

NOTES

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S INFLUENCE ON GABRIEL QAṬRAYA'S THEOLOGY OF EUCHARISTIC CONSECRATION

Almost sixty years ago, Anton Baumstark called attention to the seventh-century Nestorian commentary on the liturgy contained in ms. British Museum Oriental 3336 and noted its importance for the history of that liturgical tradition.¹ Yet it received no substantive treatment in scholarly publications until the contribution of Sarhad Y. Hermiz Jammo in 1966. This Chaldean priest, now pastor of Mother of God Church in Southfield, Michigan, identifies the author as Gabriel Qaṭraya Bar Lip(h)ah, who was a student or possibly assistant professor at the School of Nisibis around 615. The work is judged to have been composed between 615–625.²

As an example of the significance of this work for the history of the Chaldean Mass, Jammo singles out the pericope which explains why the priest, designated to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice,³ approaches the altar after the transfer of the oblations and the solemn profession of faith. It reads as follows:

Up to this point the Church expresses through its types the mystery of the death and burial of Christ. Thence the priest approaches to express the type of the resurrection, through the recitation of the holy words by his mouth and through the signing of the cross with his hand. For just as our Lord Jesus Christ, when he handed over the mysteries, blessed, gave thanks, and spoke, so likewise the Church, according to his command, designates one priest to bless and give thanks in the likeness of Christ our Lord, through the recitation making known that he says the words of our Lord, namely, "This is my body which is broken for you for the remission of sins." And as soon as the priest recites and blesses the bread and wine, (these), through the grace of the Holy Spirit, which comes down, thereupon become the body and blood of Christ, not according to nature but according to faith and efficacy. Not that there are two bodies in Christ: one in heaven, the other on earth. Rather, just as a king and his image do not make two

¹ *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur mit Ausschluss der christlich palästinensischen Texte* (Bonn, 1922) 200, n. 13.

² "Gabriel Qaṭraya et son commentaire sur la liturgie chaldéenne," *OCP* 32 (1966) 39–52.

³ This Nestorian practice is attested as early as the synod of Mar Isaac in 410; J. B. Chabot, *Synodicon orientale ou recueil de synodes nestoriens* (Paris, 1902) 268. In a letter to Jacob, bishop of the island of Darai, Išo 'Yahb I (581–96) places the designation after the liturgy of the word (ibid. 430). Gabriel Qaṭraya explains the meaning: "One priest offers the sacrifice. This is the symbol of the one Pontiff who was immolated for the redemption of our race" (f. 201r; S. Y. H. Jammo, *La structure de la messe chaldéenne: Du début jusqu'à l'anaphore. Etude historique* [OCA 207; Rome: PIOS, 1979] 41. This work contains a Latin translation of the ms., ff. 182v–211v, where Gabriel treats the rites of the Mass [pp. 29–48]. Jammo entitles it *Gabrielis Qatarensis Bar Lipah Interpretatio officiorum*).

kings, neither does the humanity of Christ assumed from us make two Sons but one Son of God who is united to the humanity (assumed) from us; so this body, with that which is in heaven, are one body of Christ.

Wherefore it behooves the priest to accomplish this fearful mystery with dread and great diligence, knowing that in that moment he stands in the place of Christ and blesses and gives thanks.⁴

Jammo's analysis of the content of this text can be quickly summarized. The preceding rites of the Mass, to the placing of the bread and wine on the altar, represent the mysteries of the life, death, and burial of Christ. Now the priest approaches the altar to express the resurrection by the recitation of the words spoken by Christ at the Last Supper and by the signing of the elements with a cross. On the occasion of these acts, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ through the grace of the Holy Spirit which comes down. The elements are the body and blood of Christ according to faith on our part and according to efficacy because of the action of the Holy Spirit. Hence the transformation does not multiply the body of Christ. The analogy with the image of a king and the humanity of Christ is used to clarify the statement that the body on the altar is one with that which is in heaven.⁵

NESTORIAN PARALLELS

Gabriel's text is compared to passages of other Nestorian commentators on the Mass. These include the *Interpretatio officiorum* of Abraham Bar Lip(h)ah,⁶ the *Commentary on All the Divine Mysteries* of Yoħannan Bar Zo'bi,⁷ the *Expositio officiorum ecclesiae* ascribed to George Arbela,⁸

⁴ Ff. 199r-200r. Jammo gives the Syriac text and a Latin translation ("Gabriel et son commentaire" 42-43).

⁵ Ibid. 43-44.

⁶ R. H. Connolly, *Abraham Bar Liphah Qatarensis Interpretatio officiorum* (CSCO 76, *Scriptores Syri* 32 = Series II, 92; Rome, 1913-15) 162. Abraham is a contemporary of Gabriel.

