissimo in detta Lingua Siriana, e l'vnico Cassanare, che sapeua ben comporre nella medesima<sup>633</sup>.*

"I [i.e. Sebastiani] donated my own four hundred *fanams* to Alexander Kadavil for translating many parts of the Roman Pontifical into Syriac, the (sacramental) forms of which were already translated by Francis Ros, the first Jesuit Archbishop of that Christianity. The said father did this with the help of some Portuguese priests and others who knew Malayalam well, he being most perfect in the said Syriac language and the unique cassanar, who knew how to compose well in that language."<sup>634</sup>

While on the basis of the available evidence the authorship of the canticles of glorification is uncertain, pieces of information like the one quoted above suggest that the collaboration between European missionaries and the local clergy (Kadavil Chandy Kattannar) for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā* and *Gazzā* prescribed by the Synod of Diamper is certainly possible. The part played by the European missionaries is strongly supported by the occasional translation into Syriac of fragments from Latin hymns belonging to the Roman Breviary. On the other hand, the use of the *Malabar Sermonary* in the hymnography of the canticles of glorification points to the mediation of European theological knowledge through Syriac intermediary from Malabar. The amalgamation of newly composed canticles of glorification with the poetry of Kadavil Chandy in MS Thrissur Syriac 62 suggests that the Indian poet might have played a role in the composition of new Catholic poetry to be inserted in the ritual. While the extent of this collaboration remains an open question, Giuseppe Maria Sebastiani's account testifies to such a "collaboration" between Francisco Ros and Kadavil Chandy Kattannar for the translation of the *Pontifical*.

## 5. Conclusion

This study of entangled literary genres is an important witness to the amalgamation of the East Syriac heritage of the Malabar Christians in contact with the Catholic missionaries, especially the Jesuits, in the second half of the sixteenth and first decades of the seventeenth centuries. Due to their literary interconnectedness, the texts under scrutiny allow one to dive into the complicated

<sup>631</sup> An account on the poet's life based on various sources is included in Toepel, *A Letter from Alexander Kadavil...*; an English translation of Sebastiani's account has been provided in Pallath, *The Grave Tragedy...*

<sup>632</sup> This is the name of Kadavil Chandy Kattannar in European sources; see Toepel, *A Letter from Alexander Kadavil...*, 387, footnote 1.

<sup>633</sup> Giuseppe Maria Sebastiani, *Seconda Speditione all' Indie Orientali Di Monsignor Sebastiani*, (Rome: Filippo M. Mancini, 1672): 147 [Book II, ch. 25].

<sup>634</sup> Translation by P. Pallath, *The Grave Tragedy...*, 214-215.



textual layers and transmission networks of the Syriac heritage of the Malabar Christians in the times of the Synod of Diamper; they also illustrate the attempt of the missionaries to create an unitary ideology encompassing both the cult and the preaching, as part of a new Syriac Catholic *paideia* in Malabar. The case studies presented here display an interesting instance of religious entanglement: the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* presents both continuity and innovation compared to the tradition of the Church of the East in Iraq. At the textual micro-level of the poetry presented here, this entanglement is expressed through a synthesis which incorporates the poetry of Narsai, the Roman Breviary and Syriac Catholic sermons produced locally in Malabar by the Catholic missionaries and comprised in the *Malabar Sermonary*.

The study of the canticles of glorification is in itself important, as it helps to recover a corpus of Syriac poetry from early modern Malabar which otherwise would be lost. It raises new research questions regarding the so far unexplored, but fascinating Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*, such as the need to reconsider the ratio between translations from Latin into Syriac and original compositions which were at interplay in this liturgical enterprise. The intertwined relationship between the *Malabar Sermonary* and pieces of liturgical poetry provides important dating criteria: many of the sermons used as the main source for the canticles of glorification survive in nineteenth century manuscript copies and this type of poetry can be used as a *terminus ante quem* for dating back the sermons to the times surrounding the Synod of Diamper (when the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* was made). Occasionally, sermons which survive only in the West Syriac revised version of the *Malabar Sermonary* have been used as sources for this type of poetry, while their initial Catholic redaction is lost.

The source analysis of this material studied together also offers an interesting incursion into the intellectual history of Syriac writing in Malabar in the seventeenth century, leading one from the workshop of one (or more) skillful poet(s) and the sources of his (or their) Syriac education to the liturgy. The entanglement between sermons and the hymns testifies to the mediation of European knowledge from the Catholic missionaries to their Indian pupils: while the sermons are based on European theological and humanistic erudition of the sixteenth century, the canticles of glorification often seem to rely on similar information only through the mediation of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

From a cross-cultural perspective, the *Malabar Sermonary* embodies the adaptation of a European literary genre into Syriac; the canticles of glorification in their turn are an example of adapting and conveying Catholic doctrine by making use of a literary genre specific to the Syriac culture of the Middle East (i.e. poetry in the meter of Narsai) and as such it is in itself an example of textual *accommodatio*. If the author of at least some of these poems is Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, this



example shows that the Jesuits involved the local people in this process of Syriac literary production and translation as a means of *accommodation*.



## Conclusions

As part of the Catholic missionary literature in Syriac that emerged in Malabar in the sixteenth century, the *Malabar Sermonary* seems to have belonged to the Syriac institution in South India at the turn of the seventeenth century. Only one composition in the corpus is clearly dated to 1567, being possibly related to the activity of Mar Joseph Sulaqa, the Chaldean Metropolitan of Malabar and the brother of the first Chaldean Patriarch, John Sulaqa. Yet, based on source analysis, it seems that most of the sermons of the collection were written around the time of the Synod of Diamper (1599) and reflect the activity of Francisco Ros, the first European Archbishop of the Malabar Christians after the Synod of Diamper (1599), and presumably of his Syriacist disciples and collaborators.

As the analysis of the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* shows, for the making of the *Malabar Sermonary*, its authors relied on the experience of the European medieval and early modern preaching culture and made use of European collections of sermons, biblical commentaries, and collections of *exempla* in an eclectic manner. They consciously chose not to simply translate or adapt a European model into Syriac, but rather used various collections of sermons, *exempla* and other preaching aids as anthologies from which they would pick up preaching material and adapt it to the newly composed Syriac sermons. For this reason, the *Malabar Sermonary* is the expression of the transmission of the preaching knowledge from Europe to South India and it points to the literary network of the Malabar Christians with the rest of the Catholic world in the context of the early modern global Catholic missions. A special connection between the *Malabar Sermonary* and the Iberian Peninsula is also to be noted: the Spanish sermons in the fourth volume of Alonso de Villegas' *Flos Sanctorum* seem to have exerted an important influence on the literary genre and structure adopted by the Syriac sermons. In addition to sermons, the oldest manuscript of the sermonary contains a collection of exempla on Marian miracles translated from Spanish into Syriac from the fifth volume of the same *Flos Sanctorum* by Villegas. Again, in two sermons which must have been written by Francisco Ros, works by the Spanish Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneyra have been used.

Besides its didactic function, the purpose of the *Malabar Sermonary* was to lead to a gradual Catholicisation of the Malabar Christians whose religious identity was rooted in the East Syriac liturgy and literary culture. Accordingly, while the exegetical and theological universe of the sermonary was predominantly Catholic, occasional East Syriac sources and elements have been incorporated in the sermons as a means of *accommodatio*. One such instance is the celebration of a 'Nestorian' saint in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous*. Accordingly, the sermonary is an important witness to the literary networks of the Malabar Christians with both the East Syriac



culture from Iraq and the Catholic culture from Europe. The parallel reading of the same *exempla* of both European and East Syriac origin in several sermons of the collection reveals that the authors of these sermons read synchronically various sources and preaching aids and put the preaching material together by contaminating different sources through bricolage and paraphrase. The structure, sources, and rhetorical strategies used in the *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* point to the authorship of Francisco Ros who also must have authored a sermon on the Apostle Thomas in the collection, as the evidence of a document from 1607 testifies. Further study on the same corpus might provide a clearer idea on how many sermons can be ascribed to Francisco Ros.

The reception history of the collection highlights its importance for the community of the Malabar Christians. After the Synod of Diamper, sermons from the collection have been used as sources for newly composed pieces of liturgical poetry which were inserted into the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* (a sort of East Syriac breviary containing services for feast days and commemorations of saints). The canticles of glorification for the night service composed on the basis of sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* were meant to compete with the poetry of Narsai, which is the archetype of Nestorian poetry and theology. Also, this case of intertextuality shows that far from being only a marginal collection of sermons, the *Malabar Sermonary* played an important role in the effort undertaken by Francisco Ros and his circle of Syriacist disciples to align both preaching and liturgy to the Tridentine Catholic doctrine. The interdependence between the sermonary and the cult is important because the revision of the *Ḥudrā* was prescribed by the Synod of Diamper and this provides a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the sermons, while many sermons from the collection survive only in nineteenth century manuscript copies. Moreover, the intertextuality between the sermons and the canticles of glorification testifies to the mediation of European knowledge from the Catholic missionaries to their Indian pupils: while the sermons are based on European theological and humanistic erudition of the sixteenth century, the canticles of glorification often seem to rely on similar information only through the mediation of the *Malabar Sermonary*. This type of mediation of European knowledge through the sermons suggests that the collection must have been used as a manual for training the local clergy of Malabar, and for this reason the sermonary became part of the Syriac literary canon of South India. The evidence gathered so far suggests that the canticles of glorification might have been authored by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, an Indian Syriacist poet and disciple of Francisco Ros, who was acquainted with the *Malabar Sermonary* due to the education that he received from Francisco Ros in the Vaipikotta Seminary.

Precisely because the collection of sermons became part of the canon of Syriac literature in Malabar, it was later copied by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Thus, after the revolt of the



Malabar Christians against their Jesuit Archbishop and the Portuguese in 1653, the *Puttaṅkūr*, i.e., the faction of the Malabar Christians who sided with the Archdeacon and gradually turned towards the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, reedited the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* for a Syriac Orthodox audience. The study of the abridgement and reediting of the sermonary in Syriac Orthodox circles reveals which elements from these sermons were found relevant for a Syriac Orthodox audience. Moreover, due to the influence of the *Malabar Sermonary*, the European model sermon as a literary genre was appropriated by the *Puttaṅkūr* to write polemic sermons against their Catholic rivals (the *Paḷayakūr*). As the analysis of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* shows, it was through contact with the *Malabar Sermonary* that the *Puttaṅkūr* assimilated key categories and tools for writing sermons. In other words, for the composition of the *Malabar Sermonary*, its Catholic authors relied on European collections of sermons, biblical commentaries, and collections of *exempla*, and conceived the sermonary as a synthesis of preaching tools circulating in Europe. Similarly, the Syriac Orthodox author of the sermon against the Portuguese and the *Paḷayakūr* preserved the structure of a European sermon but used Christian sources in Syriac and Arabic acknowledged by the Syriac Orthodox tradition; such sources were meant to replicate the preaching toolkit embedded in the *Malabar Sermonary*. This was a missionary strategy adopted by a Syriac Orthodox missionary from the Middle East, whose aim was to strengthen the Syriac Orthodox identity of the *Puttaṅkūr* and to fight back the *Paḷayakūr* by replicating and responding to their preaching arsenal. It is interesting that another Syriac Orthodox sermon on Lazarus and the rich man (number 47 in the synopsis) ended up in a nineteenth century Catholic manuscript copy of the *Malabar Sermonary*, as a reminder of the constant circulation of knowledge and texts between the *Paḷayakūr* and *Puttaṅkūr*.

Given the circulation, evolution, and transformation of these texts, the history of the compilation and reception of the *Malabar Sermonary* outlines the ecclesiastical history of the Malabar Christians from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, as an expression of the interaction between: (1) the Malabar Christians fond of their East Syriac heritage and of their East Syriac bishops (both ‘Nestorian’ and Chaldean), (2) the Catholic missionaries present in Malabar, striving to uproot “Nestorianism” and to provide a Catholic alternative to the East Syriac literary heritage of the Malabar Christians by means of *accommodatio*, (3) and the Syriac Orthodox missionaries who came to Malabar since the second half of the seventeenth century, and whose aim was to align the *Puttaṅkūr* to Antiochene discipline and orthodoxy. Decoding various textual layers and identifying the literary networks of the newly composed Syriac texts of Malabar sets the foundation for the study of intellectual history of the early modern Syriac literature from Malabar. One would expect that the systematic editing and study of more compositions from the sermonary and from the Syro-



Catholic *paideia* that emerged in Malabar in the sixteenth century would shed light on an unexplored chapter in the field of early modern global intellectual history. Like the Syriac literature in the Middle East, the contribution from South India is the expression of the complexity and diversity of the Syriac world. Hopefully further studies in the field will benefit from the preliminary finds presented in this thesis.



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MS Mannanam Syriac 30

MS Mannanam Syriac 33

MS Mannanam Syriac 46

MS Mannanam Syriac 47

MS Mannanam Syriac 59

MS Mannanam Syriac 99

MS Paris Syriac BnF 25

MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1

MS Thrissur Syriac 13

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## APPENDIX 1: The Malabar Sermonary: A Synopsis

### List of manuscripts<sup>635</sup>:

#### Mannanam Syriac 46:

Bibliography: I. Perczel, "Description and Cataloguing of Codex Mannanam Syriacus 46," in R. Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 97-103; E. Thelly, "Syriac Manuscripts in Mannanam Library," *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 84 (2004): 268 (Literary Works 3).

Initial shelf mark: 090-252-S.

Outer dimensions: 280x190x40 mm.

Script: Indian East Syriac script;

Page layout: two columns of text per page, 30 lines of text per page;

Number of folios: 244;

Date: it was dated to the early seventeenth century, after 1607, by István Perczel, although the manuscript does not contain a colophon;

Contents: miscellaneous manuscript mainly containing the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary* and a few other writings; it is the oldest copy of the sermonary; in addition to the Syriac material, in its second part, the manuscript contains Garshuni Malayalam sermons.

#### Mannanam Syriac 47:

Bibliography: E. Thelly, *Syriac Manuscripts in Mannanam...*, 268 (Literary Works 8).

Initial shelf mark: 090-252-SCA-S.

Outer dimensions: 215x160x54 mm.

Script: Indian East Syriac script.

Page layout: one column of text, 18-19 lines per page.

Number of folios: 301.

Date: early nineteenth century; the manuscript does not contain a colophon.

Paper watermark: Giorgio Magnani.

Contents: sermons from the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

#### Thrissur Syriac 17:

Bibliography: Mar Aprem, "Syriac Manuscripts in Trichur," in R. Lavenant (ed.), *III Symposium Syriacum (1980). Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures (Goslar 7-11 Septembre 1980)*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 221 (Rome: 1983): 359-360; id., *Assyrian Manuscripts in India*, (Trichur: Mar Narsai Press, 2011): 16; J. P. M. Van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas in South India and Their Syriac Manuscripts*, (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1983): 145; R. Mustață (ed.), *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 103-112.

Outer dimensions: 190x140 mm; written surface: 156x107 mm.

Script: Indian East Syriac script.

Page layout: one column of text, 21-22 lines per page.

Number of folios: 220 (the last three folios seem to be later additions and are partly damaged).

Date: late eighteenth-early nineteenth century; the manuscript does not contain a colophon.

Contents: the manuscript mainly consists of the initial Catholic redaction of the *Malabar Sermonary*.

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<sup>635</sup> Since I have worked with digital copies of the manuscripts, I did not see the paper watermarks; for the correspondence between the new and old shelf numbers of the manuscripts in the Mannanam library and for various details related to the physical description of the manuscripts recorded in this list, I am indebted to Prof. István Perczel and the SRITE project.























مُخَذَّب لَمَّا: وَمَنْصُوب: مَالٌ سَلْبٌ مَدِيدٌ: دِيمٌ لِقَمْعِهِ، نَفْسٌ. مَالٌ دَسِيسٌ لَمَقْلَبِ ( دِقَاتِيسِهِ، لَمَقَاتِلِهِ: هَلْدَقِيسٌ دَمِيسٌ لِحَسْبِ لَمِيسِ).

Ernakulam Syriac 31: fol. 104v-121v;

## 15. Sermon for the Good Friday:

[illegible]

Ernakulam Syriac 31: fol. 138v-183r (the text seems to be unfinished);

## 16. Sermons on the Resurrection of Christ:

[illegible]

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 23va-25vb;

[illegible]

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 45v-49r;

c) Untitled; incipit: ( **למנוח בן יוסף** )  
explicit: ( **אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו** ).

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 96v-103r;

d) Title: (مهمه د کورنۍ په اړه); incipit: (په دې مهمه کې چې د کورنۍ په اړه ده); explicit: (په دې مهمه کې چې د کورنۍ په اړه ده).

Ernakulam Syriac 31: fol. 121v-138v:

## 17. Sermons for the Ascension of Christ:

[illegible]



١٠. سقائے اعلیٰ حاکم، محمد احمد علی صاحب دہلی، صاحب، کتب، جلد  
(کتاب).

