

The Sources for a Study of the Chaldean Mass

William F. Macomber, Ph.D.

The documentary sources for studying the history of any liturgical rite or office may be conveniently divided into library and textual sources. The latter are the liturgical manuscripts and printed books, intended for the clergy or the faithful, that indicate to us the precise texts of prayers and rubrics. The former include commentaries on the liturgical ceremonies and prayers, chance references to them in sermons and treatises, ecclesiastical legislation that touches on them, casuistical questions on various accidents or defects, descriptions and other similar documents that give us some idea of what was done at a particular time, and place in history and what meaning was attached to what was done. To the documentary sources that involve the written or printed word we might add other sources, such as archeological remains, miniatures and other paintings, photographs, recordings and so on, which give a more or less exact testimony for the liturgical usages of a particular time and place.

In the case of the Chaldean mass, we are unusually fortunate for the remarkably large number of ancient commentaries that have survived from antiquity.¹ There is a theological reason for this fact. In the course of the fifth and sixth centuries, the Chaldean Church adopted not only the Christology, but also the entire theological synthesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia.² This included a theology of the sacraments and the liturgy. According to Theodore, the sacraments and the liturgy by which they are conferred are symbols that cannot exert their full saving influence on the faithful unless they are understood. There is a true necessity, therefore, for liturgical commentaries that will explain the salvific meaning of the sacraments and their accompanying liturgical ceremonies.³

Basic to the bishop of Mopsuestia's theology of salvation is his division of all reality into two worlds, the present world of mortality, moral mutability and

¹ Cf. my discussion of this topic, "The Liturgy of the Word according to the Commentators of the Chaldean Mass," in *The Word in the World. Essays in Honor of Fredrick L. Moriarty S.J.*, ed. R. J. Clifford and G. MacRae (Cambridge, Mass. 1973) 179-190.

² I have analyzed this synthesis as interpreted by one Chaldean theologian, "The Theological Synthesis of Cyrus of Edessa, an East Syrian Theologian of the Mid-Sixth Century," in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* [OCP] 30 (1964) 5-38, 363-384.

³ Cf. Theodore of Mopsuestia's *Catechetical Homilies* XII, 2 (ed. R. Tonneau and R. Devreesse, *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste* [=Studi e Testi 145, Vatican City 1949] 325-326), and Cyrus of Edessa's *Explanations of the Pasch* I, 4 (ed. W.F. Macomber, *Six Explanations of the Liturgical Feasts by Cyrus of Edessa* [Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium [CSCO] 355, 356: scriptores syri 155, 156, Louvain 1974] 38-39).

sinfulness and the future world of immortality, immutability and sinlessness. Mortality and immortality are the primary qualities of these two worlds, for sinfulness and the moral mutability that leads inevitably to sin are rooted in the fear of death that is generated by mortality. Hence true salvation is given only in the resurrection from the dead, whereby mortality and the fear of death are completely taken away; thereby man passes definitively to the future world.

The future world has already been inaugurated for us by Christ in his victory over death by his resurrection. Other men, in their turn, pass to the future world only by their own resurrection at the second coming. Even in this life, however, they can anticipate to a degree their future salvation and receive some of its effects. This they do in the first place by their faith in Christ's victory over death, which gives them the promise of their own immortality. This hope weakens substantially the fear of death and the tyranny of sin that is rooted in it. The greater men's faith in Christ's resurrection, therefore, and the greater their hope in their own future immortality, the less will be their fear of death and their slavery to sin in this mortal life.

The role of sacraments, accordingly, is to assist men to greater faith in Christ's resurrection and to greater hope in their own future immortality. This they accomplish by their symbolism. For every sacrament, according to Theodore, is a twofold sign: of Christ's death and resurrection in the past, on the one hand, and of our death and resurrection in the future with Christ, on the other.⁴ Saint Paul already teaches us this about baptism.⁵ It is true, moreover, of all that is done in the Church, for example, fasting, which represents for us the future manner of life in which there will no longer be any need of food and drink,⁶ and it is especially true of the Church's liturgy. It is the function of the liturgical commentator, therefore, to make plain to men the meaning of particular ceremonies in terms of Christ's and their own resurrection from the dead, so as to strengthen their faith and confirm their hope. This is the reason why liturgical commentaries enjoyed such singular importance in the Chaldean Church and why there were so many of them.

It will not be necessary to consider all of them in detail, but it will suffice to treat fully the four most important for our purposes and allude briefly to some of the others in passing. The first commentary in point of time, composed by Theodore of Mopsuestia himself, is actually not a document of the Chaldean, but rather of the Antiochene mass. I mention it here, however, because it was a model for subsequent commentaries by Chaldean authors and because it may have influenced the development of the Chaldean mass. It is contained in two of Theodore's mystagogical homilies to neophytes on the paschal sacraments they

⁴ Theodore of Mopsuestia, *loc. cit.*

⁵ Romans 6: 3-11.