⁷ Ms. Vatican Borgianus Syriacus 90, ff. 48a-48b. Yoħannan Bar Zo'bi (d. c. 1235), renowned as a scholar, was known for his zeal in maintaining the Syriac language and the Nestorian tradition. W. de Vries has published a brief report on the Memra on the mysteries contained in the codex Borgianus 90, ff. 34a-69b ("Die 'Erklärung aller göttlichen Geheimnisse' des Nestorianers Johannan Bar Zo'bi (13. Jahrh.)," *OCP* 9 (1943) 188-203. A critical edition of this work is not available. A. Khoraiiche has provided a French translation of the Memra on the mysteries ("L'Explication de tous les mystères divins' de Yoħannan Bar Zo'bi selon le manuscrit Borgianus Syriacus 90," *Euntes docete* 19 (1966) 386-426.

⁸ R. H. Connolly, *Anonymi auctoris Expositio officiorum ecclesiae Georgio Arbelense vulgo adscripta* (CSCO 72, *Scriptores Syri* 29 = Series II, 91) 1 (Rome, 1911-13) 55. This anonymous work shows signs of having been composed between the seventh and ninth centuries, although a later date, i.e., eleventh century, cannot be excluded (Jammo, *Structure* 49-50).

and the *Expositio servitii mysteriorum* of Mar 'Abdišo' of Nisibis.⁹ Along with these later sources, Jammo also refers to texts of Gabriel's predecessors. They are passages from the last catechetical instruction of Theodore of Mopsuestia¹⁰ and the 17th Memra, attributed to Narsai of Nisibis, *An Exposition of the Mysteries*.¹¹

From his analysis Jammo concludes that Abraham Bar Lip(h)ah and Yoḥannan Bar Zo'bi, both of whom reproduce Gabriel's text with slight variations, concur in attributing "to the narrative of the Last Supper and to the words of the Lord an importance, if not a value, equal to that which they attribute to the epiclesis: the two form part of a unique consecratory rite."¹² Mar 'Abdišo' is dependent on the commentary of Gabriel or Abraham. However, he does not pronounce on the consecratory role of the words of Christ. Rather, according to his text, the recitation of the words of Christ by the priest functions to indicate that the priest represents Christ at the moment of consecration.¹³

For the rest, Ps.-George Arbela alludes to the narrative of institution but expresses no opinion on its importance. Theodore's Homily 16 indicates that the narrative of the Last Supper and the words of Christ are used in the anaphora, as does the 17th Memra attributed to Narsai. But the importance given to the epiclesis makes it doubtful that these authors award a comparable role to the narrative "insofar as part of the consecratory rite."¹⁴

Over thirty years ago, Wilhelm de Vries undertook a similar analysis of the same sources, apart from that of Gabriel Qaṭraya. He concluded that Abraham attributes the consecration to the epiclesis alone.¹⁵ He also argues that Yoḥannan Bar Zo'bi does not award a consecratory role to the words of Christ.¹⁶ Although Jammo does not refer to de Vries'

⁹ J.-M. Vosté, *Ordo judiciorum ecclesiasticorum collectus, dispositus, ordinatus et compositus a Mar 'Abdišo' Metropolita Nisibis et Armeniae; latine interpretatus est, notis illustravit* (Vatican City, 1940) 97. Mar 'Abdišo' died in 1318.

¹⁰ R. Tonneau and R. Devresse, *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsuestia* (Studi e testi 145; Vatican City, 1949), Homily 16, 550. Theodore died in 428.

¹¹ R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* (Texts and Studies 8, 1; Cambridge, 1909), Homily 17(A), 16–17. Narsai died at the age of 103 in 502.

¹² "Gabriel et son commentaire" 51.

¹³ *Ibid.* 48.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 51. Jammo concludes the article with a reference to the significance of Gabriel's commentary for the resolution of the problem of the absence of the narrative of institution in the anaphora of Addai and Mari. Gabriel gives the impression that the "majority" of the anaphoras known to him contain this narrative. Hence the suppression of it in the anaphora of the apostles probably came at a later date. This is assigned around the middle of the seventh century; for, according to Ibn Al Tayyib III (d. 1043), the Catholicus Išo 'Yahb III (d. 658) shortened this anaphora for use in the Mass (*ibid.* 52).