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 26ra-29ra;

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 103v-111r;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 94r-98r;

Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 51r-59v (West Syriac revision of the sermon);

- [illegible]

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 202va-205rb;

## 18. Sermons on the Pentecost:

- [illegible]

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 49r-54v;

- b) Title: (כסא דמלכותא); incipit: (חברתא דמלכותא); explicit: (הוא יבשרנו ביום הדין);

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 29ra-33rb;

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 111r-122v;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 98r-103v;

Thozhiyur Syriac 1 : fol. 59v-68v (West Syriac revision of the sermon);

### 19. Sermon on the Sunday of the Holy Trinity:

[illegible]

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 54ra-59ra;

Mannanām Syriac 47: fol. 122v-137r;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 80r-87v (fragment);

Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 75v-78r (West Syriac revision of the sermon);

## 21. Sermon on the Nativity of Saint John de Baptist:

Title: (ܬܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ); incipit: (ܬܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ); explicit: (ܬܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ)







- b) Untitled; incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܐܬ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܠܚܝܬ ܡܢ ܕܗܝ ܕܩܬܠܐ ܕܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ).

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 67r-72r;

- c) Title: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ) or ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ).

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 30r-39r;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 188r-194r;

## 26. Sermons for the Nativity of the Virgin:

- a) Title: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ).

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 45vb-50vb;

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 158v-173r;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 104r-111r;

Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 21v-30r ; (West Syriac revision of the sermon; in the beginning this version misses the indications concerning the Gospel reading of the feast day);

- b) Title: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ).

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 54v-60v (the text is incomplete);

- c) Title: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ).

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 63r-67r (one or two lines from the beginning of the text are missing; they must have been written on the last lines of the preceding fol. which is missing);

## 27. Sermons on the Elevation of the Holy Cross

- a) Untitled; incipit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ); explicit: ( **ܡܡܢ ܡܥܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ** ).



[illegible]

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 33rb-35va (fragment: only the first part of this sermon is comprised in the MS; the second half of another sermon on vowing is added to it);

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 173r-185v;

b) Untitled; incipit: ( **مَلِكُهَا لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ** )  
 ( **مَلِكُهَا لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ** ); explicit: ( **مَلِكُهَا لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ** )  
 ( **مَلِكُهَا لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ لَمْ يَمُوتْ** ).

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 38ra-39vb;

c) Title: (מלכת צדק); incipit: (היה נא יי אלהינו: מלכת צדק ברחמיך); explicit: (אשר לא יאמר: מלכת צדק ברחמיך); explicit: (אשר לא יאמר: מלכת צדק ברחמיך).

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 39vb-42rb (there might be some folios missing from this text);

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 88r-93v (fragment; the beginning is missing);

28. Sermon for the commemoration of all Saints:

Untitléd; incipit: (  **ٱلْمَلِكُ دَلِيلًا مَجْدًا عَظِيمًا . هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقَائِمُ بِحُكْمِهِ . ش . دَلِيلًا . هُوَ الْمَلِكُ دَلِيلًا .** )  
 دَمُوسْلَمَ ٱلْمَلِكُ دَلِيلًا مَجْدًا عَظِيمًا . هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقَائِمُ بِحُكْمِهِ . ش . دَلِيلًا . هُوَ الْمَلِكُ دَلِيلًا .  
 دَمُوسْلَمَ ٱلْمَلِكُ دَلِيلًا مَجْدًا عَظِيمًا . هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقَائِمُ بِحُكْمِهِ . ش . دَلِيلًا . هُوَ الْمَلِكُ دَلِيلًا .

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 86rb-88ra;

Ernakulam Syriac 31: fol. 10r-15r (fragment);

29. Sermon for the commemoration of Mar Behnam:

[illegible]

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 72rb-73rb;

### 30. Sermon on the Evangelists:

Title: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ); incipit: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ); explicit: (ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ).  
 ✠.

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 88ra-91rb;

Ernakulam Syriac 31: fol. 1r-10r (fragment);

### 31. Sermon on the Holy Angels:

[illegible]











b) Untitled; incipit: ( **لَمَّا دَخَلَ دَارَهُ** .. **أَمَّا تَحْتَهُ** **مَعْلَمَةٌ** : **وَالْقَوْمُ** **يَسْلَمُونَ** **بِإِسْمِهِ** : **لَسَمَ الْكَلْبُ** )  
 ( **دَخَلَ** **سِتْرًا** : **وَمِنْهُ** **عَقْدَةٌ** **بِأَمْرِ** **الْمَلِكِ** . **بِذَلِكَ** **لَعَنَ** **بَنِي** **إِسْرَءِيلَ** **مَعْقِدَةً** **بِأَمْرِ** **الْمَلِكِ** **فَلَمْ** **تَقْلَمْ** **حُلَا** )  
 explicit: ( **بِأَمْرِ** **الْمَلِكِ** **لَعَنَ** **بَنِي** **إِسْرَءِيلَ** **مَعْقِدَةً** **بِأَمْرِ** **الْمَلِكِ** **فَلَمْ** **تَقْلَمْ** **حُلَا** ) .

Ernakulam Syriac 31: fol. 209r-212v;

#### 40. Sermon on Baptism:

[illegible]

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 73va-76rb;

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 219r-230v;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 158r-164r;

#### 41. Sermon on the Holy Sacraments:

Title: (ܡܙܡܘܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ); incipit: (ܡܙܡܘܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ); explicit: (ܡܙܡܘܪ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܡܠܟܐ);

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 59rb-64ra;

Mannanam Syriac 47: fol. 137r-148v;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 164v-170v;

## 42. Sermon on the desire of money and usury:

Title: (אמרונו חסדו של מלך ישראל); incipit: (אמרונו חסדו של מלך ישראל); explicit: (אמרונו חסדו של מלך ישראל).

Mannanam Syriac 46: 103ra-107va;

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 170v-178v;

43. Sermon on drunkenness:

Title: (ܬܠܬ ܕܗܘܪܝܢ ܒܥܡܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ); incipit: (ܕܥܡܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܥܡܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ); explicit: (ܬܠܬ ܕܗܘܪܝܢ ܒܥܡܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ).  
 .ܨܘܬܐ).

Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 97va-99va;

Mannanām Syriac 47: fol. 22r-29v, 230v-231v (fragment);

Thrissur Syriac 17: fol. 178v-180r (fragment);

44. Sermon on the teaching of the faith:

[illegible]











## **APPENDIX 2: *Exempla* from a collection of Marian miracles by Alonso de Villegas translated from Spanish into Syriac**

While in the introduction of the thesis, I have mentioned the influence of the sermons from the fourth volume of Alonso de Villegas's *Flos Sanctorum* on the *Malabar Sermonary*, there is further evidence that at least one author of the sermons from the *Malabar Sermonary* (most likely Francisco Ros) used Villegas' collection, as a toolkit of *exempla* to write new compositions in Syriac. Thus, MS Mannanam Syriac 46, the oldest manuscript of the *Malabar Sermonary*, contains besides sermons an untitled compilation of *exempla* on Marian miracles which was translated and adapted from the fifth volume of the same Spanish collection into Syriac.

The Marian *exempla* of MS Mannanam Syriac 46 are comprised between fol. 184vA-187vB. Their Spanish source is inserted in Alonso de Villegas' *Fructus Sanctorum* (i.e. the fifth volume of *Flos Sanctorum*) under the title: "Discurso Quarenta y ocho, de Santa Maria Madre de Dios."<sup>639</sup> The Spanish original consists of a series of *exempla* disguised as a sermon. It begins with an allegorical interpretation based on the tenth chapter of the book of Joshua about Joshua's battle against the Gibeonites, in which the Virgin Mary is assimilated to the moon and Christ to the sun. This allegory has the role of a *prothema* and is followed by six biblical *exempla* related to Virgin Mary, after which the author inserts as *exempla* a compilation of Marian miracle accounts. The compiler of the Syriac version in MS Mannanam Syriac 46 has paraphrased the first part of these miracle accounts; a comparative textual example will be provided below.

The peculiarity of the Spanish collection of Marian miracles is that in the beginning or in the end of each *exemplum*, Villegas indicated his sources; in the Syriac translation/paraphrase the names of the quoted authors have been transcribed in Syriac, while preserving the Spanish pronunciation. Given that Francisco Ros was the only Spaniard Syriacist in Malabar at the turn of the seventeenth century, this translation was most likely done by him. The following list records the first miracle accounts from the *editio princeps* (1594) of Villegas' collection, most of which have been translated/paraphrased into Syriac:

<sup>639</sup> An electronic edition of the Spanish text based on the *editio princeps* was done by José Aragüés Aldaz and is available online: <https://www.uv.es/lemir/Textos/Flos/Flos.html>. I have followed this edition throughout the thesis; for the Marian section of the collection: <https://www.uv.es/lemir/Textos/Flos/Discurso48.html>. On the *exempla* from Villegas' *Fructus Sanctorum*, see José Aragüés Aldaz, "Historia y oratoria para la pervivencia renacentista del *exemplum*. A propósito del *Fructus Sanctorum* de Alonso de Villegas," in María Isabel Toro Pascua (ed.), *Actas del III Congreso de la Asociación Hispánica de Literatura Medieval (Salamanca, 3 al 6 de octubre de 1989)*, vol. 1, (Salamanca: Biblioteca Española del Siglo XV, 1994): 117-128.



1. The Virgin Mary appears on a pillar made of jasper stone to the Apostle Jacob, who was preaching in Zaragoza, in Spain, and asks the Apostle to build up a church dedicated to her there (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 265v-266r; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 184vA);
2. The miracle of the house of Virgin Mary from Loreto (Italy) (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 266r-v; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 184vB);
3. The building of the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore and the institution of the feast of Our Lady of the Snows; (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 266v; missing from the Syriac translation);
4. Before the departure from this world, the Virgin Mary gives two of her garments to two of her neighbour widows (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 266v; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 185rA);
5. After the Council of Chalcedon, Emperor Marcian (450-457) and his wife Pulcheria attempt to translate the body of Virgin Mary from Gethsemane to Constantinople in order to place it in a church dedicated to the Mother of God, but the tomb of the Virgin is found empty (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 266v-267r; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 185rA-185vA);
6. A miraculous cloak (*maphorion*), which the Virgin Mary has given to her Hebrew neighbour in Galilee is translated to Constantinople in the Church of Blachernai, in the times of Emperor Leo I (457-474) (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 267r-v; missing from the Syriac translation);
7. The Virgin Mary restores the severed hand of John of Damascus (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 267v-268r; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 185vA-186rA);
8. The Virgin Mary saves a Jewish boy thrown by his father in a burning furnace for partaking in the Eucharistic loaf (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 268r-v; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 186rA-B);
9. Saint Basil the Great, together with the Christians of Caesarea in Cappadocia pray in the church dedicated to Our Lady so as to be delivered from the persecution of Julian the Apostate. As a result, the Martyr Mercurius whose relics were kept in the same church defeats Julian in battle and the Apostate dies (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 268v; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: 186rB-186vB);
10. An archdeacon called Theophilus commits apostasy and makes a pact with the devil; afterwards he repents and receives forgiveness though the mediation of the Virgin Mary (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 268v; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 186vB);
11. Saint Ildefonsus of Toledo (607-667) receives a chasuble from the Virgin Mary, as a gift for having written a treatise in defence of her perpetual virginity against the heretics (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 268v-269v; missing from the Syriac translation!);



12. A formerly rich man who lost his possessions is tempted to make a pact with the devil by abjuring God, but he refuses to deny the Virgin Mary; the man receives forgiveness through the intercession of the Holy Virgin before Christ (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 269v-270r; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 186vB-187vA);

13. A pregnant woman gives birth to a boy on her way to the shrine of Mont Saint Michel in France. The Virgin Mary delivers her and the child from being drowned by the rising tide (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 270r; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 187vB);

14. Through the mediation of a visiting monk, a robber who used to pray daily ‘*Ave Maria*’ discovers that one of his servants is a devil prepared to drag him to hell for his iniquity; as a result, he repents and changes his life (*Fructus Sanctorum*: fol. 270r-v; MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 187vA).

In the Syriac paraphrase of the Spanish original the order of the last two miracle accounts has been reversed. Moreover, while the Spanish collection indicates Johan Herolt’s *Promptuarium Exemplorum* as the source of *exemplum* 12 listed above (“Lo dicho es del Promptuario de exemplos”<sup>640</sup>), the compiler of the Syriac version attributes it to Vincent of Beauvais’ *Speculum Historiale*, Book VII, chapter 76: (ܡܢ ܬܝܚܝܬܐ ܬܚܝܬܐ ܕܬܝܚܝܬܐ ܕܬܚܝܬܐ),<sup>641</sup> which is a fake reference. While it is true that Book VII of the *Speculum Historiale* contains many Marian miracle accounts, the indicated chapter from the *Speculum Historiale* contains in fact an account related to the Assumption of the Virgin<sup>642</sup>. In addition to this, the miracle about the rich man who lost his possessions is missing from the Marian miracle accounts provided by Vincent of Beauvais. The reference to Book VII of Vincent of Beauvais’ work is most likely the result of a textual contamination, as most of the Marian miracle accounts from Villegas’ *Fructus Sanctorum* are based on Book VII of the *Speculum Historiale*. It is again noteworthy that in later editions of Villegas’ *Fructus Sanctorum* the *exempla* 10 (about Theophilus and the pact with the devil) and 13 (the pilgrim woman who gives birth on her way to Mont Saint Michel) are missing.<sup>643</sup>

<sup>640</sup> *Fructus Sanctorum*..., fol. 270r.

<sup>641</sup> MS Mannanam Syr. 46: fol. 187vA.

<sup>642</sup> This chapter is entitled: “De Historia assumptionis Beatae Mariae Virginis et qualiter Apostolis revelata est”; see Vincent of Beauvais, *Bibliotheca Mundi seu Speculi Maioris Vincentii Burgundi Praesulis Bellovacensis Ordinis Praedicatorum, Theologi ac Doctoris Eximii, Tomus Quartus, qui Speculum Historiale Inscibitur*, (Douai: Baltazar Beller, 1624): 248-249, available online: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k81676r/f1.item.r=vincent+beauvais.langFR.zoom>.

<sup>643</sup> See, for instance, Alonso de Villegas, *Fructus sanctorum y quinta parte de Flos sanctorum, que es libro de exemplos, assi de hombres illustres en sanctidad, como de otros cuyos hechos fueron dignos de reprehension y castigo*, (Barcelona: Ioseph Texidò, 1728); the Marian section is comprised between pp. 424-447.



For textual comparison, I am providing here the *exemplum* about the Jewish boy in the furnace (number 8 in the list above) in both its Syriac translation and the Spanish original.

**Text** (MS Mannanam Syr.46: fol. 186rA-B<sup>644</sup>):

[illegible]

**Translation:** “In the times when Justinian was ruling, it had happened that the son of a Jew went to the church together with other Christian children and entered [the church] among them, and together with them took [bread] remaining from the awe-inspiring sacraments<sup>652</sup>, according to the custom of that Church. And it happened [that] when the boy returned home and [his father] saw that he had been late, he asked [the boy] why he was late from coming back from school. The boy recounted his father everything that had happened and how he had partaken in the sacraments together with the other faithful little children. His father became extremely angry while listening to

<sup>644</sup> In the MS, the text is covered by a tape in the right margin. I have abbreviated the manuscript further as M.

<sup>645</sup> A. c. (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎠); p. c. (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎠) (del.).

646 Sic!

<sup>647</sup> Em. (𐤀𐤊𐤍); M (𐤀𐤊𐤍).

<sup>648</sup> Sic!; supposedly from the root (iim).

649  $M^{ac}$  (٢٥);  $M^{pc}$  (٢٥) (s.l.).

<sup>650</sup> Em. (حدّثك); M (حدّثك).

651 Sic!

<sup>652</sup> (تذخيد) “rest”, “remaining [part]” here does not refer directly to the consecrated Eucharistic bread, but to ἀντίδομα, the blessed bread distributed in the end of the liturgy; the pieces of the Eucharistic loafs which have not been used directly for the making of the Eucharist are distributed as ἀντίδομα in the Greek Orthodox Church.



these [things]; he grabbed the boy and threw him into the glass [melting] furnace which was in his home, so that [the boy] would die there. The boy remained inside the fire [of the furnace] without [any] harm for three days. His mother was looking for him without knowing what happened; she was moving around, while calling the boy and he answered her from inside the furnace. In a haste she opened the furnace door and saw [the boy] without injury; she asked him the cause of this miracle and the boy told her: ‘A Lady clothed with scarlet garments similar to the one by means of whom I was given the bread in the church together with the rest of the children – that Lady, who was carrying on her arms a little child, protected me and averted the flame away from me; She gave me bread and water.’ The emperor heard these [things] and commanded that the boy and his mother get baptized. As for the [boy’s] father who did not want to [get baptized], [the emperor] commanded to be hanged and on a fig-tree and strangled because he wanted to kill his son. Nicephoros [Xanthopoulos], Gregory of Tours, [Luigi] Lippomano and [Michael] Glycas, truthful writers, wrote [this story].”

### Spanish original:

En Constantinopla, en tiempo del emperador Justiniano, sucedió un caso notable, y fue que, siendo costumbre, cuando los sacerdotes dezían Missa, que juntavan las reliquias del Sacramento, que siempre quedavan, consagrandos panes enteros o tortas, con que ellos y los que oían Missa comulgavan, y dábanlas a algunos niños que aún no tenían edad para pecar (Nizéforo dize de sí mismo que comulgó desta edad diversas vezes con aquellas reliquias); sucedió, pues, que entre estos niños se juntó una vez el hijo de un judío, cuyo oficio era hazer vidrio, teniendo para esto en su casa un horno. Donde, como el mocho se detuviesse aquel día por esta ocasión, y viniesse de la escuela donde iba a leer más tarde de lo acostumbrado, preguntándole el padre en qué se avía detenido, él dixo lo que avía hecho. Oído del judío, con grande enojo que dello recibió, asíó dél y echóle dentro del horno, estando bien encendido. Y allí estuvo tres días, sin que la llama se apagasse, por ocasión del oficio que el padre tenía. En este tiempo andava la madre a buscar a su hijo por la ciudad, afligidísima, y no hallándole, començóse a lamentar y dar bozes, llamándole cerca del horno. Oyó las bozes el niño, y respondió de dentro:

-Madre, aquí estoy.

Corrió ella, y abriendo el horno, vídole dentro sin daño alguno. Preguntóle cómo no le avía muerto la llama. Él respondió que una Señora vestida de grana, muy hermosa, que tenía un niño en los brazos, semejante a otra que estava en la iglesia donde le dieron el pan con los otros niños, le avía dado agua y de comer, junto con apartar dél la llama porque no le hiziesse ningún daño. Vino esto a oídos del emperador Justiniano, el cual hizo baptizar /**(268v)**/ a la madre, y no queriendo el padre baptizarse, por el delito que cometió de querer matar a su hijo, le mandó ahorcar de una higuera. Dízenlo Nizéforo, libro diez y siete, capítulo quinze, Gregorio Turonense, libro *De Gloria Martyrum*, capítulo nono, Lippomano, tomo tercero, y Glycas, parte quarta de los *Anales*.<sup>653</sup>

<sup>653</sup> Villegas, *Fructus Sanctorum...*, 268r-v.



### APPENDIX 3.a.: Untitled sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr (text edition)

#### Note on the edition of the text

I am providing a semi-diplomatic edition of the sermon based on MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 80r-95r. All the interventions into the text have been recorded in the critical notes. Since it is not always very clear how and why the scribe of this manuscript used the dots, I have generally tried to replicate in the edition the use of the dots as they appear the manuscript. I have also not corrected the misuse of *rukākhā* and *quššāyā*.

#### Abbreviations and conventional signs:

T = MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1

em. = emendavi

a.c. = ante correctionem

p.c. = post correctionem

del. = delevit

s.l. = supra lineam

[...] = interpolation

<...> = addition of the editor



654  
 655  
 656  
 657  
 658



<sup>663</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎢); T (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎢).



<sup>671</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎢𐏁𐎧): T (𐎠𐎢𐏁𐎧).



[illegible]

<sup>672</sup> Em. (𐎧𐎠); T (𐎧𐎠).

<sup>673</sup> Em. (عَمِي); T (عَمِي).

<sup>674</sup> Em. (حتت هتد); T (حتت هتد).



[illegible]

675 Sic!

<sup>676</sup> Em. (ذوئِنتِ); T (ذوئِنتِ).



[illegible]

677 T<sup>ac</sup> (تجدد); T<sup>pc</sup> (تجدد) (del.).



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### APPENDIX 3.b.: Untitled sermon against the Portuguese and the Paḷayakūr (translation)

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, proclamation of Blessed Matthew, one of the twelve Holy Apostles. May their prayer be a bulwark for us in this world and in the one to come, by the prayers of the Mother of God, Virgin Mary! Amen.

In that time, Jesus – glory to His grace – told and commanded His twelve blessed disciples: “Behold, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves”... until: “I also will deny him before My Father Who is in heaven.”<sup>679</sup>

[*Prothema*] So far got completed the reading from the Holy Gospel of Blessed Matthew the Evangelist. It is the time now to interpret the living words of the Divine Book through the help of Christ, our Lord. First of all, we say that in the *Book of Kings*<sup>680</sup> is written that God told King Solomon: “Request [fol. 80v] from Me something that you desire and I will grant it to you [instantly] and I will give you whatever you will ask from Me.” Thus answered Solomon to God: “My Lord, I wish a prudent heart and enlightened knowledge so that I would know well to lead Your people, Israel.” And this answer pleased the Lord God and He told Solomon: “Because you did not ask gold and silver, nor the souls of your enemies, but knowledge and prudence of the heart, behold, I have given you something that I have not given to the kings who preceded you and, also, after you there will be no other [king] similar to you.” For this reason, it is also right for us to ask from our Compassionate Lord to give us an enlightened mind and a wise heart, as David said in the Psalm Fifty-One: “Create in me a pure heart, God!”<sup>681</sup>

[*Initial prayer*] Therefore, let us all pray together: “Our Father, Who art in heaven...” [fol. 81r] and “Hail, Mary...”

Saint Jacob, the Metropolitan [Bishop] of the city [of] Edessa, said: “The teaching of the Son of God is full of light and new life for those who listen to it scrupulously; the eyes from within and the ears of the soul need the [good] tidings which are carefully vivifying [us]”. Our Lord told His disciples: “Behold, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves,”<sup>682</sup> that is to say: the lambs are [His] disciples and also the Christians, and the wolves are the heathens, the Jews, and the Muslims<sup>683</sup>. And as a lamb is not able to harm a wolf<sup>684</sup>, likewise you should be gentle and kind with everyone! And you should also know that the lambs are accepted [beasts] in the Holy Books; for, in the Law [of Moses], God commanded that in the day of the Passover a faultless lamb should be slaughtered and eaten on account of the salvation of the sons of Israel; and in the Holy Gospel it is written that in the day of the resurrection [fol. 81v] the good ones will be separated from the wicked, as “the shepherd who separates the lambs from the kids, and the lambs are placed on [His] right and the kids on [His] left.”<sup>685</sup> And Isaiah, the most glorified among the prophets, prophesized about Christ and likened Him to a lamb, while saying: “like a lamb He was led to slaughter, and like

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<sup>679</sup> Matthew 10: 16, 33.

<sup>680</sup> See 3 (1) Kings 3: 5. 9-12.

<sup>681</sup> Psalms 51: 12.

<sup>682</sup> Matthew 10: 16.

<sup>683</sup> Literally, the Tayites.

<sup>684</sup> Literally, “is not able to do any evil with a wolf”.

<sup>685</sup> Matthew 25: 32-33.



a sheep before [its] shearer He was silent and did not open His mouth”<sup>686</sup> due to His humility. And, also, Saint John the Baptist said on His account: “Behold, the Lamb of God, the One Who takes away the sin of the world!”<sup>687</sup> And, as our Lord – glory to His name! – was named “a Lamb”, likewise He called those partaking Him “lambs”, when He said: “Behold, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves! Therefore, be wise as serpents and guileless as doves!”<sup>688</sup> that is, there are four good peculiarities in the serpent. One [of them is] that the serpent surrenders its whole flesh in order to be wounded, but it hides away its head; likewise you [fol. 82r] should surrender whatever [possession] you have that will perish, and preserve the faith which is [your] head. [Its] second [peculiarity] is that when the serpent is unclean, its body gets burdened; then, it keeps a fast for forty days until its body becomes loose; then, it sees a small crack and pushes itself into that hole, and it enters it, sheds its skin, and gets reinvigorated and becomes young [again]. In like manner, if you are unclean as well because of [your] sins and feel burdened by them, then take refuge in fasting not only for forty days, but many times forty [times] forty [days]! And then “enter through the narrow gate,”<sup>689</sup> according to the word of our Lord, and strip off the old garment of [your] dead deeds and become renewed children, while saying, as it is written in the preface [ܩܕܝܫܐ] of the Grammar [Book] [which is written] in the meter of [Mor] Aphrem: “restore my youth through the light of Your presence, [fol. 82v] and allow me to become wise through You!”<sup>690</sup> The third peculiarity of the serpent is that when it sees a man stripped [of his clothes] and naked, it does not dare to approach him, but if a man is clothed in [his] clothes, then the snake attacks him. Likewise the old snake, that is Satan, when he sees a man stripped of the evil passions of sin, he does not assault him, but flees from [that man], and if the man is clothed in the dirty clothes of the shameful pleasures, then [Satan] grows stronger than him and defeats him. [Its] fourth peculiarity – wise men say – is that when the serpent goes to drink water, it does not bring with itself its venom, but it leaves it in its nest. Likewise, when you go to the church, which is the spring of the living water, you should not bear with you any rage or enmity against anyone; and if you feel resentment of any sort [towards someone] [fol. 83r], then [the resentment] should not join you to the house of the Lord! And Mor Aphrem, the teacher, said in one of his *mēmre*<sup>691</sup>: “Oh, [you], who pray to God, do not revile your brother in your heart, for the insult does not allow the prayer to be pure! Oh, [you] who make petition for his offence, behold, a corpse is laid in your heart; forgive your brother his offence and then pray purely! For, anger is worse than a sword; also, fury [is worse] than a knife. Take an arrow and shoot it towards your brother, but do not throw an insult at him! For, if you shoot an arrow towards your brother, it will strike [his] body on the outside, and if you throw an insult at him, it will enter inside his heart.”<sup>692</sup>

<sup>686</sup> Isaiah 53: 7.

<sup>687</sup> John 1: 29.

<sup>688</sup> Matthew 10: 16.

<sup>689</sup> Matthew 7:13.

<sup>690</sup> This is the sixth distich from the prologue of Bar Hebraeus’s *Metrical Grammar* (see Gregorius Barhebraeus qui et Abulpharag, *Grammatica Linguae Syriacae*..., 1.

<sup>691</sup> I.e., verse homilies.

<sup>692</sup> I do not know from which *mēmre* by Ephrem have these verses been excerpted. It is certain, however, that they appear among the “rogations” (ܩܕܝܫܐ) attributed to Ephrem, which are inserted in the *Beth Gazo* (a collection of Church songs, hymns, and tunes, similar to that of the Greek Orthodox *Octoechos*) which is in use in the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch; for the present reference, see *Bethgazo: Schatzbuch der Melodien*..., 388-389; the quoted verses correspond to the rogations 66-69.



[The word] that our Lord said: “Be guileless as doves,”<sup>693</sup> that is: in many cities men make big houses for doves, and, again, they put many baskets in these houses; and the doves come, and dwell in them, and make many nestlings [fol. 83v]. Then, men take the nestlings, eat some of them and sell others, while the doves do not get angry, nor do they flee away from the houses of their owners. Likewise, it is right for the true Christians to endure cheerfully and not to separate themselves from the household<sup>694</sup> of Christ, their true Lord, if afflictions and persecutions from the heretics befall on them, and if they face the pillage of their riches, as Paul the divine Apostle was saying that nothing can separate him from the love of Christ: nor the fire or the sword, nor all the present and the future [things]<sup>695</sup>. “Beware of men, for they will deliver you to courts”<sup>696</sup>, that is to say: [they] will throw you in prison and in bitter captivities, and that will not be enough for them, but “they will draw you to their synagogues”<sup>697</sup>, that is to say: they will inflict torments on you harshly in the sight of everyone. “And they will bring you before governors and kings [fol. 84r] for My sake”<sup>698</sup>, that is: it will not be [an act of] propitiation for your evil deeds, but [it will happen] because of Me and because of My Gospel, “to [bear] witness before them and the Gentiles”<sup>699</sup>, that is to say: they – namely, your oppressors and also the Gentiles etc. – will witness your victory, because you have suffered all these [things] without [having committed] any transgression for the sake of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, and for [your] true faith in Him. “But when they will deliver you over, do not be concerned how or what you will speak”<sup>700</sup> – here the following question befits the lovers of learning: ‘How is it that Peter, the head of the Apostles, says in his Catholic Letter: “Be prepared for a defence” – that is to say, to give an answer – “to whomever asks and inquires you about [your] faith”<sup>701</sup>, while Christ, our Lord, commanded [us]: “do not to be concerned how you will speak”<sup>702</sup>? The answer [is]: there is no contradiction between the word of Peter and the word of the Lord. As long as there is a [suitable] occasion [fol. 84v], and a place and listeners, then it becomes us to reply and answer him who wishes to listen to the history of our faith, according to the word of Simon Peter. However, if the violence of the persecution from the heretics and tyrant heathens would stand against us, and the word of truth is not accepted, but there is grudge and controversies – as the one who claimed that it was the goat that flew and not the raven – then, the [spoken] word is of no use, and we need not care about [any] justification, as the Master of truth, our Lord, taught us. “For it will be given to you in that hour what to speak. For it will not be you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you”<sup>703</sup>, that is: the succour from the right side [of Christ]<sup>704</sup> and the help from above will accompany you. The Holy Spirit who spoke through the prophets will be for you [both] mouth and tongue. And see, oh, experienced reader, how He said “the Spirit of your Father” [fol. 85r]; He did not say “the Spirit of My Father”, because our Good Lord – glory to

<sup>693</sup> Matthew 10: 16.

<sup>694</sup> Literally, [ܐܬܡܝܬܐ] “familiarity”; the term is important in the Syriac mystical literature; “familiarity is the translation of [ܐܬܡܝܬܐ], which means literally being a housemate”; apparently, “it corresponds “with the Greek συνουσία found in John Climachus and Plotinus and with the Latin *familiaritas* occurring in the *Imitatio Christi*” (A. J. Wensinck (transl.), *Bar Hebraeus’ Book of the Dove Together with Some Chapters from His Ethikon*, (Leiden: Brill, 1919): CI, CII).

<sup>695</sup> Cf. Romans 8: 35, 38.

<sup>696</sup> Matthew 10: 17.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid.

<sup>698</sup> Matthew 10: 18.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid.

<sup>700</sup> Matthew 10: 19.

<sup>701</sup> Cf. 1 Peter 3: 15.

<sup>702</sup> Matthew 10: 19.

<sup>703</sup> Matthew 10: 19-20.

<sup>704</sup> Allusion to Matthew 25: 33.



His grace – was making known that they are His brothers and the sons of God the Father, His Father. “Brother will deliver over his brother to death, and the father his son, and sons will rise against their parents and will put them to death”<sup>705</sup>, that is to say: He Who knows everything before it comes to be, predicted the multitude of the future afflictions which would happen to the believers.

He showed that those who belong to the same flesh and blood would become enemies of one another, and this is a difficult [matter], as one of the Persian poets said: “If all men would insult and revile me, I would not be hurt, nor would I be filled with rage, but if I hear a single lesser harsh word from a friend, [then] it inflicts on me an utterly harsh pain.” For, it is said that a king [fol. 85v] sentenced a man to death by stoning, and while [others] were casting stones at him, he did not speak nor groan [at all]; in the end a friend of him came, threw a stone at him, and only went along the way. Then, [the man] shouted loudly and said: ‘This blow hurt me more than all the blows from the others’. “And you will be hated by everyone”<sup>706</sup>, that is: [both] those distant and those familiar<sup>707</sup> [to you] will hate you “for My name’s sake”<sup>708</sup>. And if a fool would argue that in this world there are many Tayites and heathens abundant/prosperous in riches and possessions, and they eat, drink, fornicate, and ride horses and elephants, and no one says a single [word] to displease them, [while] in the Book of the Gospel, Christ showed many afflictions [to come] upon His disciples and the chaste Christians<sup>709</sup>; we answer the one who argues [so], that this world is nothing before God, and He does not want it to be wearied, but [this world is] for those whom He does not love [fol. 86r], and who do not love Him; yet, God has another world in which He wants to make rejoice those who have walked on the footsteps of Christ. **A parable:** Some merchants were going from one city to another, strayed from the way, and became very thirsty. And while they were worn out, a young man with beautiful appearance came across them and water was dripping from the curls and bristles of his [hair]. Then, they asked him where there was water; he answered them: ‘In front of you there are two springs of water, one farther and one closer, but the water of the source that is closer is bitter and turbid, [while] the water of [the source] that is farther is sweet, drinkable and pleasant. Some of those merchants were lazy and did not wait a little to reach the good water, but as soon as they saw the water [fol. 86v] of the [fountain] which was closer, they rejoiced over it and drank from it greedily; yet, it was of no use to them, but their belly bloated, their bowels burst asunder, and they died. However, those who were diligent and carried the toil until they reached the good waters, drank willingly, and quenched their thirst. And they forgot about their toils and anguish, and were at ease. The interpretations of this parable are well known to everyone: thus, the merchants are the human beings, who earn for themselves either profit or penalty; and when they were departing from this world to the one to come, they were rewarded according to their deeds; the beautiful young man is Christ, Who is more beautiful in appearance than all mankind; the two springs [of water] are the two worlds, and whoever takes pleasure in the delights here [on earth], is deprived of the blessings there [in the afterlife]. [fol. 87r] **A story:** In the time of Blessed Mor Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, there were two poor Christians, and they were working on a wage for whoever would call them for daily labour. And in the city of Alexandria there was also a rich Jew: he was building houses and courts for himself, and called these two needy men to hew stones and burn lime [for him], so that he would pay them their wage. The two of them went and became day-labourers for the Jew. And one day, one of the [Christians] told his fellow: ‘Why is it

<sup>705</sup> Matthew 10: 21.

<sup>706</sup> Matthew 10: 22.

<sup>707</sup> Literally, “those from the outside and those from the inside” [خَبْرًا وَمِنْ خَلْفًا].

<sup>708</sup> Ibid.