¹⁵ *Sakramententheologie bei den Nestorianern* (OCA 133; Rome: PIOS, 1947) 225–27.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 228.

investigation, both agree on the interpretation of the text of Mar 'Abdišo'.¹⁷ However, de Vries refers to another text of this author which seems to accord to the words of Christ a consecratory role. It is the passage of the *Expositio servitii mysteriorum* which explains why the priest receives Holy Communion first:

The celebrating priest first takes the Eucharist himself. Thus he shows that he has need of sharing in these holy mysteries more than the others, although he was, in his service, the mediator. But the one who has sanctified [Christ] is greater than all. Namely, he lives always and offers prayers for them. And by his word and the power of the Spirit, whom he sent, they [the mysteries] have become sanctified.¹⁸

Also, Mar 'Abdišo' makes a similar statement in the explanation of the diptychs: "The sacrificial gifts must be taken up and consecrated by the word of God and the power of the Spirit."¹⁹

The latter text is repeated in the treatise of Timotheus II (1318–32) *On the Seven Bases of the Ecclesiastical Mysteries*.²⁰ In this last Chaldean commentary on the Mass before reunion with Rome, the patriarch also records a liturgical account of the institution of the Eucharist, including the words of Christ. It is found in his explanation of the part of the liturgy between the solemn approach of the priest to the altar and the Pax.²¹ However, in his interpretation of the silent prayer of the anaphora, which contains the account of institution, it is merely stated: "He [Christ] has promised us that if we offer his body and blood, he will be united with us just as God united Himself with him, through the descent of the Spirit over it [the body], through the sharing of his mysteries."²²

De Vries therefore concludes that only Mar 'Abdišo' understands that the words of Christ play a role in the consecration of the oblations: "Prescinding from Ebedjesu [= Mar 'Abdišo'], no Nestorian author ascribes to the account of institution a consecratory meaning in the liturgy. And according to Ebedjesu it is not the words of Christ alone, as Assemani wishes, which effect the change; rather the epiclesis also belongs essentially to it."²³

The explanation of Gabriel Qaṭraya quoted above sheds new light on the early Nestorian theology of the Eucharistic consecration. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he attributes a consecratory role to the words of Christ. It is not so obvious that Abraham is like-minded; for two

¹⁷ Ibid. 228.

¹⁸ Vosté, *Ordo judiciorum ecclesiasticorum* 101 (de Vries, *Sakramententheologie* 230).

¹⁹ Ibid. 97 (de Vries 230).

²⁰ Ms. Vat. Syr. 151: IV, 15, ff. 115r-115v (de Vries 230).

²¹ Ibid., ff. 108r-108v (on 108v).

²³ *Sakramententheologie* 223.

²² Ibid., ff. 111v-112r.

possibly significant differences are found in his text, which is otherwise faithful to that of Gabriel.²⁴ While Abraham adds the command of Christ to repeat the meal, he omits the words "This is my body. . . ." Secondly, he does not explicitly state how the priest represents the resurrection of Christ. Abraham's condensed version of Gabriel's text reads as follows:

Up to this point the Church expresses by its types the mysteries of the death and burial of Christ. Now indeed the priest approaches to express the type of the resurrection. Just as our Lord, when he handed over these mysteries, blessed and gave thanks and said, "This do you in my memory," so the Church does according to his command. It designates one priest to bless and give thanks in the likeness of our Lord Christ, who by his recitation makes known that he says the words of our Lord. And when the priest recites and blesses bread and wine, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which comes down, thereupon they are made the body and blood of Christ.²⁵

GABRIEL'S EXPLANATION OF THE COMMUNION PROCLAMATION

The omission of the words of Christ, "This is my body . . .," the failure to designate how the priest represents the resurrection, and the use of the common Nestorian jargon "through the recitation," which normally refers to the pronouncing of the whole liturgical prayer,²⁶ make it unclear whether Abraham concurs with Gabriel on the role of the narrative of institution. One cannot discount the possibility that he considers the epiclesis as *the* moment of consecration.²⁷ Moreover, there is another significant difference between Gabriel's commentary and that of Abraham which is relevant to this issue. It occurs in the interpretation given to the herald's proclamation before the reception of Holy Communion: "Let us all approach with fear and reverence to the mysteries of the body and precious blood of our Redeemer."²⁸

Abraham simply states: "And now we do not look attentively on the bread and wine according to the order of their nature, but as if on the body and blood of Christ."²⁹ On the other hand, Gabriel provides the following lengthy explanation, unique among Nestorian commentaries on the Mass. It is found only in the work of Yoḥannan Bar Zo'bi,³⁰ who also repeats the passage of Gabriel, ff. 199r-200r, without the changes made by Abraham.³¹

²⁴ A comparison of the whole commentary of Abraham on the Mass (Connolly, *Interpretatio officiorum* 157-66) with that of Gabriel shows that it is a condensation of the latter.

²⁵ Connolly, *Interpretatio officiorum* 162.

²⁶ De Vries, *Sakramententheologie* 226.

²⁷ Jammo concedes that Abraham is less clear on the function of the words of Christ than Gabriel ("Gabriel et son commentaire" 45).

²⁸ Gabriel's *Interpretatio officiorum* f. 202v (Jammo, *Structure* 42).

²⁹ Connolly, *Interpretatio officiorum* 164.