<sup>709</sup> Literally, “their chaste Christians”.



that you and I, who are Christians, do not have money and are very needy, while this Jew, the enemy of Christ, has money, possessions and buildings?’ His fellow answered and told him: ‘It is written: “Do not emulate the lawless, and do not envy those who commit iniquity!”<sup>710</sup> and behold, the [fol.87v] lawless are prosperous in [this] world, and strong in their might, but know, my brother, that this world is a dream, and passes away, and it will be destroyed. And Christ, our Lord, called the poor blessed and commanded His disciples not to possess anything. And many sons of Israel, kings and rich men, left everything they possessed and walked through the created [world] in poverty. And countless martyrs scorned and rejected everything that is in the world, and received torments and laceration with hope in the resurrection from the dead and in [their] retribution’. And [the Christian] was telling many such things to his fellow, but the wretched one was not listening to him, nor receiving [his advice]. Satan entered into him, and he went and told the Jew for whom he was working on a wage: ‘I want to enter your religion and to become a Jew, and I do not need [anymore] [fol. 88r] the Nazarene religion [ܢܒܪܬܢܐ]’. The Jew answered and told him: ‘If you are doing this because of your neediness, I will give you alms for your meagreness, but remain a Christian, as you [already] are!’ The poor answered him: ‘I am assured in my heart that the religion of the Nazarenes is not good; for this reason, I wish to become a Jew’. The Jew told him: ‘We have a rabbi who is called Hakham; I will ask him first concerning your situation and I will tell you as he would have commanded’. Then, [the Jew] went to ask that second Caiaphas, the enemy of all righteousness, and when [the rabbi] heard, he rejoiced with much joy and told him: ‘If he would deny the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and [if] he would revile Mary, the mother of Jesus, and [if] he would make an image<sup>711</sup> of Christ crucified on the cross, and would pierce him with a spear [fol. 88v] and insult him, [then] we will accept him afterwards, and we will circumcise his foreskin, and he will become one of us’. Then, the misfortunate Christian consented to him, to do everything that the Jews would tell him, and he apostatized, and reviled and pierced the image of Christ. Instantly the wrath of the Lord remained upon him, his hand dried up, his tongue stuck straight out like a rope, and his unclean spirit went to the Gehenna of fire. But from the place of the wound [left] by the spear flowed blood and water abundantly until [the blood and water] reached outside the market place of the city; and when the Jews saw these miracles, they were struck with great fear, and they ran to inform Mor Theophilus, the Patriarch. He immediately rose and brought with him priests, deacons, monks and Christians, and went to that [fol.89r] place, and they prayed and interceded to God, and then the water and the blood stopped flowing from the place of the wound. And the Patriarch commanded to bear the Cross in procession to the great church with pomp and much veneration, and they collected all the blood from the ground, and also scraped off the dust, and rubbed [them] off from all places where the blood and the water which had been flowing from the Cross had reached. And they put everything together in vessels inside the church, so that it would be/become *hnānā*<sup>712</sup> for the believers. And that day the rich Jew and all his household got baptized, and he gave much money to the church, and many alms to the poor for the

<sup>710</sup> Psalms 37: 1.

<sup>711</sup> In fact, as the continuation of the account suggests, the “image” [ܐܝܡܢܐ] here is supposed to designate a cross and not an icon depicting the Crucifixion of Christ.

<sup>712</sup> The Syriac *hnānā* (ܚܢܢܐ), which in its etymological sense means “mercy”, “compassion”, is used technically in order to designate a material relic. In his book on the emergence of the cult of relics, R. Wiśniewski notes:

“another Syriac custom was that of producing the *hnana*. Like the Greek term *eulogia*, that is, ‘a blessing’, [*hnana*] could be used in reference to a material object. *Hnana* was a mixture of oil, water and dust from the place where a saint lived or was buried which the faithful received as a healing relic.” (R. Wiśniewski, *The Beginnings of the Cult of Relics*, (Oxford: OUP, 2019): 208-209).



love of Christ, our Lord – glory to His compassion! – Who has worked such a great grace with him and led him out from darkness to light. And also, many Jews believed and received the sign of life, the holy baptism [fol. 89v], and became true Christians<sup>713</sup>. See, my beloved brothers, what happened to that wretched [man], and how he died a terrible death and inherited the never-ending woe and suffering, because he did not accept [his] poverty, but wanted to become rich? You as well, let there be none amongst you who would yearn for growing rich, and let [none of you] envy the rich men, but rather work in righteousness! The Lord will be enough for whomever He nourishes and let no one murmur against his Creator [and ask]: ‘Why so and so are rich and I am poor?’, but let us thank, adore and glorify God, the Good Nourisher, at all times! For there are some simple-minded people who think: ‘Behold, the Turks, the Franks<sup>714</sup> and the idol worshippers have *mammon*, and perhaps God granted them riches, because He loves them’ and they do not know that such reasoning is a Satanic deception [fol. 90r], that is to say, Satan instils bad thoughts in them so that they would doubt in their heart concerning the correct faith. Instead of such vain reasonings we should meditate on the living words of the Holy Books and on the vivifying commandments of Christ, our Saviour, Who said: “The one who will endure till the end, will be saved”<sup>715</sup>, that is to say: [we] need endurance until [our] last breath. “When they persecute you in one city, flee to another one”<sup>716</sup>, that is: [Christ] taught us not to stand against evil, as He fled before Herod. Again, a spiritual interpretation: when they chase you away from earth<sup>717</sup>, flee to heaven! When the disciples heard [this], they were thinking: ‘if they chase us away from one city, and we flee to another one, and, again, from that one they drive us out to another [city] [fol. 90v], and thus they [chase us away] from many cities, [then] what do we do’<sup>718</sup>? Jesus said: “For, amen I say to you that you will not finish all the cities which [are] in Israel until the Son of Man will come”<sup>719</sup>, that is: ‘My help will follow you through the signs and miracles that I give you to perform’. “A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a servant than his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and for the servant [to be] like his master”<sup>720</sup>, that is: ‘see how I, your Teacher and your Lord, have walked through the world! Likewise, also you should imitate Me!’ “And if they called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more [would they call so] the sons of His household”<sup>721</sup>, ‘if they insulted Me, Who am the Lord of the entire creation, and reviled Me?’ And they said that He has demon, and [that He is] Beelzebub, and that “He casts out demons by the prince of demons.”<sup>722</sup> ‘They also called Me a Samaritan’<sup>723</sup> [fol. 91r] and [said] many such [offences against Me], and I have endured all of them. Likewise, if they insult you and revile you, do not feel any pain or sadness, and do not be afraid of them, nor of their reviling!’ “For nothing is covered that

<sup>713</sup> This is a story of Coptic origin which circulated in both Coptic and Arabic. In the Coptic Synaxarium, the event of the miraculous Cross of Alexandria is celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Mesore/Mesri. On a detailed examination of this source, see the analysis of the text.

<sup>714</sup> I.e. the Portuguese.

<sup>715</sup> Literally, “will live” [حيي]; Matthew 10: 22.

<sup>716</sup> Matthew 10: 23.

<sup>717</sup> In the text is used the same verb from the root [ضام] whose PEAL meaning is “to persecute, chase away”; I have translated it through “to chase away” here and in the following instances, as, in English, the verb “to persecute” does not allow a circumstantial complement in the separative case.

<sup>718</sup> Literally, “how do we do”.

<sup>719</sup> Matthew 10:23.

<sup>720</sup> Matthew 10: 24-25.

<sup>721</sup> Matthew 10: 25.

<sup>722</sup> Luke 11: 15.

<sup>723</sup> See John 8: 48.



will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known”<sup>724</sup>, that is to say: your victory and their shame are revealed [both] in this world and in the one to come. “What I tell you in the dark, say it in the light!”<sup>725</sup>, that is to say: ‘what I have taught you secretly and in private, teach [it] to mankind openly!’ “And what you hear [now] in your ears, proclaim it on the housetops! And do not fear those who kill the body”<sup>726</sup>, that is to say: in a short time the rule of those who kill will come to an end; “yet, they cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in the Gehenna!”<sup>727</sup>, that is to say: [fol. 91v] God is eternal and endless, and also His delights and torments are perpetual. On the contrary, the rulers of this world pass away very quickly and perish. And even if they kill the body, they cannot [kill] the soul, because it is spiritual and immortal. For this reason, Paul, the architect of the whole Church said: “To fall in the hands of God is a [thing of] great fear”<sup>728</sup>. “Are not two sparrows sold for an *assarius* [ܐܨܪܝܘܬ]?” And not even one of them will fall to the ground [apart] from your Father”<sup>729</sup>, that is to say: if without [God’s] nod nothing happens even to contemptible birds, how much more [is this true] for man, who was created according to God’s image? “But also the hairs of your head are all numbered”<sup>730</sup>, that is to say: for the divine wisdom all matters are unforgettable. “Fear not, therefore! You are worth more than many sparrows”<sup>731</sup>, that is [fol.92r]: He comforts us so that we would not be afraid of the temptations that come upon us; for He is [our] exit out of them. “Thus, everyone who will acknowledge Me before men, I also will acknowledge him before My Father Who is in heaven”<sup>732</sup>, that is: he who shows love towards Christ here, while not revering the deception [of the world], nor being afraid of [its] threat and menace, will find great honour before God the Father, and before His angels and saints. “But he who will deny Me before men, I also will deny him before My Father Who is in heaven”<sup>733</sup>, that is: we will be rewarded there with great rewards, just as he who denies the truth before men will be denied before God the Father. And just as God is greater and more sublime than all things created and made [on earth], likewise the reward of the righteous in the Kingdom of Heaven will be greater, while [the retribution] of the sinners will be through bitter torments which [are] everlasting.

Until now we have explained [fol. 92v] a bit from the readings of the Holy Gospel; let us return now to the beginning of the reading and let us speak only about the first sentence, briefly and not at length, so as not to prolong the speech [too much] for those who listen. For, the Lord said: “Behold, I am sending you as lambs among the wolves”<sup>734</sup> Look carefully and see, my brothers, that He did not give them<sup>735</sup> a sword and war machines<sup>736</sup> in order to threaten the people and subdue them by violence, although – glory to His power! – He is “the King of kings and the Lord of lords”<sup>737</sup>. He also did not put in their hands money<sup>738</sup> so as to lure them, although He is the Creator of gold,

<sup>724</sup> Matthew 10: 26.

<sup>725</sup> Matthew 10: 27.

<sup>726</sup> Matthew 10: 27-28.

<sup>727</sup> Matthew 10: 28.

<sup>728</sup> Hebrews 10: 31.

<sup>729</sup> Matthew 10: 29.

<sup>730</sup> Matthew 10: 30.

<sup>731</sup> Matthew 10: 31.

<sup>732</sup> Matthew 10: 32

<sup>733</sup> Matthew 10: 33.

<sup>734</sup> Matthew 10: 16.

<sup>735</sup> I.e. to the Apostles.

<sup>736</sup> In the text [ܡܚܚܩܝܢ], probably from Gr. μηχανή.

<sup>737</sup> 1 Timothy 6: 15; Revelation 19: 16.

<sup>738</sup> Here the author seems to play within the Syriac text with the use of transient possession as used in Malayalam language, which distinguishes between permanent and transient possession.



rubies and precious pearls, but – as you heard – He sent them as lambs among the wolves, while they did not have armor for war and silver to give as bribe, [fol. 93r] and He gave them the commandment to be poor. And it is known to the whole world that the Apostles were from Jerusalem and from the surrounding cities, according to the words of the angels who called them “men of Galilee”, as it is written in the holy book of the Acts<sup>739</sup>. And one of these Holy Apostles is Mor Toma the Blessed Apostle; through the commandment of our Lord, he came to the land of India and proclaimed the Gospel, instructed and baptized many [people]. And the Indian Christians were following his teaching until the Franks [i.e. the Portuguese] got to rule over them, and bribed [their] kings and rulers, and afflicted and subdued them. They [i.e. the Franks] were killing the Syriac bishops who were coming [to India] for this flock. And so, through bribery, they got power over this people of India. Look closely, my beloved ones, and examine whether the deed [fol.93v] that the Franks did is according to the teaching of Christ or according to the teaching of Mohamed, who was subduing mankind through the violence of the sword and wanted to bring them to his disgraceful law through bribery and allurements. For God said in the holy book of the Law [of Moses]: “You will not take bribe, because the bribery blinds the eyes even of those with wise judgment and twists the words even of the innocent”<sup>740</sup>. And in the book of the Proverbs of Solomon, chapter [ܡܠܬܬܐ] four, the Holy Spirit said: “The one who accepts bribe loses his soul and the one who hates to take bribe is saved”<sup>741</sup>. Now, it does not befit you to renege on your Syriac Fathers for a small amount of money that you are receiving from the Franks. For Mor Aprem said: “Those of former times had a trodden way; do not tread a [new] path by yourself!” And in the fourth section [ܫܗܐܗܐ] of the Book of Proverbs: “The wise son [fol. 94r] gladdens his father and the foolish son brings disgrace to his mother”<sup>742</sup>. And in the tenth section [ܫܗܐܗܐ]: “Do not change the ancient landmark that your fathers have set!”<sup>743</sup> And if one of them would tell us: ‘Behold, pagan peoples left the idols of their fathers and followed Christ. In the same way, we also left the customs of our heretical fathers and followed the Franks,’ we answer him: ‘It suffices you this disgrace that came from your own mouth and bore witness against you, [namely] that you are son of the heretics! From now on do not say anymore «I am a free-born», but «[I am] son of those accursed and anathematized»! Through the grace of God you have become the son of the Franks? However, we do not speak as you do, but we say that we are Syriacs and sons of the Orthodox Syriacs from the blessed seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, from the race of the Lady Mary, the God-Bearer, and also from the race of Saint [fol. 94v] John the Baptist, Peter, Paul and the rest of the apostles and evangelists; [we are] the disciples of Mor Toma, we are not the disciples of the Franks, unlike you. We do not need wealth, but the poverty of the Son of God, Who was wrapped in swaddling clothes and placed in the manger of the beasts, and He did not have a place where to lay His head, according to the word of the Lord<sup>744</sup>. And for the sake of His love we are paying poll-tax, as He humbled Himself – glory to His humility – and asked Simeon to pay the poll-tax on behalf of both of them<sup>745</sup>. And we do not want to be kings, as He says: “My kingdom was not from this world”<sup>746</sup>,

<sup>739</sup> Acts 1: 11.

<sup>740</sup> Exodus 23: 8.

<sup>741</sup> Proverbs 15: 27. Most likely, here, by “chapter [ܡܠܬܬܐ] four” the author means the fourth “section” or *shāhā* of the Book of Proverbs; a *shāhā* [ܫܗܐܗܐ] is a division of the Syriac Bible different from the conventional division into chapters. Further on, in the text, the author explicitly uses the division of the same biblical work (the Book of Proverbs) into *shāhā* instead of chapters.

<sup>742</sup> Proverbs 10: 1.

<sup>743</sup> Proverbs 22: 28.

<sup>744</sup> Luke 9: 58.

<sup>745</sup> Matthew 17: 24-27.



but we desire the truth of Christ, we follow His disciples and we venerate and embrace our Syriac Fathers. For, Ben Sira said in the second section [*ṣḥāḥā*] [of his book]: [**fol. 95r**] “Fight for the truth until death and the Lord will fight for you!”<sup>747</sup> For these reasons, let us pray and ask unceasingly from the abundant sea of His mercifulness that He would help us and grant us to hate the whole world, but love, praise and exalt our Lord forever!

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<sup>746</sup> John 18: 36.

<sup>747</sup> Siracides 4: 28.



## **APPENDIX 4.a.: *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (initial Catholic redaction) (text edition)**

### **Note on the text edition**

I am providing a semi-diplomatic edition of the sermon on the basis of MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 91va-94vb. For the emendation of the common parts, I also used the Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermon, preserved in MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 102r-105v.

All the interventions into the text have been recorded in the critical notes. I have not corrected the misuse of *rukākhā* and *quššāyā*.

### **Abbreviations and conventional signs:**

M = MS Mannanam Syriac 46

T = MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1

con. = conieci

em. = emendavi

a.c. = ante correctionem

p.c. = post correctionem

del. = delevit

mg. = in margine

s.l. = supra lineam

ut uid. = ut videtur

[...] = interpolation

<...> = addition of the editor







<sup>783</sup> Em. (ملحه صمت); M (ملحه صمت).



[illegible]

<sup>784</sup> Em. (حَقْد); M (حَقْد).

<sup>785</sup> Em. (عم); M (امت).

<sup>786</sup> M<sup>ac</sup> (𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣 𐎠𐎡𐎢); M<sup>pc</sup> (𐎠𐎡𐎢) (del. p.c.).

<sup>787</sup> Em. (هت); M (ه).

<sup>788</sup> Em. (الضلعه اصلي); M (الضلعه اصلي).

[illegible]

<sup>790</sup> Em. (عَمَّ); M (عَمَّ).

<sup>791</sup> Em. (محم حيد); M (محم زيد).

<sup>792</sup> Em. (لَمَذَه); M (لَمَذَه).

<sup>793</sup> Em. (حَلَمَ); M (حَلَمَ).

<sup>794</sup> M<sup>ac</sup> (لأفد); M<sup>pc</sup> (لأفد لأفد) (mg.).

<sup>795</sup> Em. (أَفْعِلْ); M (أَفْعِلْ).