³⁰ Ff. 53a-54a (Khoraiche, "L'Explication" 409-10).

³¹ Ff. 48a-48b (Khoraiche 405).

Therefore it behooves us to approach this mystery with fear and great care, not [however] in a superficial way. For just as that blessing by which God blessed Adam and Eve, saying, "Be fertile, and multiply and fill the earth," perdures to this day through all generations to eternity, nor will cease, so also this blessing by which the Lord blessed bread and wine and called them his body and blood, behold, it perdures in eternity, nor will cease. Likewise, just as it is a great impiety if anyone says of Adam, whom God called "His image," that he is not the image of God, so it is great impiety if anyone says of the mysteries that they are not the body and the blood of Christ after he said, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood." Therefore, although [these mysteries], by their nature, are bread and wine, as the Lord commanded us, we ought to consider them as the body and blood of Christ.³²

From this quotation it is not difficult to conclude that Gabriel attributes to the words of Christ the value of a continuously efficacious power, when spoken by the priest, which is analogous to the permanent efficacy of that word by which God enabled Adam and Eve to procreate. Since Abraham omits this passage, he gives no further indication of the significance of the words of Christ in the anaphora. This omission may also provide a clue to his rejection of two ritual moments of the consecration. The faithful repetition of both ff. 199r-200r and ff. 204r-204v by Yoḥannan Bar Zo'bi indicates that he holds the same position as Gabriel and Mar 'Abdišo'.

GABRIEL'S DEPENDENCE ON NESTORIAN SOURCES

Gabriel may be considered as instrumental in fostering a theology of Eucharistic consecration which gives a significant role to the words of Christ. This is surprising within the Nestorian tradition. Since its inception, Nestorian theologians have taught in a most explicit way that the moment of consecration is the epiclesis of the Spirit which comes after the secret prayer with its recalling of the institution of the Eucharist. No other Christian Church can claim such consistency in its explicit teaching about the moment of consecration of the bread and wine. This is due to the authority of Theodore of Mopsuestia within the Nestorian Church. He gives very precise teaching on the exclusive consecratory role of the epiclesis.³³ Narsai of Nisibis, founder of the School of Nisibis, repeats his teaching and secures its place.³⁴

Is Gabriel's viewpoint due to a personal insight? At the end of his commentary on the Mass, he reckons with the possibility that some may

³² Ff. 204r-204v (Jammo, *Structure* 43).

³³ Hom. 16, 11-12 (Tonneau-Devreesse, *Les homélies catéchétiques* 550-52).

³⁴ Hom. 16 (Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies* 21); Hom. 21: "On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism" (Connolly 58); Hom. 32: "On the Church and on the Priesthood" (Connolly 67).

not agree with some of his interpretations.³⁵ The passages we have been discussing certainly come to mind. But Gabriel does not refer to them. Given the Nestorian concern for traditional teaching, it seems likely that Gabriel would not have highlighted the role of the liturgical account of institution without some support from authorities recognized by the Nestorian Church. However, the only authority mentioned by Gabriel is Theodore of Mopsuestia. The "Blessed Interpreter" or "Ecumenical Doctor" is referred to both at the outset and at the end of the commentary on the Mass.³⁶ Since a significant part of Theodore's writings have been lost, it cannot be proved conclusively that Gabriel is not dependent on him. But the possibility is extremely unlikely, since Theodore is so explicit about the consecratory role of the epiclesis.

On the whole, the texts of Gabriel's commentary which we are considering have only relatively insignificant parallels with the extant writings of Theodore. The "Blessed Interpreter" makes statements similar to these parts of ff. 199r-200r: "For just as the Lord Jesus . . . in the likeness of Christ our Lord;" ". . . knowing that in that moment . . . gives thanks." Examples of these are: (1) ". . . handing over the mysteries to his disciples in order that through them we all might receive and accomplish them; then, in turn, we make the commemoration;"³⁷ (2) "It follows that a type of the high priest must be fulfilled, and this is found in those appointed for the service of the mysteries;"³⁸ (3) "The priest who draws near to the altar is representing his [=Christ] image."³⁹ However, there are several parallels with other previous Nestorian sources, some more striking than others.

The section of ff. 199r-200r, ". . . not according to nature but according to faith . . . are one body of Christ," is clearly based on Nestorian sources. The 17th Memra, attributed to Narsai, states:

And even though their nature [= of bread and wine] is immeasurably far from him, yet by power and by union one is the body . . . one in power is the body which the priest breaks in the Church with the body that sits in glory at the right hand . . . Christ is united to the bread and wine which are upon the altar.⁴⁰

However, passages from the recently edited text of the *Explanation of the Pasch* of Cyrus of Edessa, written before 351, could be the direct

³⁵ F. 211r: "Moreover, I ask those who happen upon this book not to accuse me if they find something said by me which does not harmonize with the opinions of others" (Jammo, *Structure* 47-48).