 $^{796}\text{Em. (دملہ ذیل); M (دملہ ذیل).$ 

<sup>797</sup> Em. (تَمَمَ); M<sup>ac</sup> (تَمَمَ); M<sup>pc</sup> (تَمَمَ) (del.).

<sup>798</sup> Em. (عمّاء); M<sup>ac</sup> (عمّاء); M<sup>pc</sup> (عمّاء) (del.).

<sup>799</sup> Em. (مهد ست); M (مهد ست).

<sup>800</sup> Em. (مَدَّ); M (مَدَّ).

<sup>801</sup> Em. (مکت); M (مکت).

<sup>802</sup> Em. (حَدِّد); M (حَدِّد).

<sup>803</sup> Em. (فء); M (فء)

<sup>804</sup> Em. (يكتسب); M (يكتسب).



[illegible]

<sup>805</sup> Em. (دلدلده); M (دلدلده).

806 Del. p. c..

<sup>807</sup> M<sup>ac</sup> (حند حاكيتا); M<sup>pc</sup> (حند حاكيتا) (del.).

808 Del. p.c.

<sup>809</sup> Em. (خَلَقَ); M (خَلَقَ).

$$^{810} \text{M}^{\text{ac}} (\text{دښت دښت}); \text{M}^{\text{pc}} (\text{دښت دښت}).$$

<sup>811</sup> Em. (سقة حنن); M (سقة حنن).

<sup>812</sup> Em. (عَمَّ); M (عَمَّ).

<sup>813</sup> Em. (𐎶𐎠𐎶𐎠); M (𐎶𐎠𐎶𐎠).

<sup>814</sup> Em. (دلفند); M (دلفند).

<sup>815</sup> M<sup>ac</sup> (مذبح الخ); M<sup>pc</sup> (مذبح الخ).

<sup>816</sup> Em. (عبد, قد); M (عبد, قد).

<sup>817</sup> Mac (دَلّی صحیح) ut uid.; M<sup>pc</sup> (دَلّی صحیح) (s.l.).

818 T (تَدْمِةٌ); M (تَدْمِةٌ).

<sup>819</sup>T (𐎲𐎠𐏁𐎧𐎡𐏁𐎢𐎺𐎠𐎥𐎶𐎵𐎫𐎴𐎣𐎪𐎠𐎹𐎤𐎬𐎰𐎦𐎱𐎽𐎿); M (𐎲𐎠𐏁𐎧𐎡𐏁𐎢𐎺𐎠𐎥𐎶𐎵𐎫𐎴𐎣𐎪𐎠𐎹𐎤𐎬𐎰𐎦𐎱𐎽𐎿).



[illegible]

<sup>820</sup> Del. p.c..

<sup>821</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎹); M (𐎠𐎢𐎡).

<sup>822</sup> Em. ( **يُصَلِّتُ** ); M ( **يُصَلِّبُ** ).

<sup>823</sup> Em. (مددیت); M (مددیت).

<sup>824</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎴 𐎠𐎡𐎴) (sic!); M (𐎠𐎡𐎴 𐎠𐎡𐎴).

825 Em. (مس); M (مس).

<sup>826</sup> Em. (مستند); M (مستند).

827  $M^{\text{ac}}$  ( $\Delta$ );  $M^{\text{pc}}$  ( $\Delta$ ) (s.l.).

<sup>828</sup> Em. (مَد); M (مَد).

<sup>829</sup> Em. (𐭪𐭫𐭭𐭮); M (𐭪𐭫𐭭𐭮).

<sup>830</sup> Em. (دك ٨٧٤); M (دك ٨٧٤).

<sup>831</sup> Em. (مخد); M (مخد).

<sup>832</sup> Em. (عَمَلِيَّة); M (عَمَلِيَّة).

833 M<sup>ac</sup> (لا ماضي); M<sup>pc</sup> (لا مضى) (del.).

<sup>834</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎹𐎶𐎠𐎶); M (𐎠𐎡𐎹𐎶𐎠𐎶).

<sup>835</sup> Em. (دښدڼه); M (دښدڼه).



[illegible]

<sup>836</sup> Em. (قَـ لَحَفَ); M (قَلَحَفَ).

<sup>837</sup> Em. (قَدَحَفْ); M (قَدَحَفْ).

838 Sic!

<sup>839</sup> Em. (ﻣﺤﻒ); M (ﻣﺤﻪ).

<sup>840</sup> Em. (॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥); M (॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥).

<sup>841</sup> T (محقول); M (محقول).

<sup>842</sup> Em. (لا تسم); M (لا تست).

<sup>843</sup> Em. (عَمَّ); M (عَمَّ).

<sup>844</sup> T (دوسدا); M (دوسدا).

845  $M^{\text{ac}}$  (وسمى<sup>٨٤٥</sup>);  $M^{\text{pc}}$  (وسمى<sup>٨٤٦</sup>) (mg.).

<sup>846</sup> Em. (دڻڪت); M (دمڻڪت).

<sup>847</sup> Em. (دفعه); M (دفعه).

<sup>848</sup> Em. (, 𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎢𐎠); M (, 𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎢𐎠).

<sup>849</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎴); M (𐎠𐎡𐎴).

<sup>850</sup> Em. (دكتف); M (دكتف).

851 Em. (𐤌𐤍𐤏); M (𐤌𐤍𐤏).

<sup>852</sup> Em. (2555); M (2555).



[illegible]

<sup>853</sup> Em. (عَمَلٌ); M (عَمَلٌ).

<sup>854</sup> Em. (مَدَّ); M (مَدَّ).

<sup>855</sup> Em. (ذهدح); M (ذهدح).

<sup>856</sup> Em. (مستقد); M (مستمد).

857 M<sup>ac</sup> (الحق); M<sup>pc</sup> (الحق).

<sup>858</sup> Em. (يُحَدِّثُ); M (يُحَدِّثُ).

<sup>859</sup> Em. (د); M (ه).

<sup>860</sup> Em. (مَدَسَم); M (مَدَسَم).

<sup>861</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎴); M (𐎠𐎡𐎴).

<sup>862</sup> Em. (حلمة); M (حلقمة).

<sup>863</sup> Em. (حک); M (حک).

<sup>864</sup> Sic, quamquam est feminini generis!

<sup>865</sup> Em. (دَمَمَ); M (مَم).

$$^{866}\text{M}^{\text{ac}} (\text{مخمس}); \text{M}^{\text{pc}} (\text{مخمس}) (\text{mg}).$$



<sup>872</sup> Em. (ميد); M (مند).



**APPENDIX 4.b.: Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous (initial Catholic redaction)**  
(translation)

Habakkuk the Prophet was crying to God, saying: *How long will I cry to You, Lord, and You will not answer me? [How long] will I shout to You, while in affliction, and You will not save me? Why have You shown me the wickedness and the labour so that I would see plunder and iniquity in the city? Why do you look to those who scorn [You] and You hold Your peace? The lawless treads over the righteous one and You will make men as the fishes in the sea and as the creeping things without a ruler. The judgement and the opposition got to prevail; therefore, the law was torn in pieces and the judgement does not reach its end, as the lawless prevailed over the righteous one; therefore, a perverse<sup>873</sup> judgement goes forth<sup>874</sup>. And again, because he saw the prosperity of the sinners, David the Prophet [said]: My feet were almost stumbling and my steps almost slipped as nothing, for I was envious of the wicked when I saw/was seeing the peace of the lawless: they do not partake in the labour of men and they are not scourged like [other] men<sup>875</sup>. Again, they acted according to the advice of [their] heart; they thought and spoke evil and they spoke iniquity against the Most Exalted One. They set their mouth in heaven and their tongue walks through the earth<sup>876</sup>. And also many among the Christians while seeing the prosperity and welfare of the evil ones/[men], are very much scandalized because of them, but if we consider their end, we will cast away [all] doubt concerning them. For this reason, David says: *If I had said "I will do as they [do]" , there would be wickedness before me. Until I would enter the sanctuary of God so as to understand their end: You will set them according to their perfidy and cast them down when they will exalt themselves. How [91vB] of a sudden they came to be [a matter] of amazement: they ceased to be and failed by reason of [their] confusion, as one who awakes from a dream<sup>877</sup>! In [Your] city, Lord, You will despise their appearance<sup>878</sup>. Therefore, let us consider the end of the lawless and let us know the truth! For, as Blessed David says, they boast and exalt themselves like the trees of the woods, but all of a sudden they perish and are not to be found in their place<sup>879</sup>. For all deceitful men are like a breath; because the man walks [only] in appearance<sup>880</sup>. And so, the kings are not [true] kings, but they show the likeness of kings and the riches are not riches, but a shadow of the true riches and so on. Thus, the worldly prosperity is not prosperity, but poverty and we see those prosperous of a sudden descending to Sheol. For, this world is like a field in which one finds tares among the wheatears and the Head of the house waits for the harvest and expects the conversion of the lawless. And when He harvests, He throws the straw into the fire and puts the wheat into the barn of heavens<sup>881</sup>. Take a look, my brothers, to the pleasantness of God! Mar Gregory the Pope [says]: "the righteous [one] is scourged in order to be corrected, as he is preserved for glory; and the wicked succumbs to his own luxury, because he benefits entirely from the worldly blessings, while being deprived of the heavenly ones; for this is how are fattened the calves which are to be slaughtered, and the one who labours under a yoke is brought into subjection<sup>882</sup>. For, since God knows that the lawless ones will return to Sheol and will be tormented there forever, He makes them rejoice in this world on account**

<sup>873</sup> Literally, "unnatural".

<sup>874</sup> Habakkuk 1:2-3, 13-14, 3-4.

<sup>875</sup> Psalms 73: 2-3.5.

<sup>876</sup> Psalms 73: 7-9.

<sup>877</sup> Literally, "while seeing a dream".

<sup>878</sup> Psalms 73: 15-20.

<sup>879</sup> Psalms 37: 35-36.

<sup>880</sup> Psalms 39: 6-7.

<sup>881</sup> Allusion to Matthew 13: 24-30.

<sup>882</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book XXI, chapter IV. 8.



of the good deeds they are doing, such as almsgiving, [92rA] fasting and so on. And as a reward for these, God grants them the corporeal blessings, but He chastises the righteous and the chosen ones in [this] world so as to bless them with good things forever. Thus, the corporeal blessings are not true blessings, but they are gifts for mankind in general and for the irrational life. For this reason, let us not be sad if we are not granted the things that the Gentiles seek, but first of all let us seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness which are the good and everlasting blessings; for the worldly ones are passing away according to the word of Blessed Paul: *the form of the world is passing away*<sup>883</sup>.

For this reason, as a king has in his hands special gifts<sup>884</sup> in order to bestow them upon his [own] friends and other [gifts] for the others, likewise God, the King of perpetual adoration/adored forever /perpetually adored King, *chastises those whom He loves*<sup>885</sup> in [this] world and bestows upon them the sublime gifts of His Spirit, and fills their hearts with spiritual pleasantness and with the hope for the everlasting life. Compared to the corporeal gifts, the [spiritual] ones are light, while the [corporeal] ones are darkness. *Therefore, do not emulate the lawless and do not envy the evildoers, since they dry up as the hay and quickly wither away as the green herbs*<sup>886</sup>, *but hold yourself back from evil and do good*<sup>887</sup>. *For the rich have wanted and have suffered hunger and those who seek God will not be deprived of good*<sup>888</sup> and *the man of peace has a good ending*<sup>889</sup>. Again, since the heavenly beatitude is the supreme good, it cannot be attained through the luxuries of the world, but through many afflictions. For, we see that a ploughman tills [the ground] and harrows [92rB] [it] and reaps [the harvest], and he labours and struggles with the troubles of the heat and of the cold, so as to gather the crops of the earth; and [also that] an assiduous/laborious merchant renounces his own life for the sake of his merchandise. Therefore, if for the sake of earthly things men are so diligent, is it not even more necessary that we bear labours and get afflicted for the Kingdom of Heaven, about which our Lord said that *it is taken by violence and the violent are seizing it*<sup>890</sup>? Blessed Cyprian recounts about one brother that while he was very anxious not to die and was seeking for an answer, a young man with an awe-inspiring appearance stood next to him and threatened and spoke to him with a vehement outcry: ‘You are afraid of pain, and you do not want to leave [this world]! What should I do with you?’<sup>891</sup> Therefore, it is not enough to show virtue through words, if we are not capable of comparable deeds. Hence, *blessed are those who mourn as they will be comforted*<sup>892</sup>. Then, let us remember that we inherit the heavens through these afflictions. For this reason Blessed Paul says that *we ought to enter the Kingdom of Heaven through many afflictions*<sup>893</sup>. Remember that after the sin of Adam and his expulsion from the Paradise we are dwelling this earth which belongs to the beasts, and so, we cannot possess two blessings, that is [both] the earthly and the heavenly ones. For we are exiled and we depart from our Lord to this world, and so we should not wonder if we are afflicted like the sons of Israel who in Egypt, the land of their sojourning, were wearied by the Egyptians with the making/forming of bricks. But when

<sup>883</sup> 1 Corinthians 7: 31.

<sup>884</sup> The construction mimics the use of transient possession in Malayalam.

<sup>885</sup> Hebrews 12: 6.

<sup>886</sup> Psalms 37: 1-2.

<sup>887</sup> Psalms 34: 15.

<sup>888</sup> Psalms 34: 11.

<sup>889</sup> Psalms 37: 37.

<sup>890</sup> Matthew 11: 12.

<sup>891</sup> Cyprian of Carthage, *Liber de mortalitate*, chapter 19 (Migne, PL 4: 595A-B).

<sup>892</sup> Matthew 5: 4.

<sup>893</sup> Acts of the Apostles 14: 22.



they fled from Egypt and passed over the sea, they immediately received the Law of God and He fed them with bread from heaven. [92vA] Likewise, those who want to inherit life, are afflicted in this world, but they rejoice in heaven. For, the whole world would not be sufficient for the reward of our labour. For this reason, in the Second Letter to the Corinthians, Blessed Paul says: *For, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, in the same way, also our comfort abounds [in us], through Christ. For, we know that if you partake in the sufferings, you also partake in the comfort*<sup>894</sup>. And again, he says: *For this reason, we do not grow weary; for, even if our outward man is corrupted, yet from day to day he gets renewed from the inside. For, although the affliction of this time is feeble and light, it prepares endless glory for us unto the ages of ages. So that we do not rejoice in the visible [things], for the visible [things] belong to [this] time, but the invisible ones last forever*<sup>895</sup>. *For we know that if our house which is in this corporeal world would be dissolved, we still have a building from God, a house not made by hands and everlasting in heaven. Also, because of this we groan and long to assume our house from heaven*<sup>896</sup>. Again, through the worldly afflictions our heart is elevated so as to earnestly desire the heavenly [things], as it is written in the Law about the sons of Israel, [namely] that they were afflicted by Pharaoh who was killing their children; and for this reason, [i.e.] in order to be ransomed from these afflictions, they put their trust in Moses and together with him they fled away from captivity. And were there no afflictions happening to them, then they would not have thought about fleeing away from the slavery [inflicted on them by] their enemies. Likewise, so that we would hate the world and love the indissoluble blessings, God, according to His will, also decided that we should be afflicted in this transitory life, so that we would think of [92vB] the unperishable life. Mar Pontianus the Bishop [says:] “through the wonderful providence of God it happens that the righteous ones are troubled by afflictions, so that when the truth calls them towards [its] desire, [then] this world chases them away from [the truth] through the afflictions that it imposes on them. And [it also happens that] the easier all this deters the mind from the desire of this world, the more [the mind] is driven back towards the place where it is called”<sup>897</sup>. For, if we do not want to leave this world, although it is bitter, then, were it to be sweet, how much less we would have wanted to leave it. Therefore, the affliction is a difficulty which drives us back towards God. Mar Gregory the Pope [says]: “the inactive spirit is reproved by scourges so that it would bestir itself and the harshness of the chastisement/correction becomes a source of light”<sup>898</sup>. And Blessed David says: *when He was killing them, they were seeking Him, and they were returning [to Him] and rising towards Him early [in the morning]*<sup>899</sup>. The same thing is also shown to us by the story of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. While he was walking in the upper chamber of his palace and was watching the great city of Babylon, the capital of his kingdom, he said: ‘Behold! Is it not this the great Babylon, which I have built up as a the house of the kingdom through the power of my own strength and for the splendour of my magnificence?’ And whilst he was speaking [so], a voice fell down from heaven and said: ‘It is said to you, Nebuchadnezzar king: “The kingdom will pass from you and [men] will drive you out from among men, and your dwelling will be together with the wild beasts, and you will eat grass like an ox. And seven periods of time will pass over you until you will know that The Most High [God] has the power over the kingdom of men, and He gives it to whomever He wants”’. And in that [93rA] very

<sup>894</sup> 2 Corinthians 1: 5. 7.

<sup>895</sup> 2 Corinthians 4: 16-18

<sup>896</sup> 2 Corinthians 5: 1-2.

<sup>897</sup> I.e., towards the truth; Pope Pontian apud Isidorum Mercatorem (Migne, PL 130: 142A-B).

<sup>898</sup> Cf. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book VI, chapter XXIII. 40.

<sup>899</sup> Psalms 78: 34-35.



hour/moment his appearance was changed and he was cast out from among men, and was eating grass like an ox; his body was wet with dew from heaven and his nails were like birds' [claws]. As the teachers of [such] stories<sup>900</sup> say, his body was from before as that of an ox, and from behind as that [of] a lion. And after seven periods of time it happened that Nebuchadnezzar was brought to his senses<sup>901</sup> through this affliction; he was chastened and he lifted up his eyes to the heavens, and he repented and submitted to God, and humbled himself before [God]<sup>902</sup>. For this reason, David says: *do not be like a horse, nor like a mule without understanding, which are tamed with a bridle since their early age*<sup>903</sup>, that is to say, through chastisement/correction God waits for the sinners. Again, are well known the afflictions of those who are well-pleasing to God and who are His servants. For this reason, in the Holy Letter to the Romans, Paul says: *we also glorify ourselves in afflictions, because we know that affliction perfects in us endurance, and endurance trial, and trial hope, and hope does not put [us] to shame*<sup>904</sup>. And the Holy Books show us this [fact] in many places: for, behold, the righteous Abel was killed by his brother Cain, and while Noah was making the ark, he was mocked by the lawless who perished through the flood. Abraham was persecuted by the Chaldeans, and Isaac by Ishmael, Jacob by Esau, Joseph by his brothers, and Moses together with all the sons of Israel by the Egyptians. The righteous Job was struck with leprosy<sup>905</sup> and with the loss of all his possession, which was/consisted of *seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred female donkeys*; and his household was the greatest [93rB] of all the people of the East<sup>906</sup>. And, alas, his wife was reviling him and urging him to curse God and die, but he told her: *'You have spoken as one of the foolish women, for, if we have received good [things] from the hand of God, why would I not endure the evil [things]?'*<sup>907</sup> Likewise the law-abiding Tobit, merciful towards the living and the dead, after [all] his good deeds was blinded, and he was reviled by his wife. Despite of the fact that he was blind, when she stole a lamb, he heard its bleating and asked her to bring it back to its owners, but she was scorning him<sup>908</sup>. Again, David was persecuted by Saul, and despised by Absalom, his son, and reviled by Shimei<sup>909</sup>. The Prophet Isaiah was sawn in two by Mannaseh, the King of Israel; Jeremiah was stoned by the Jews, Ezekiel was killed by the commander of the army of the Jews. Amos died because Jeroboam stabbed his temples with nails. Saint John the Baptist was thrown in prison by King Herod and beheaded. Again, Peter the Apostle was crucified for the true faith, and Paul was killed by sword, and all the Apostles were scourged and persecuted. The martyrs delivered themselves up to death, the confessors [of the faith] were tempted, the virgin women were wearied and became victorious, and the Blessed Bearer of God suffered more than all holy men and women. For this reason, [Simeon] told her: *A spear will pierce your own soul*<sup>910</sup>, that is to say indescribable suffering. For, through the death of her Son, she endured the [birth]-pangs that she did not feel while giving birth. Last [of all], we know how much Christ our Lord suffered for our salvation. About this matter, in the Letter to the Hebrews, Paul says [the following]: *therefore, look how much He endured from*

<sup>900</sup> See Peter Comestor, *Historia Scholastica* (Migne PL 198: 1452A).

<sup>901</sup> Literally, "he became chaste, modest, sober".

<sup>902</sup> See Daniel 4: 26-31.

<sup>903</sup> Psalms 32: 9.

<sup>904</sup> Romans 5: 3-5.

<sup>905</sup> Literally, "ulcerations".

<sup>906</sup> See Job 1: 3.

<sup>907</sup> Job 2: 10.

<sup>908</sup> See Tobit 2: 19-23 (in the Peshitta version, the corresponding passage is Tobit 2: 11-14).

<sup>909</sup> See 2 Samuel 16: 5-8.

<sup>910</sup> Luke 2: 35.



*those sinners [93vA] who were enemies to themselves, so that you would not grow weary and weak; you are not yet reaching to the point of [shedding your own] blood in the struggle against the sin*<sup>911</sup>.

Consequently, it would not be possible for anyone to receive the crown without affliction. For the sign of the Christian is [in]??? the Cross, without which we cannot become disciples of Christ, as He says in the Holy Gospel<sup>912</sup>. And in order to show forth [this fact] this [is written] in the Book of Ezekiel the Prophet: when the Lord was sending angels holding swords [into their hands] for the desolation of the people trespassing [the Law of God], there was a writer together with them. He was clothed with linen and [had] an ink-pot fastened to his belt, so that he would draw a sign over the mourning and wearied men, in order to distinguish them from those whom the angels were striking, and so that [the mourning and the wearied] would not be wounded together with the others<sup>913</sup>. Thus, it is known that mournfulness and labour belong to the righteous ones who are pleasing to God<sup>914</sup>. For this reason, our Lord said: *Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh*<sup>915</sup>. Again, He says: *Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation! Woe to you who are filled, for you shall starve! Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall weep and mourn*.<sup>916</sup> Therefore, let the cheerful men of this world fear the righteousness of God! The righteous Job [says]: *I have seen a fool with a firm root and I cursed his beauty immediately; his sons shall flee afar from salvation [and] they shall be crushed at the gate and there shall be no escape [for them]*<sup>917</sup>. Again, the temporary afflictions are a correction for those who desire salvation. For this reason, Blessed Paul says in the Letter to the Hebrews: *Have you forgotten the teaching that we told you as to [our] sons? My son, do not neglect the correction of the Lord, and do not feel weakened when you are rebuked by Him. For the Lord corrects the one whom [93vB] He loves, and He scourges the sons whom He accepts. Therefore, endure the correction, because God cares for you as for His sons. For what son is there whom his father does not correct? And if you were deprived of the correction by which everyone is corrected, then you would have been strangers and not sons. And if our fathers in the flesh were correcting us and we were respecting them, how much more ought we to be subject to the Father of the spirits and live? For [the fathers in the flesh] were correcting us, as they wished, for this short time, but God [corrects us] for our own help, so that we partake His holiness. And at its own time, every correction is not to be endured as if it would belong to gladness, but as belonging to sadness. However, in the end, [it is to be endured], because it bestows the fruit of peace and righteousness to those who have been trained by it*<sup>918</sup>. As the gold is tested in the furnace of fire, likewise<sup>919</sup> etc. Jesus Ben Sira [says]: *The kiln of fire proves the potter's vessels and the temptations of the afflictions [prove] the righteous men*<sup>920</sup>. Again, David says: *Your rod and Your staff, they comforted me*<sup>921</sup>. For this reason, Jesus Ben Sira exhorts us and says: *let us prepare ourselves for temptations whenever we are approaching the works of God*<sup>922</sup>. And as we read in the Gospel that a great storm arose over sea when our Lord was sleeping<sup>923</sup>, likewise when

<sup>911</sup> Hebrews 12: 3-4.

<sup>912</sup> See Matthew 16: 24.

<sup>913</sup> See Ezekiel 9: 1-6.

<sup>914</sup> Literally, "pleasing before God".

<sup>915</sup> Luke 6: 21.

<sup>916</sup> Luke 6: 24-25.

<sup>917</sup> Job 5: 3-4.

<sup>918</sup> Hebrews 12: 5-11.

<sup>919</sup> Siracides 2: 5; Wisdom of Solomon 3: 6.

<sup>920</sup> Latin Siracides 27: 6.

<sup>921</sup> Psalms 23: 4.

<sup>922</sup> Siracides 2: 1.

<sup>923</sup> See Matthew 8: 23-27; Mark 4: 35-41; Luke 8: 22-25.



we begin the work of God, various temptations weary us, which did not happen [before] when we were proceeding on the way of our sins – for we were acting according to the will of Satan; but after we have fled from his slavery, he strives greatly in order to subdue us. For this reason, Angel Raphael tells Tobit: *And because you were accepted by God, it was necessary that temptation should prove you*<sup>924</sup>. [94rA] And as a sign of this [matter], when our Lord was crucified, [the soldiers] offered Him vinegar to drink and He did not drink it, but just tasted from it, in order to signify that He was leaving the rest of His Passion to His friends. For this reason, in the Second Letter to Timothy, Blessed Paul says: *All those who want to live in the fear of God, in Jesus Christ, will be persecuted*<sup>925</sup>. Again, the afflictions are given to us as a retribution on account of our sins, so that we would not be judged in the world to come. And the story of David shows us this fact. The First Book of the Chronicles<sup>926</sup> recounts that David told Joab, the commander of his army: ‘Go and count for me Israel and Judah, walking through every tribe from Dan to Beersheba; and count the people, so that I would know its number!’ And Joab answered to the king: ‘May the Lord, your God, add [to the number] of your people one hundred times more! Why does my Lord seek this?’ But the word of the king prevailed over Joab and the commanders of the army. And they departed from before the king in order to count the people and went round all that land; and after nine months and twenty days they went to Jerusalem and Joab gave the king the number of the counted people<sup>927</sup>. And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand warriors able to draw a sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand<sup>928</sup>. And after having counted the people, David repented in his heart and told the Lord: ‘I have sinned greatly through what I did, but I beseech you, remove the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly!’ And David got up early in the morning and the word of God was [spoken] to Gad the prophet, so that [Gad] would tell it [to David]: ‘Go and tell David: “These [words] says Lord: «From [94rB] three things that I am setting against you, choose the one that I will do to you.»”’ And Gad came to David, and made [things] manifest to him, and said: ‘Either there will come a famine in your land for seven years<sup>929</sup>, or for three months you will be fleeing before your enemies and they will chase you away, or there will be a pestilence for three days in your land. Therefore, chose and make manifest to me what you will answer to the One Who sent me!’ And David told Gad: ‘I am very weary, but it is better for me to fall down in the hands of the Lord, for His mercy is abundant, rather than to be delivered up in the hands of men.’ And the Lord yielded pestilence in Israel from daybreak until the time of the afternoon meal<sup>930</sup>. And seventy thousand men died from among the people, from Dan to Beersheba, and the angel of God stretched forth his hand over Jerusalem in order to destroy it. And the Lord was moved with mercy over [their] affliction and told the angel who was decimating the people: ‘It is enough, now leave your hand to rest.’ And the angel of the Lord was standing by the threshing floor of Areunah the Jebusite. And when he saw the angel, David said to the Lord: ‘Behold, I have sinned and I committed iniquity; and these ones who are [guiltless like] sheep, what did they do? I beseech You, may Your hand turn now upon me and upon the house of my father!’ And that day Gad came to David and told him: ‘Rise and set up an altar before the Lord, in the threshing floor of Areunah the Jebusite!’ And David rose thitherward, bought the threshing floors from Areunah with fifty

<sup>924</sup> Tobit 12: 13.

<sup>925</sup> 2 Timothy 3: 12.

<sup>926</sup> See 1 Chronicles 21; in fact, this account rather relies on the parallel account from 2 Samuel 24.

<sup>927</sup> Literally, “the number of the counting of the people”.

<sup>928</sup> 2 Samuel 24: 9; pace 1 Chronicles 21: 5.

<sup>929</sup> 2 Samuel 24: 13; pace 1 Chronicles 21: 12.

<sup>930</sup> In the text (ⲁⲃⲟⲓⲗ), which apparently designates “the meal eaten by reapers at 3 p.m.” (see Payne Smith s.v.).



shekels<sup>931</sup>, and built an altar to the Lord. And he brought up on the altar [offerings of] crops and holocausts. And the Lord felt pity for the people and the pestilence was averted from Israel. Jeremiah [says]: *I will suddenly speak against a nation and against a kingdom so as to extirpate and destroy it, and if [94vA] that people repents of its evil, I will also repent of the evil that I have thought to do to it. And I will immediately speak about [that] kingdom so as to build it up and plant it*<sup>932</sup>. Again, in the Second Book of the Kingdoms we read that in the days of David there was famine for three years. And David asked the counsel of the Lord on this matter and [the Lord] answered him that this famine happened because of Saul who had already died and his house [that was guilty] of blood, since he killed the Gibeonites. Because they were the remnant of the Amorites, the sons of Israel had sworn that they would not be killed, but Saul, out of ignorant jealousy, killed many of them. And David handed over and gave them seven men who were from the house of Saul and [the Gibeonites] hanged them, and the wrath of God over the people ceased<sup>933</sup>. Therefore, when we are afflicted by God because of our sins, let us do what Jeremiah the prophet said, that is to say: *Let us examine our ways, let us pray and return to the Lord!*<sup>934</sup>. For the Eastern Christians of Mar Sabrišo‘ the Bishop have done this way; in that time, due to the multitude of the sins of men a pestilence almost decimated the men of Beth Garmai, Assyria and Nineveh. And it happened that while this holy man, Mar Sabrišo‘, was praying to God [to cease] the punishment of [divine] wrath which was ravaging his flock, he heard the voice of an angel saying: ‘Proclaim a fast, and make a rogation, and the pestilence will be removed from you!’ Immediately the holy man ordered that the people of the Lord would be gathered to the church and would observe the fast. And in the first day of intercession, which was Monday, it happened that the Angel of the Lord withdrew his hand and nobody was afflicted [94vB] anymore by the plague. And when the sixth day of the week, which is Friday, came, the people took the Holy Sacraments and they were sanctified, and since then nobody died. It is from this [event] that this three days fasting has been transmitted [to us]. In the same way, also the sinful Ninevites repented through the preaching of Jonas and they were not reproved; and for the chastisement of the people it did not rain for three years and six months, according to the word of Elijah. Mar Cyprian the Bishop Martyr says: Why do we wonder that God is scourging us as we are sinners? Although we are fighting against the deeds of our sins, we are unrighteous judges; being human we do not want to be reproved by God, but [we reprove] those partaking our [human] nature<sup>935</sup>.

<sup>931</sup> 2 Samuel 24: 24; pace 1 Chronicles 21: 26; the reading (ܡܠܚܬܐ ܫܡܝܬܐ) might be either the result of the contamination of the Peshitta version, which reads: (ܡܠܚܬܐ ܫܡܝܬܐ), with other sources, or the result of a memory quote.

<sup>932</sup> Jeremiah 18: 7-9.

<sup>933</sup> Paraphrase of 2 Kings 21.

<sup>934</sup> Lamentations 3: 40.

<sup>935</sup> Perhaps a quote taken out of context from Cyprian of Carthage, *Ad Demetrianum*, chapter 8 or 10 (see Migne, PL 4: 549 A-B and 551A-B).



**APPENDIX 5.a.: *Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous* (the Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermon) (text edition)**

**Note on the text edition**

I am providing a semi-diplomatic edition of the sermon on the basis on the basis of MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1: fol. 102r-105v. For emendation of the common parts, I have used as well the text of the initial Catholic redaction of the sermon from MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 91vA-94vB. All the interventions into the text have been recorded in the critical notes. Since it is not always very clear how and why the scribe of this manuscript used the dots, I have generally tried to replicate in the edition the use of the dots as they appear the manuscript. I have also not corrected the misuse of *rukākhā* and *quššāyā*.

**Abbreviations and conventional signs:**

T = MS Thozhiyur Syriac 1

M = MS Mannanam Syriac 46

em. = emendavi

coni = conieci

[...] = interpolation

<...> = addition of the editor



[illegible] $^{936}\text{Em. (فد); T (فد).$ <sup>937</sup> M (م); T (م).

<sup>938</sup> M (هلل منج); T (دل منج).

<sup>939</sup> M (دلت); T (دلت).

<sup>940</sup> M (محمده); T (محمد).

<sup>941</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠); T (𐎠𐎡𐎴𐎧𐎺𐎠).

<sup>942</sup> Em. (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎢); T (𐎠𐎢𐎡𐎢).

<sup>943</sup> Em. (مَلَدَ); T (مَلَدَ).

<sup>944</sup> Em. (مده و صم); T (مده و صمت).











**APPENDIX 5.b.: Sermon on the Afflictions of the Righteous** (the Syriac Orthodox revision of the sermon) (translation)

Habakkuk the Prophet was crying to God, saying: *How long will I cry to You, Lord, and You will not answer me? [How long] will I shout to You, while in affliction, and You will not save me? Why have you shown me the wickedness and the labour so that I would see plunder and iniquity in the city? Why do you look to those who scorn [You] and You hold Your peace? The lawless treads over the righteous one; You will make men as the fishes in the sea and as the creeping things without a ruler. The judgement and the opposition got to prevail; therefore, the law was torn in pieces and the judgement does not reach its end, as the lawless prevailed over the righteous one; therefore, a perverse judgement goes forth*<sup>962</sup>. Again, when he saw the prosperity of the sinners, David the Prophet [said]: *My feet were almost stumbling and my steps almost slipped as nothing, for I was envious of the wicked when I saw/was seeing the peace of the lawless: they do not partake in the labour of men and they are not scourged like [other] men*<sup>963</sup>. Again, *they acted according to the advice of [their] heart; they thought to speak evil and they spoke iniquity against the Most Exalted One. They set their mouth [fol. 102v] in heaven and their tongue walks through the earth*<sup>964</sup>. And also many true Christians were very much scandalized by the prosperity and welfare of the evil ones/[men], but if we consider their end, we will cast away [all] doubt concerning them. For this reason David says again: *If I had said “I will do as they [do]”, there would be wickedness before me. Until I would enter the sanctuary of God and I would understand their end: You will set them according to their perfidy and cast them down when they will exalt themselves. How of a sudden they came to be [a matter] of amazement: they ceased to be and failed by reason of [their] confusion, as one who awakes from a dream! In [Your] city, Lord, You will despise their appearance*<sup>965</sup>. Therefore, let us consider the end of the lawless and let us know the truth! For, as the Blessed David says, *they boast and exalt themselves like a tree of the woods; when I passed by, it was not there anymore and I looked for it and so on*<sup>966</sup>. Again, he says: *For the deceitful men are like a breath*<sup>967</sup>. Again, in Matthew, the tenth section [ṣḥāḥā] [of] the Gospel: *The Kingdom of Heavens is similar to the man who sowed good seeds in His field; and while his men were sleeping, His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. [fol. 103r] The tares also appeared and the servants of the Lord of the house approached and told Him: Our Lord, did you not sow good seed in your field? From whence [then] does it have tares? He answered them: An enemy did this. His servants asked Him: Do you want us to go and collect them? He answered them: Lest while gathering the tares you would also root up the wheatears together with them, let both of them rather grow together until the harvest. And at the time of the harvest I will tell to the reapers: First, gather the tares and bind them in bundles to be burnt, and gather the wheat into My barns!*<sup>968</sup> That is to say, *the Sower is the Son of Men; the field is the world; the good seed are the righteous; the tares are the evil ones and the sinners; the enemy is Satan; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels and so on*<sup>969</sup>. For this reason, Gregory the Patriarch says: the righteous [one] is scourged in order to be corrected, as he is preserved for the glory; and the lawless succumbs to

<sup>962</sup> Habakkuk 1: 2-3, 13-14, 3-4.