³⁶ F. 187v; ff. 211r-211v (Jammo 29, 48).

³⁷ Hom. 16, 10 (Tonneau-Devreesse, *Les Homélie catéchétiques* 551).

³⁸ Hom. 15, 19 (*ibid.* 495).

³⁹ Hom. 15, 21 (*ibid.* 499).

⁴⁰ Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies* 17.

source on which Gabriel depended:⁴¹

1) . . . not so that we would think that it is by nature the body of our Lord. . . . For just as, in the case of images that are set up in the name of kings, it is not to the materials from which they have been fashioned that we look, but rather to the glory with which they have been endued . . . in the same way, too, in the holy Church, the bread and wine have been placed as a glorious image of the body of the heavenly king who is far from us and hidden in the divine dwelling places. . . .⁴²

2) And on this account, too, he called it his body, not so that we would think that he has two bodies, one in heaven and one on earth for us, but so that he might make us understand by means of the appellation that he has placed upon this [bread] that it is the sign of that [body]. For just as the image of the king and the king do not constitute two kings, nor again does the humanity that was taken from the seed of the house of David together with God the Word, who assumed it, make two Sons on this account that it is called "Son". . . . Yet it, too, is called "Son," not, it is evident, on account of its nature, but on account of the divine glory with which it is endued; so, too, this [bread] is not the natural body, but the image of that which is hidden from us in the dwelling places above. . . .⁴³

On f. 204r Gabriel repeats a common Nestorian admonition about not approaching Holy Communion in a "superficial way" (literally "in a simple way"). After the passage of f. 204v, "Likewise, just as it is great impiety . . . blood of Christ," Gabriel continues: "And as often as we receive them on our hands, it is proper for us to think: We embrace and kiss our Savior, and mix his body with our body, and fuse his blood with our blood." Again, this is the typical expression of Nestorian piety. Examples from Cyrus can serve to illustrate these usages:

1) . . . it is not to [the external appearances] of the holy mysteries that we ought to look. . . .⁴⁴

2) . . . we may not look upon it unthinkingly and superficially [=simply and outwardly] but may understand that it is the signifier of great goods.⁴⁵

3) And I do not say to you that this is the type of my body, lest, looking to its nature, you consider it contemptible and mean.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Most of the collection of thirteen Nestorian treatises entitled *Explanations of the Feasts of the Economy* were known to Gabriel. The oldest nucleus contained eight explanations. Thomas of Edessa (d. 543) wrote two: Nativity and Epiphany. Cyrus of Edessa wrote six: Fast, Pasch, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost Sunday. Hnana of Adiabene wrote two: Friday of Gold and Rogation.

⁴² *Pasch* 3, 5 (W. F. Macomber, *Six Explanations of the Liturgical Feasts by Cyrus of Edessa, an East Syrian Theologian of the Mid-Sixth Century* (CSCO 356, *Scriptores Syri* 156; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1974) 42.

⁴³ *Pasch* 3, 6 (Macomber 43). The same teaching is found in Thomas of Edessa, who was, with Cyrus, a disciple of Mar Aba (*Explanation of the Nativity* 7, in S. J. Carr, *Thomae Edesseni tractatus de nativitate Domini nostri Jesu Christi* [Rome, 1898] 37–38).

⁴⁴ *Fast* 5, 4 (Macomber 18).

⁴⁶ *Pasch* 5, 8 (Macomber 49).

⁴⁵ *Pasch* 1, 5 (Macomber 39).

4) Since Christ was aware that he was not going to live with his followers after the resurrection . . . he . . . left us as a sort of image this bread, so that whenever we draw near to it and receive it on our hands, we would consider that it is our Redeemer himself that we are embracing, and, while gazing upon this [bread], we would think that we are sojourning in his company.⁴⁷

5) . . . when by the grace of the Spirit we cherish the sacrament of his body and blood on our hands, we would consider that in reality we are embracing and kissing, as it were, the very substance of his holy body.⁴⁸

However, Nestorian sources antecedent to Gabriel do not offer parallels to these two texts of ff. 199r-200r: (1) “. . . the priest approaches to express . . . cross with his hand.” (2) “As soon as the priest recites and blesses . . . become the body and blood of Christ.” The passage of ff. 204r-204v, which has no parallel in previous Nestorian commentaries, is: “For just as that blessing . . . called them his body and blood, behold, it perdures in eternity, nor will cease.”

CHRYSOSTOM'S DE PRODITIONE JUDAE HOMILIA 1, 6

Striking similarities with two of the above quotations, which cannot be traced to Nestorian sources, are found in John Chrysostom's *Homily on the Betrayal of Judas* 1, 6.⁴⁹ There exists a second recension of this homily, written by Chrysostom, which contains notable differences.⁵⁰ In the following translation of the original, the most significant changes made in 2, 6 are placed in brackets.