<sup>963</sup> Psalms 73: 2-5.

<sup>964</sup> Psalms 73:7-9.

<sup>965</sup> Psalms 73: 15-21.

<sup>966</sup> Psalms 37: 35-36.

<sup>967</sup> Psalms 39: 6.

<sup>968</sup> Matthew 13: 24-30.

<sup>969</sup> Matthew 13: 37-39.



his own luxury, because he abounds entirely in the worldly goods, for which reason [fol. 103v] the heavenly ones are not given to him; for this is how the calves which are to be slaughtered are fattened, and the one who labors under a yoke is brought into subjection<sup>970</sup>. And again, the Blessed Paul says: *God chastises those whom He loves*<sup>971</sup> in this world and bestows upon them the sublime gifts of His Spirit and fills their hearts with spiritual pleasure and with hope for the everlasting life. For this reason, David says: *do not emulate the lawless and do not envy the evil doers, since they dry up as the hay and quickly wither away as the green herbs*<sup>972</sup>. Again, he says: *hold yourself back from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it*<sup>973</sup>. [And] he says again: *the rich have wanted and have suffered hunger and those who seek God will not be deprived of any good*<sup>974</sup> and *the man of peace has a good ending*<sup>975</sup>. For this reason, Blessed Paul [in the Second Letter] to the Corinthians says: *for, as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, in the same way, also our consolation/comfort abounds [in us], through Christ. For, we know that if you partake in the sufferings, you also partake in the consolation/comfort*<sup>976</sup>. Again, our Lord says in the Gospel: *the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence/is taken by violence and the violent are seizing it*<sup>977</sup>. [fol. 104r] For this reason, after the sons of Israel had been afflicted by the Egyptians in the land of Egypt, they inherited the earthly Jerusalem<sup>978</sup>. Again, Matthew said in [his] Gospel: *Blessed are those who mourn, as they will be comforted/receive consolation*<sup>979</sup>; *blessed are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*<sup>980</sup>. Then, let us remember that we inherit the Kingdom through these afflictions. For this reason, Blessed Paul says that *we ought to enter the Kingdom of Heaven through many afflictions*<sup>981</sup>. Remember that after the sin of our father, Adam, and his expulsion from the Paradise we are dwelling this earth which belongs to the beasts, and so, we cannot possess two blessings, that is [both] the earthly and the heavenly ones. For we are exiled and we depart from our Lord to this world, and so, we should not wonder if we are afflicted. For this reason, [Paul] says again: *we do not grow weary; for, even if [our] outward man is corrupted, yet from day to day we are getting renewed from the inside. For, although the affliction of this time is feeble and light, it prepares endless glory for us unto the ages of ages*<sup>982</sup>. For this reason, in the Holy Letter to the Romans Paul says: *we also glorify ourselves in our afflictions, because we know that affliction* [fol. 104v] *perfects in us endurance, and endurance trial, and trial hope, and hope does not put [us] to shame*<sup>983</sup>; that is, listen, my brothers, to the histories of the righteous Job! Let us remember again about the Cross; the Cross is a [a sign of] dishonour/reproach/ignominy. For this reason, our Lord says in His Gospel: *whoever wishes to come after Me, let him take up his cross and come after Me*<sup>984</sup>. Without it we cannot become His disciples. For this reason, Paul says in [his] Letter: *My son, do not neglect the correction of the Lord, and do not feel weakened when you are*

<sup>970</sup> Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob*, Book XXI, chapter IV.8.

<sup>971</sup> Hebrews 12: 6.

<sup>972</sup> Psalms 37: 1-2.

<sup>973</sup> Psalms 34: 15.

<sup>974</sup> Psalms 34: 11.

<sup>975</sup> Psalms 37: 37.

<sup>976</sup> 2 Corinthians 1: 5, 7.

<sup>977</sup> Matthew 11: 12.

<sup>978</sup> Literally, "the Jerusalem from below".

<sup>979</sup> Matthew 5: 4.

<sup>980</sup> Matthew 5: 10.

<sup>981</sup> Acts of the Apostles 14: 22.

<sup>982</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:16-17.

<sup>983</sup> Romans 5: 3-5.

<sup>984</sup> Matthew 16: 24.



rebuked by Him. For the Lord corrects the one whom He loves, and He scourges the sons whom He accepts. Therefore, endure the correction, because God cares for you as for His sons. For what son is there whom his father does not correct? And if you were deprived of the correction by which everyone is corrected, then you would have been strangers and not sons. And if our fathers in the flesh were correcting us and we were respecting them, how much more ought we to be subject to our spiritual fathers<sup>985</sup> and live?<sup>986</sup> For as the gold is tested in the furnace of fire, likewise<sup>987</sup> [fol. 105r] etc. Jesus Ben Sira [says]: the kiln of fire proves the potter's vessels and the temptation of the affliction [proves] the righteous men<sup>988</sup>. Again, David the Prophet [says]: Your rod and Your staff, they comforted me<sup>989</sup>. For this reason, the Angel Raphael told Tobit: because you were accepted by God, it was necessary that temptation should prove you<sup>990</sup>. As Isaiah the Prophet says: the affliction chastens<sup>991</sup>. For this reason, Saint James says in [his] Letter: my brothers, count it all joy<sup>992</sup> whenever you enter many and various temptations<sup>993</sup>. Again, Peter who was called Kepa says: my beloved, do not be surprised at the temptations which come upon you, as if something strange were happening to you, since it is for your [own] trial that they come upon you! But rather rejoice insofar as you share in Christ's passion, so that, likewise, you may also rejoice and exult in the revelation of His glory<sup>994</sup>. Therefore, when we are afflicted, let us leave all our sins and desires and let us come towards our Lord in heartfelt prayer! Let us beseech Him and say as the apostles said to Him: Lord, we are perishing, save us!<sup>995</sup> Thus, our Lord will save us [fol. 105v] as He saved Hezekiah, the King of the Jews, from the Assyrians [and] as he saved the prophets, the apostles, the martyrs and the confessors [of faith], and all the holy men and women, and [all] the righteous men and women. Amen.

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<sup>985</sup> Sic!

<sup>986</sup> Hebrews 12: 5-9.

<sup>987</sup> Siracides 2: 5.

<sup>988</sup> Latin Siracides 27:6.

<sup>989</sup> Psalms 23: 4.

<sup>990</sup> Tobit 12: 13.

<sup>991</sup> Literally, "teaches to be chaste", "makes sober".

<sup>992</sup> Literally, "let all joy be to you".

<sup>993</sup> James 1: 2.

<sup>994</sup> 1 Peter 4: 12-13.

<sup>995</sup> Matthew 8: 25.



**APPENDIX 6:** Canticle of glorification for Marian feasts from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā*

MS Paris Syr. BnF 25: fol. 228v-229r<sup>996</sup>:

**ܬܠܬܐ ܕܝܡ ܡܬܡܬܝܢ ܠܕܝܢ ܡܪܝܡ**  
**ܐܡܝܢ ܬܠܬܐ ܕܝܡ ܡܬܡܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ. ܡܢܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ:**  
 ܩܨܡܐ ܠܡܝܚܐ ܠܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ<sup>997</sup> ܠܕܝܢ ܬܠܬܐ ܕܝܡܝܢ  
 ܡܠܟܐ<sup>998</sup> ܠܕܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܝܚܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
**ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ**<sup>1000</sup>  
 ܕܡܠܟܐ ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1001</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1002</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
**ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ**  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1004</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1005</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
**ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ**<sup>1006</sup>  
 ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1007</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1008</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1009</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1010</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ  
 ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ<sup>1011</sup> ܕܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ

<sup>996</sup> Again, the abbreviations used in the critical notes are those recommended in *Règles et recommandations pour les éditions critiques...*: em.= emendau; coni.= coniec. I used angle brackets < > to mark editorial additions; the edition is based on MS Parisinus Syriacus BnF 25 (abbreviated as P). This is a semi-diplomatic edition based on a single manuscript; all the interventions in the text have been recorded in the critical notes.

<sup>997</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>998</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>999</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1000</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1001</sup> Coni. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1002</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1003</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1004</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1005</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1006</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1007</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1008</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1009</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1010</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).

<sup>1011</sup> Em. (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ); P (ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ).







Virgin Mary became the cause of goodness for our nature,  
 And from her womb was born the Lord (*Yah*) for our entire salvation,  
 [She was] the cause of life and of holiness for the human race,  
 And the Splendour of the Father and Light of the world was revealed by her.

Oh, our great hope, our sweetness, and the expectation of the generations,  
 We, the wretched ones, find rest upon you through the work of our hands!<sup>1031</sup>  
 Our Intercessor, let your face illuminate upon us, your servants,  
 Through your prayer, o Blessed [Virgin], let us attain your mercy!

Mary is the mother of the Second Adam, God the Word:  
 In the likeness of the earth, she also gave birth without intercourse.  
 The same commandment that gave a sign to the earth to give birth to Adam,  
 that formed His image in her limbs in the likeness of Adam.

As the fire broke out in flames over a tree and did not consume it,<sup>1032</sup>  
 [Likewise] His divinity dwelled upon the Virgin and was not burning her.  
 [God] the Craftsman who without hands had taken the dust,  
 He framed in [the Virgin] a body similar to the first one.<sup>1033</sup>

The promise proceeded from Abraham and dwelled upon David,  
 And from David it came and reached Mary.  
 She concluded the course of the path of promise, by begetting the Life,  
 And [the Life] entered in her limbs so as to rest and dwell [in her] as in a haven.

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<sup>1031</sup> I.e., through prayer.

<sup>1032</sup> Apparently, an allusion to the burning bush from Exodus 3.

<sup>1033</sup> I.e., to the body of Adam.



## APPENDIX 7: The sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle and a response by Francisco Ros from 1607

A report from 1607, which stems from Francisco Ros' jurisdictional controversy with the bishop of Cochin,<sup>1034</sup> contains convincing evidence that the sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle from the *Malabar Sermonary* (number 22 in the synopsis) was written by Francisco Ros. The text of the report is preserved in the 65<sup>th</sup> tome of the Goa-Malabar section of ARSI, between fol. 124r-137v, and it bears the title: "Reposta a hu[m]a apologia feita em favor do S[e]n[h]or Bispo de Cochin contra hum tratado feito en favor da iusto do q[ue] o S[enh]or B[is]po de Angamalle procedeo na prisao do Vigairo de Cranganor".

As shown by Antony Mecherry, the aim of this report from 1607 was to legitimise and defend Francisco Ros' position as the bishop of an ancient and prominent diocese which since immemorial times has been an important Metropolitan See of the Church of the East.<sup>1035</sup> At the Synod of Diamper, the Metropolitan See of Angamaly-Cranganore was reduced to a suffragan bishopric subjected to the *Padroado* Archbishop of Goa. Through Francisco Ros' effort, the diocese of Angamaly was restored to its former Metropolitan status only in 1608.<sup>1036</sup> The response from 1607 reflects Francisco Ros' struggle for the recognition of the Metropolitan status of his diocese. In this context, in order to defend the status of his diocese, Bishop Ros refers to a canon by Theodosius of Seleucia, Patriarch of the Church of the East, included in the *Nomocanon* of 'Abdišo' of Nisibis, as a source of legal authority.<sup>1037</sup> In the report, Francisco Ros writes the following:

E consta por livros antiguiss[im]os, e autenticos q[ue] o beaventurado Apost[olo] S. Thome fendou sete Arceb[is]pados no Oriente distinguindo-os entre si, q[ue] são o da China, das Marcandias no Magor. Dos Heriones que he Cambaia, do Hendo q[ue] he este da Serra[,] do Parsem. dos Rasicaio[s] [,] do Xam, dos Marosajos povos de S[c]ithia e Tartaria onde entra o Cataio, e depois da morte do dito Apostolo por m[ui]tos annos perseverara[m] na fee com seus prelados sujeitos ao Patriarcha de Seleucia; como consta de hum canon antiguiss[im]o de Theodosio Patriarcha, referido por Mar Audixo Arceb[is]po de Armenia, que ha mais de 600 annos q[ue] floreceo em hum livro en q[ue] resumio todos os canones antigos, e no anno. 1120. foi a Roma das partes da India hum Arceb[is]po por nome João Metropolitano da Serra, a visitor o Sumo Pontifice, e darlhe obediencia como referem Elinandus in Cronico, Gesnerus en sua Biblioteca. Nauclerus in Hist[oria] gen[eralis] e S. Dionisio Cartusiano, e outros q[ue] c[e]rta, e segue Staplatonio in serm[one] de Divo Thom[a] Apost[olo]; e todos os successores do Apostolo S. Thome, e predecessores do presente perseverava[m] sempre na [...] <sup>1038</sup> do territorio q[ue] a lei Apostolica lho attribuiu. <sup>1039</sup>

<sup>1034</sup> The document is discussed by Mecherry in id., *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation...*, 267-272.

<sup>1035</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1036</sup> See ibid., 272-274.

<sup>1037</sup> For the general context of this document, see ibid.; for the identification of the canon in the *Nomocanon*, see ibid., 267-268, footnote 342.

<sup>1038</sup> I could not read this word in the document.

<sup>1039</sup> ARSI, Goa-Malabar 65: fol. 131r.







“[A canon] of Theodosius: These six sees, chief among the metropolitan eparchies, namely [the sees] of Elam, of Nisibis, of Prath<sup>1043</sup>, of Assyria<sup>1044</sup>, of Beth Garmai, and of Hulvan – which partook the honour of acting as mediators in the consecration of the Patriarch, [and] which sees are not as remote from one another as other [sees], must gather with the Patriarch once in four years. And also the bishops of a great eparchy, that is [the bishops of] the other metropolitan [eparchies]: of China, of India, of Fars, of Merw, of *Sam*<sup>1045</sup>, of the people of Rayy, of the people of Herat, and of the people of Samarkand – who are far away, and, because of mountains infested with robbers and of terrible seas, are hindered from travelling as they would wish – must send letters of assent to the Patriarch once every six years. In their letters they must show all the general affairs of the places under their [jurisdiction], which are in need of correction. At the same time, from all the great and small cities which are under their [jurisdiction], a [customary] offering must be sent to the Patriarch, according to their means, and, according to the canons of the Fathers, the required [revenue] must be given to the administration of the Patriarchal House. And the synod commands that whoever does not observe these [matters] be deemed worthy of accusation by the synodical assembly; and if he persists shamelessly like a heretic and disregards this matter, let him be deemed worthy of the sentence of a judge!”

The canon quoted above was distorted by Francisco Ros to re-create and legitimize the itinerary of the Apostolic mission of Saint Thomas, while aiming to strengthen the status of his own diocese. Subsequently, the same distortion was passed on in the sermon on Saint Thomas of the *Malabar Sermonary*. The reconstruction of the evangelizing mission of the Apostle Thomas in the sermon used the same Theodosian canon from ‘Abdišo’<sup>1046</sup>’s *Nomocanon*; the author of the sermon added to it the itinerary of the Portuguese expansion in the East.<sup>1046</sup> In the oldest manuscript in which the sermon is preserved (MS Mannanam Syriac 46) this idea is articulated as follows:

For Mar Thoma preached to and taught the Persians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and among the people of Herat (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Merw (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Rayy (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Parthia (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Bactrians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Babylonians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Soqotri (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Indians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Chinese (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Ethiopians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and also to the Magi who were worshipers of our Lord. He baptized and confirmed them.<sup>1047</sup>

In the more recent manuscript of the same sermon (MS Thrissur Syriac 17), the same passage has been augmented:

For Mar Thoma did not preach only to Israel, but in person or through his disciples, [he also preached] to the Persians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and among the people of Herat (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Merw (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Rayy (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Parthia (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and of Media (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Bactrians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and to the Hyrcanians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Babylonians (ܩܕܝܫܐ) and the people of Samarkand (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Soqotri (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Indians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Chinese (ܩܕܝܫܐ) and to the inhabitants of Mahācīna (ܩܕܝܫܐ), to the Ethiopians (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and also to the Magi who were worshipers of our Lord in His infancy. He baptized and confirmed them, and through his disciple, whose name is Thaddaeus (ܬܕܝܐ), he also converted to our Lord, Abgar, the King of Edessa, and the subjects of his kingdom, after Thaddaeus had healed the king of his illness through the sign of the Cross.<sup>1048</sup>

Moreover, like the Rosian report quoted above, the sermon on Saint Thomas from the *Malabar Sermonary* emphasizes the subjection and obedience of the Indian Church to the pope in Rome, by

<sup>1043</sup> I.e. the province of Maishan.