But finally the time is at hand to approach the awe-inspiring table. So let us all approach with fitting modesty and soberly. Let there be no Judas. . . Christ is present (*paresti*), and now this one, who set in order (*diakosmēsas*) that table, he himself now sets in order this one [2, 6: And now Christ is present setting in order (*kosmōn*) this table]. For it is not man who makes the oblations (*proskeimena*) become (*genesthai*) the body and blood of Christ but this one, the Christ crucified for us [2, 6: For it is not man who makes the oblations become the body and blood of Christ]. Supplying the outward appearance (*schēma plērōn*), the priest stands upright, proclaiming (*phtheggomenos*) those words (*remata*) [2, 6: Supplying the outward appearance only (*monon*), the priest stands upright, and he offers supplications (*deēsīn prosperei*)]. But the power and the grace are of God [2, 6: But the grace and the power are of God, who produces (*ergazomenē*) the whole]. “This is my body,” he says. This word refashions (*metarruthmizei*) the oblations. And just as that utterance which said, “Be fertile, and multiply, and fill the earth,” indeed was spoken once, became deed empowering our nature for procreation for all time; so, too, this utterance, once spoken, at each table in the churches from then until today (*sēmeron*) and until his second coming produces (*ergazetai*) the completed sacrifice (*apērtismenēn thusian*) [2, 6: And

⁴⁷ *Pasch* 3, 4 (Macomber 41).

⁴⁸ *Fast* 5, 5 (Macomber 18).

⁴⁹ PG 49, 380.

⁵⁰ PG 49, 389-90.

just as that utterance which said, "Be fertile . . .," was word (*rēma*) and became deed (*egeneto ergon*), empowering the human nature for procreation; so, too, this utterance always increases the grace in those participating worthily].

The second comment of Gabriel on ff. 199r-200r, which has no known Nestorian source, compares with "Supplying the outward appearance . . . refashions the elements." Chrysostom also provides a parallel to that part of ff. 204r-204v for which a similar difficulty obtains: "And just as that utterance . . . produces the completed sacrifice." But is Gabriel directly, or even indirectly, influenced by Chrysostom?

GABRIEL'S DEPENDENCE ON CHRYSOSTOM

Throughout his commentary on the Mass, Gabriel does not mention Chrysostom by name. The opportunity presented itself when he explains the symbolism of the priests and deacons standing around the altar. Here he follows the interpretation which, according to Nestorian tradition, originates with Chrysostom. However, he merely states: "However, the priests and deacons, who stand in the sanctuary, indicate that the holy angels are present when the mysteries of redemption are accomplished."⁵¹ On the other hand, the 17th Memra, attributed to Narsai, adds: ". . . as Chrysostom has borne witness who saw them."⁵² Yohannan Bar Zo'bi, after repeating Gabriel's text, also remarks: "The great Chrysostom, mouth of gold, who saw them around the altar during the celebration of the mysteries, is witness of it."⁵³ Apparently it suffices for Gabriel to mention only Theodore of Mopsuestia, the "interpreter" par excellence, who always was, even more than Nestorius, the great theologian of the Nestorian Church.

It is not known whether Gabriel had access to Chrysostom's homily; certainly the possibility cannot be discounted. The collection of Chrysostom's writings at Nisibis was probably extensive. Hnana of Adiabene, the controversial director of the School of Nisibis from 572-610, preferred Chrysostom's approach to the interpretation of Scripture over that of Theodore.⁵⁴ However, at least an indirect dependence seems likely when account is taken of the interpretation of the liturgical role of the account of institution *and* the use made of Gen 1:28 by both authors.

⁵¹ F. 201r (Jammo, *Structure* 41).

⁵² Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies* 7. Connolly thinks that Narsai refers to Chrysostom's *De sacerdotio* 6, 4 (PG 48, 682), where he describes a similar vision reported to him as having been seen by a venerable old man (*ibid.*, n. 1).

⁵³ F. 50a (Khoraiche, "L'Explication" 406). Khoraiche refers the text to Chrysostom's *Ecloga quod non indig. accedend. sit ad div. myst. hom.* (PG 47, 893): "What do you do, O man? With Christ present, the angels standing opposite the table . . ." (*ibid.*, n. 101). However, Yohannan probably simply repeats a firmly-embedded Nestorian tradition.

⁵⁴ A. Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis* (CSCO 266, Subsidia 26; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusCO, 1965) 244.

Chrysostom attributes an important role to the liturgical recitation of the words of Christ in his *Homily on the Second Epistle to Timothy* 2, 4: "For the words which God spoke are the same as those now spoken by the priest, so also is the sacrifice the same."⁵⁵ But nowhere is he so explicit as in *De prod. Judae hom.* 1, 6: "This is my body, he [=priest] says. This word refashions the oblations."⁵⁶ Moreover, Gabriel's interpretation of the role of the words of Christ in the anaphora, which parallels this latter text, stands in sharp contrast to the unequivocal position of the classical Nestorian theologians of the day. Would Gabriel have introduced it without some authority such as that of Chrysostom?

An even closer parallel exists in the use made of Gen 1:28. Chrysostom introduces a comparison between the text of Scripture and the words of Christ to shed light on the transformation of the elements: God's utterance, spoken once, empowers human nature for procreation; Christ's utterance, spoken once, when repeated by his representative, accomplishes the sacrifice. The *tertium comparationis* is the once-spoken word which remains always efficacious to produce what it says in the chosen instruments. The creative word of God enables the increase of human life through human co-operation,⁵⁷ the word of Christ, spoken by his representative, is the primordial cause of the presence of the sacrifice on the many tables of the churches. It is noteworthy that *De prod. Judae hom.* 1, 6 provides the only example of this use of Gen 1:28 by Chrysostom. In the later revision of the homily, a comparison between the event described in the text of Genesis and the words of Christ is introduced to explain the spiritual effects of the reception of Holy Communion: "... so, too, this

⁵⁵ PG 62, 612.

⁵⁶ Chrysostom does not limit the liturgical moment of consecration to the words of Christ. He attributes the descent of the Holy Spirit to the long intercessory prayer in *De sacerdotio* 3, 4 (PG 48, 642); cf. *ibid.* 6, 11 (PG 48, 681). The consecration is ascribed to the Spirit in *De resurrectione mortuorum* (PG 50, 432); *De sancta pentecosta* (PG 50, 459); *De coemeterio et cruce* 3 (PG 49, 397). But he also refers to the primordial causality of Christ, as divine person, in the Eucharistic consecration: *Baptismal Catecheses* 3, 26 (A. Wenger, *Huit catéchèses baptismales* [SC 50; Paris, 1957]); *In Jn. hom.* 46, 4 (PG 59, 261). Chrysostom understands that there is a correspondence between the Eucharistic consecration and the Incarnation (*In beato Philogono hom.* 6; PG 48, 753). Therefore it is logical that he would ascribe the transformation of the elements also to an act of Christ himself, who, as Logos, took flesh.

⁵⁷ Commenting on Gen 1:22, where the words "Be fertile and multiply" are referred to birds and sea creatures, Chrysostom says: "For the blessing of God and that word ('rēma) 'Be fertile and multiply' confer on them subsistence and duration" (*In cap. 1 Gen. hom.* 7, 5; PG 53, 66). He also understands that the words of Gen 1:28 bestowed the same capacity on Adam and Eve before they sinned (*In cap. 1 Gen. hom.* 10, 4; PG 53, 86). However, Chrysostom does not think that the increase of the human race would have taken place through sexual intercourse if Adam and Eve had not sinned. When they sinned and thereby become subject to death, God gave Adam and Eve the power to procreate through sexual intercourse (*In cap. 2 Gen. hom.* 18, 4; PG 53, 153).

utterance always increases the grace in those participating worthily.⁵⁸ Therefore there is only an indirect reference to the role of the words of Christ in the consecration of the elements.

Gabriel's use of Gen 1:28 corresponds to that of *De prod. Judae hom.* 1, 6.⁵⁹ God's utterance remains effective to produce human life through the chosen instruments; Christ's utterance remains effective to make bread and wine become his body and blood when spoken by his chosen representative. Moreover, this writer has been unable to discover any similar use of Gen 1:28 in sources previous to Chrysostom or contemporaneous with him. This also holds for patristic sources, Nestorian or otherwise, before the time of Gabriel. Subsequent Nestorian authors, as already noted, provide only one example. Yoḥannan Bar Zo'bi repeats the text of Gabriel. Abraham Bar Lip(h)ah wrote a condensation of Gabriel's commentary. This probably accounts for the omission of the comparison between Gen 1:28 and the words of Christ. Still the analogy, which highlights the transformative effect of the narrative of institution of the Eucharist, may have been considered by Abraham to be insufficiently in tune with official Nestorian teaching.

JOHN OF DAMASCUS' INTERPRETATION OF CHRYSOSTOM'S ANALOGY

The teaching of *De prod. Judae hom.* 1, 6 provided a similar problem for John of Damascus, the eighth-century Byzantine theologian. For, in keeping with his own tradition, he advocated a theology which focused on the epiclesis of the Spirit as the moment of consecration of the bread and wine.