<sup>1044</sup> I.e. of Mosul.

<sup>1045</sup> Assemani’s Latin translation of this canon renders the Syriac (ܩܕܝܫܐ) as *Sciama* (see Mai, *Scriptorum Veterum...*, 146); it may refer to Damascus (see Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, vol. 2, s.v.); I would like to thank Dr. Adrian Pirtea for this suggestion.

<sup>1046</sup> See Mustață, *Sermon on Saint Thomas...*, 39.

<sup>1047</sup> Ibid., 78; for the Syriac original, see ibid., 60.

<sup>1048</sup> Ibid., 78, 60.



making use of the same story according to which a certain John, Patriarch of India, went to Rome to pay homage to Pope Calixt II, in 1122.<sup>1049</sup> In the text of the sermon, its author (presumably the same Francisco Ros) forged the identity of “John the Patriarch of India” (which in European sources was assimilated to that of Prester John<sup>1050</sup>), into the identity of Mar Papa bar Aggai, a fourth century Patriarch of the Church of the East. The reason for doing so was that ‘Abdisho’'s *Nomocanon* contains several spurious letters by Western Church prelates claiming the supremacy of the Catholicos Patriarch of Seleucia Ctesiphon over the whole Church of the East; one such letter is a consolation letter sent by the Western Fathers to Papa the Patriarch (i.e. Papa bar Aggai).<sup>1051</sup> This collection of letters was expressly condemned by the Synod of Diamper, because it was perceived as a threat to Roman papal primacy.<sup>1052</sup>

The emphasis on Saint Thomas as Apostle of the global missions (stemming from his alleged evangelisation of Asia which was forged by distorting the canon attributed to Patriarch Theodosius), the obsession with the *Nomocanon* of ‘Abdisho’ and this legend about Prester John (“the Patriarch of India”) paying homage to Pope Calixt II, in order to legitimize the Catholic presence in India are the landmarks of both the sermon on Saint Thomas from the *Malabar Sermonary* and the Rosian report quoted above. This entanglement of distorted sources could hardly come from two different persons and leads one to the conclusion that the sermon on Saint Thomas from the *Malabar Sermonary* must have been written by Francisco Ros himself.

<sup>1049</sup> I have discussed in detail all the intricacies of this story in the introduction to the *Sermon on Saint Thomas*..., 24-31; however, at that point I did not know about Ros’ *Response* from ARSI Goa-Malabar 65, fol. 124r-137v.

<sup>1050</sup> For the text of this legend about Prester John, see “De Aduentu Patriarchae Indorum ad Vrbem sub Calisto Papa Ilo,” in K. Brewer (ed.), *Prester John: The Legend and Its Sources*, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015): 30-38.

<sup>1051</sup> See Mai, *Scriptorum Veterum*..., 326, 164.

<sup>1052</sup> The collection of letters is explicitly condemned in the Third Action of the Synod of Diamper, chapter XIV, decree 14; the decree refers to ‘Abdisho’'s *Nomocanon* as “The Book which is called of the Synods” [*o livro che chamão dos Synodos*]; see J. H. da Cunha Rivara, *Arquivo Portuguez*..., fasc. 4, 332.



## APPENDIX 8: Letter of Salvador dos Reis to the Congregation *De propaganda fide*

### Text:

E[minentissi]me et Reverendissime Domine!

Litteras Em[inenti]ae V[est]rae datas 12 Julii 1770 accepi 25 Novembris 1771. De primo quidem, quod attinet communicationem, quae hic mere materialis est, Catholicorum cum Schismaticis, ad eam jam tollendam tot ac tantae se offerunt difficultates, ut eas vincere spes nulla sit absque multis perturbationibus et evidenti eorundem Catholicorum periculo.

Prima difficultas est, quod dominantes sint Ethnici pecuniarum cupidissimi, utpote et praecipue Rex Travancorensis, in cujus dominio, praeter paucas in ditione Regis Cochinchinensis sitas, omnes pene Ecclesiae, in quibus est producta communicatio, sitae sunt, qui Rex clare affirmat sibi ab Episcopis Schismaticis lucrum provenire non item a Catholicis. Accepi etiam Brachmanes profato Regi persuasisse, multas et ipsi et regno suo venturas esse calamitates, si novas extruendi ecclesias Catholicis facultatem praebeat. Ut sacrum peragatur in domibus privatis super altare portabile eadem offeruntur difficultates, cum id fieri non possit sine profati Regis potestate. Accedit quod Schismatici in locis ubi est praefata communicatio, plerumq[ue] ditiores, ac proinde potentiores sint Catholicis, atq[ue] his etiam promptiores ad sumptus faciendos; et si quae sit ecclesia in qua Catholici potentiores sunt Schismaticis, hi ab aliis suae sectae hac in re juvantur. Exemplo sit quidam Schismaticus inter illos praecipuus ex oppido Cottágam. Hic dum nuper Catholicam religionem suscepit omnem movere lapidem caeteri Schismatici, eorumq[ue] Archiepiscopi, ut impedirent, neq[ue] adhuc quiescent, ita ut et post duos annos etiamnum dubitem, si possit vivere pacifice in Religione Catholica, non obstante quod primus Regis Cochinchinensis Minister percarus etiam Regi Travancorensi illum apud Regem praedictum multum adjuverit. Preterea et ipsi Catholici rem difficilem faciunt, cum aegre ferunt desistere a praedictis Ecclesiis hac de causa, quae apud illos plurimum valet, quod in eis sepulti sint eorum majores[.]

Communicata re tota; et etiam epistola Em[inenti]ae V[est]rae [fol. 340v] cum Reverendissimo D[omino] Vic[ari]o Apostolico hic mihi respondit videri sibi non debere Catholicos inquietari, sed ob temporum injuriam permitti praefatam materialem communicationem ne tumultus fiat, et perturbationes excitentur; additq[ue] melius esse pauca conservare, quam omnia amittere. Addo, atq[ue] iterum iterumq[ue] conqueror non habere me Missionarios, qui hoc negotium agant.

Non meo, sed ipsius Regis imperio, atque etiam me inscio modo quodam raro sublata est haec communicatio solum in ecclesia dicta Chatuculangare, ubi Rex Cochinchinensis dominatur. Delatis ad Regem quaerelis Catholicorum contra Schismaticos primus hujus Regis minister in medio Ecclesiae ab altari majori ad principalem portam usq[ue] erigi jussit parietem, qui ecclesiam dividat in duas partes aequales una Catholicis, Schismaticis altera assignata. Quod attinet Sacerdotis et altaris ornamenta, facta diligentia, rescivi non ea Catholicis cum Schismaticis eadem esse, sed diversa. Diversum item est tempus, in quo suas caeremonias celebrant.

Denique dico in hac dioecesi tres esse Archiepiscopos, Babylonicum unum et indigenas duos, quos dicunt a Babylonico nuper esse ordinatos; sed de hac ordinatione si vera sit et valida tantum dubito, quantum dubito, si Babilonicus ille sit verus Episcopus, et si quae in ordinatione observanda sint, observaverit.



Postremo dico optare me ut in qualibet ecclesia esset unus saltem sacerdos, cui soli comitti posset Parochi munus; sed cum omnes fere sint lucri magis cupidi, quam animarum, iudicatum est utilius esse Christianis, ut omnes sint Parochi singuli singulis hebdomadibus, vel mensibus. Non desunt tamen aliquae ecclesiae, in quibus unicus est Parochus magis idoneus.

Haec sunt quae Em[inenti]ae V[est]rae et Sacrae huic Congregationi rescribenda censui prompto animo accepturus quidquid mihi a S[acra] hac Congregatione praeceptum fuerit. Interea Deum enixe precor, ut E[minent]iam V[est]ram diutissime servet incolumem, et sacrae purpurae fimbriam [*sic!*] cum profunda veneratione exosculor.

Eminentiae Vestrae

Pocottae in Malabaria

10 Octobris 1772

Humillimus ac devotissimus servus  
Archiepiscopus Cranganorensis<sup>1053</sup>

### Translation:

[Most Eminent and Most Reverend Lord,

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 1771, I received the letter that Your Eminence had sent me on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 1770. First of all, with respect to the participation (*communicatio*) of the Catholics together with the schismatics [in the liturgical celebrations of the latter], which participation is in this case a purely ‘material’ one, there are so many very difficult problems which stand against having abolished this [liturgical participation] by now, that there is no hope to overcome these problems, because of the many troubles and the obvious endangerment [that it would cause] to the same Catholics.

The first problem is that the ruling power is held by pagans who are avid of [material] gain, especially by the King of Travancore, in whose dominion are placed almost all churches, where the aforementioned [liturgical] participation (*communicatio*) happens, except for a few other [such churches] which are placed under the rule of the King of Cochin. The King [of Travancore] openly declares that he gets profit from the schismatic bishops, but not from the Catholic [ones]. I have even learnt that the Brahmins had convinced the aforementioned king that a lot of misfortunes would befall on himself and on his kingdom, provided that he allows the Catholics to build up new churches. The same problems arise from celebrating the mass on portable altars in private houses, as this cannot happen without the official permission of the aforementioned king. In addition to this, in the places where the aforementioned [liturgical] participation happens, the schismatics are in most cases wealthier and, thus, more influential than the Catholics, and more liable to spending money [for churches] than the Catholics. And if in a certain church the Catholics are more powerful than the schismatics, [the schismatics] are helped in this matter by other members belonging to their sect. To give one example, there is a certain schismatic most prominent among those

<sup>1053</sup> APF SC (IOC) 33: fol. 340r-v.



from the town of Kottayam<sup>1054</sup>. When he converted to the Catholic religion recently, the other schismatics and their archbishops left no stone unturned<sup>1055</sup> to prevent him [from converting to the Catholic faith], and up to the present day they still do not desist from disturbing him, so much so that even now, after two years, I would doubt that he is able to live peacefully in the Catholic religion – not withstanding that the chief Minister of the King of Cochin, who is also very dear to the King of Travancore, helped that [Catholic Christian] very much, [by pleading his case] before the King [of Travancore]. Besides this, the Catholics themselves make this situation very difficult, as they are reluctant to leaving the aforementioned churches, because their ancestors are buried in them – which is a very important reason for them.

After informing the Most Reverend Lord, the Apostolic Vicar, about the whole matter, including the letter of Your Eminence, he answered me that, in his opinion, the Catholics should not be troubled [by this matter], but, because of the injustice of [our] times, the aforementioned ‘material’ [liturgical] participation (*communicatio materialis*) should be allowed so as to avoid confusion and not to stir up agitation; he also added that it is better to preserve a few things than to abandon everything. I would add and I am complaining again and again: I do not have missionaries [suitable] to carry out this task.

Not by my [commandment], but by the commandment of the king himself, and without my knowledge, in an uncommon way, this kind of [liturgical] participation had been abolished only in the church called Chattukulangara<sup>1056</sup>, where the King of Cochin rules. After the quarrels of the Catholics against the schismatics had been reported to the king, the chief minister of this king commanded that a wall be built in the middle of this church from the central altar to the main gate, so that [the wall] would divide the church into two equal parts: one part being allotted to the Catholics, and the other one to the schismatics. In what regards

<sup>1054</sup> I would like to thank my colleague, Emy Merin Joy, for identifying “Cottágam” from the text of the letter with Kottayam.

<sup>1055</sup> Literally, “moved every stone”.

<sup>1056</sup> This is the Church of Arthatt also known as the Kunnamkulam Chattukulangara Church. About it, the English missionary Thomas Whitehouse writes in 1872: “In only one of these churches was any remnant of the old independent Syrian community left, and that was Kúnnankúllam; and here, too, they had acquired a hold, since the Church is said, in 1758, to be a *Mixed Church*, or one in which the Syrians and Syro-Romans both worshipped” (Thomas Whitehouse, *Lingerings of Light in a Dark Land: Being Researches into the Past History and Present Condition of the Syrian Church of Malabar*, (London: William Brown and Co., 1873): 171). Further on Whitehouse continues: “In the north-west corner of this district [i.e. district of Trichur], a few miles north of Chowghát, there is, at this present time, an interesting group of Syrian churches, at or within an easy distance of the large Christian town of Kúnnankúllam. They are all united closely together, as they need be, for they are isolated, by many long intervening miles, from the other churches of their party. The mother church of this group is Arth, or, as more commonly called, Artháttá Church, which, standing on a hill with its priests’ houses and other ecclesiastical buildings about it, presents a picturesque appearance in the beautiful landscape which surrounds it on all sides. This edifice was one of the few Syrian churches which suffered in Tippoo’s invasion of Malabar – his troopers having set fire to it, so that its roof and all the woodwork was destroyed. [...] The ecclesiastical arrangements at Artháttá approach nearer to that of a cathedral in early times; or perhaps they may rather be thought to resemble those which prevailed amongst the priests and Levites at Jerusalem. A corporate body of twelve or more Cattanars divide the religious services amongst themselves – two only being “in residence” at a time, and that for a limited period of one month [...] Artháttá Church now stands very much by itself, not having so much as a village or hamlet around it. The Syrians, however, say that it once formed the centre of a large and busy population, but in consequence of an extensive fire which consumed all their habitations, the people migrated *en masse*, and built their new town in a more sheltered situation on the side of a steep hill, about a mile to the north-east, in the vicinity of a large tank, and gave it the name Kúnnankúllamgerry, or *Hill tank town*. The people still show a strong affection for the old spot where their forefathers lived, died, and at last were buried; and therefore the large graveyard at Artháttá Church is the principal burial place of the community” (ibid., 175-176).



the [garments] of the priest and the ornaments of the altar, after an inquiry had been made, I have learnt that they are not the same for both the Catholics and the schismatics, but different. Again, they celebrate [each] their [own] ceremonies at a different time, [and not simultaneously].

Finally, I [would] mention that in this diocese there are three archbishops: one from Babylon and two indigenous ones; [the locals] say that the two [indigenous bishops] have been recently ordained by the Babylonian [archbishop]. However, I doubt whether this ordination is true and valid, as much as I doubt that that Babylonian [man] is a true bishop, or that he observed all the things that need to be observed during an ordination.

Last of all, I say that I wish in every church to be at least a single priest, who would be entrusted exclusively with the role of parish priest! However, since most of [the priests] are avid for [material] gain rather than for the [pastoral] care of the souls, it was judged to be more useful for the Christians if all priests would be parish priests, each of them [in their turn] for a week or for a month. Yet, there are still some churches in which there is a single well suited parish priest.

These are the things that I thought that need to be reported in my answer to Your Eminence and to this Sacred Congregation [*De propaganda fide*], while readily awaiting for any advice from this Sacred Congregation. Meanwhile I pray God earnestly to keep Your Eminence safe and healthy for as long as possible, and in deep veneration I kiss the fringe of Your sacred purple garment!

To Your Eminence

[Written] in Pocotta, in Malabar,  
On the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, 1772

[Your] most humble and devote servant,  
The Archbishop of Cranganore]



## CEU eTD Collection

[illegible]

“Receive the greetings<sup>1063</sup> which are from a people who speaks a foreign tongue towards Your Holiness, our Lord Mor Ignatius the Patriarch, [the one] who [sits] over the Apostolic See which is in Nineveh, and who has been chosen by God! Bring us close to the same See of Your Holiness, and redeem us from the affliction of the Franks<sup>1064</sup>, and send us teachers and divine books, and enlighten us from the darkness of ignorance! Until the present time, we [have been] standing in war with the Franks, and in persecution and affliction, which are full of sufferings. [This is] the

<sup>1064</sup> I.e., the Portuguese.



persecution which was caused by the kings of our lands, who after taking money of bribery from the rich Franks, have been afflicting us without mercy, and have been imposing on us a great tax<sup>1065</sup>. And since sometimes we could [pay the tax], but at times we were not able [to pay it], we have been fleeing away from them from one place to another, because we do not have gold to give to the unmerciful pagan kings, as the Franks do, since we are poor. For this reason, we ask You to send us teachers and books: we do not know the books, because there is no one to teach us. But the learned [man] Stephen has endured many hardships for us. For the honour of Your Holiness he came to us and we received goods from him; he also gave us many alms, and we received [the alms] for You, but we did not give him any gold. The learned Stephen did not take any money from us, as we are poor. For this reason, You should know the hardship that he endured because of [his] journey. He also brought for us much of his gold, but we did not give him anything, because the assemblies of our people could not get together. [Please,] bear with our scarcity [of money] which happened because of our humbleness and poverty! May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of us and with all of our flocks! Amen.”

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<sup>1065</sup> In the original, (خمس) which was used before in the same text with the sense of “bribe”.