In order to provide some intelligibility to the mystery of the transformation of the Eucharistic elements, he borrowed from the teachings of earlier Greek Fathers in several passages of *De fide orthodoxa* 4, 13. In

⁵⁸ The analogy introduced in 2, 6 is more directly related to the main concern of the pericope: the "sacrifice is spiritual food" (PG 49, 380; cf. 390), which nourishes those who are spiritual. The *tertium comparationis* in this instance is the enduring power of the word of God to increase life: in one case, human life; in the other, the spiritual food which nourishes the supernatural life.

⁵⁹ We can assume, however, that Gabriel did not give precisely the same meaning to Gen 1:28 as did Chrysostom. Rather, for him, it refers to the power of procreation through sexual intercourse. For Theodore of Mopsuestia, the theological authority of the Nestorian Church, maintained that death was not the result of Adam's sin. Adam was created mortal (*Fragmenta in Genesin* 3, 17; PG 66, 640-41). The fact that a couple was created is proof for Theodore that they were destined to produce offspring and so for a temporal life. Narsai and his coworkers adopted this position (Vööbus, *History* 263). The synod in 596 under the Catholicos Subrišo' decreed excommunication against "anyone who says that the nature of Adam originally was created immortal" (Chabot, *Synodicon orientale* 199). The theological issue behind this teaching is related to the anti-Origenist position of the Nestorians on the question of the pre-existence of souls (A. Guillaumont, *Les "Kephalaia Gnostica" d'Evagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'origénisme chez les grecs et chez les syriens* [Patristica Sorbonensia 5; Paris, 1962] 183-96).

one instance he alludes to *De prod. Judae hom.* 1, 6. Drawing on the comparison between the creation of the world, the Incarnation, and the consecration of the elements of bread and wine, he states in part: "If the heaven and the earth . . . were made by the word of the Lord; if the one God, the Word, became man by his own will and took flesh from the ever pure . . . virgin . . . is he not able to make the bread his body and the wine and water his blood?"⁶⁰

This observation is in line with what Chrysostom had said. But in his further development, John of Damascus reformulates Chrysostom's thought so that it conforms to what is said elsewhere in the *De fide orthodoxa* about the consecratory role of the Spirit.⁶¹ This is accomplished by substituting for Gen 1:28 the text of Gen 1:11: "Let the earth bring forth the green herb." From this latter verse he is able to conclude:

Even until now, when the rain falls, the earth brings forth its shoots under the influence of the divine command. God said, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood," and, "Do this in commemoration of me." And by his mighty command it is realized until he comes. . . . And by the invocation the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit becomes a rainfall for the new cultivation.⁶²

In this development John of Damascus compares the clouds which hover over the earth to the Holy Spirit who broods over the Church; the rain of the clouds, which acts as instrument of God to bring forth plant life, to the descent of the consecratory power of the Spirit on the occasion of the epiclesis.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Grabriel's *Interpretatio officiorum*, ff. 199r–200r, awards a consecratory role to the liturgical recitation of the words of Christ. This is confirmed by his interpretation of the proclamation of the herald before Holy Communion, ff. 204r–204v. Abraham Bar Lip(h)ah's condensation of these passages has notable omissions which render his acceptance of Gabriel's teaching problematic. Among later Nestorian sources, only Yoḥannan Bar Zo'bi (13th century) and Mar 'Abdišo' (14th century) indicate support for Gabriel's theology of consecration.

The two passages of Gabriel's commentary show the influence of previous Nestorian sources. However, none can be found which correspond to those sections which seemingly award a consecratory role to the recitation of the words of Christ in the anaphora. This is understandable, since the Nestorian Church follows the teaching of Theodore of Mop-suestia, who identifies the consecration with the descent of the Holy Spirit at the moment of the epiclesis.

⁶⁰ PG 94, 1140.

⁶¹ PG 94, 1144.

⁶² PG 94, 1140–41.

The most explicit teaching of John Chrysostom on the consecratory role of the liturgical recitation of the words of Christ, and the only place where he employs Gen 1:28 to shed light on the transformation of the Eucharistic bread and wine, is *De prod. Judae hom.* 1, 6. The striking parallels between this pericope and the two passages of Gabriel's commentary, for which no Nestorian sources previous to Gabriel can be cited, raise the possibility that Gabriel was dependent on ideas first advanced by Chrysostom in this homily. The probability is further increased since the use of Gen 1:28 in this context is not only unique in Chrysostom's writings but also not found elsewhere in patristic sources before Gabriel.

The failure of later Nestorian writers, with the two exceptions, to repeat a teaching similar to that of Gabriel is due to the difficulty it created for the traditional Nestorian theology of consecration. Chrysostom's homily posed a similar problem for the later Byzantine Church. The *De fide orthodoxa* 4, 13 shows how it was solved by one of its great theologians.

University of Notre Dame

EDWARD J. KILMARTIN, S.J.