⁶ Cf. Cyrus of Edessa, *Explanation of the Fast* II, 5-6, and V, 5 (Macomber, *Six Explanations*, 7-8 and 18-19).

had just received. It survives only in Syriac translation.⁷ Since the neophytes were already acquainted with the liturgy of the word, the homilies cover the mass only from the transfer of the gifts, after the dismissal of catechumens and others not permitted to attend the liturgy of the Eucharist, to the end of the liturgy. Each homily consists of a brief text that recapitulates the principal ceremonies of that part of the mass and an extended, point by point commentary on the text. It is not perfectly clear that Theodore is himself the author of the text as well as of the commentary, but, since the text harmonizes well with Theodore's entire theology, it seems distinctly more probable. It is also not perfectly clear when and where these homilies were composed — whether they were written down or at least delivered before 392, while Theodore was still a priest at Antioch, or rather after 392, when he was consecrated bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia. A comparison of the liturgy of the homilies with that of Antioch as witnessed by writings of Saint John Chrysostom reveals a general similarity with some discrepancies of lesser moment.⁸ Since Chrysostom and Theodore were contemporaries at Antioch, this would seem to indicate that Theodore is not commenting on precisely the same liturgy, but one that is very similar. It seems more probable, therefore, that Theodore's homilies present to us the liturgy of Cilicia as it was celebrated during his episcopacy from 392 to 428.

The second document is an imitation of the first. It is the metrical homily on the mass that is attributed to Narsai (died 503),⁹ the greatest theologian of the Chaldean Church. It supposedly witnesses to the liturgy Nisibis, where Narsai was director of the School of the Persians, transferred by him there from Edessa, during the latter part of the fifth century. I say "supposedly" because the authenticity of the homily is controverted.¹⁰ For one thing, its attribution to Narsai is unclear in all but two recent manuscripts; the others merely speak of "the meter of Narsai," and a few, including one of the oldest, attribute it rather to a thirteenth century author, 'Abdišo' of Elam.¹¹ Secondly, the homily mentions

⁷ Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Catechetical Homilies XV and XVI* (Tonneau, 461-605). They were previously edited by A. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* (Woodbrooke Studies 6, Cambridge 1933), but the translation is less accurate, and the text is not as good as the photographic reproduction of the manuscript that Tonneau provides.

⁸ Cf. F. Van de Pavard, *Zur Geschichte der Messliturgie in Antiocheia und Konstantinopel gegen Ende des vierten Jahrhunderts* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 187, Rome 1970) 235, 261, 264 and 373-374.

⁹ The Syriac text was edited by A. Mingana, *Narsai doctoris syri homilia et carmina* (Mosul 1905) vol.1, 270-299. It was translated into English by R. H. Connolly, *the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* (Texts and Studies VIII, 1, Cambridge 1909).

¹⁰ The principal skeptic is the Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Ignace Ephrem II Rahmani, *Les liturgies orientales et occidentales et étudiées séparément et comparées entre elles* (Beirut 1929).

¹¹ I indicate the known manuscripts in my article, "The manuscripts of the Metrical Homilies of Narsai," in *OCP* 39 (1973) 299.

one prayer, the final Our Father, that is known from independent and fairly reliable sources to have been added by the Patriarch Timothy I (780-823).¹² On the other hand, Connolly has shown convincingly that the style and the language used are the same that is found in the other homilies of Narsai whose authenticity is not disputed; it is very improbable that an author from the thirteenth century, when Syriac had fallen into decadence, could have imitated them so successfully.¹³ Furthermore, there are archaic features in the liturgy as commented upon that would have been anachronistic in the thirteenth century.¹⁴ Finally, the interpretation of the formulae of dismissal imply a living catechumenate¹⁵ and contrast sharply with the unrealistic interpretation of Gabriel Qaṭraya, a commentator of the early seventh century,¹⁶ whom we will consider next. It seems, therefore, that we are dealing here with a genuine homily of Narsai, which may have been edited, however, by 'Abdišo' of Elam in the thirteenth century, in order to make Narsai's commentary conform better to the liturgy of his day. Consequently, we cannot always be sure in particular instances in which the homily's liturgy agrees with that of the thirteenth century whether this is because the element in question was kept unchanged from Narsai's time or because the medieval editor has modified the original text. It was this editor, presumably, who added the nonmetrical subtitles that introduce each section.¹⁷ Finally, it should be noted that Narsai's commentary, like that of Theodore of Mopsuestia, does not embrace the entire mass; it begins with the

¹² The anonymous ninth century commentary on the Chaldean liturgy edited by R. H. Connolly, *Anonymi auctoris Expositio officiorum Ecclesiae Georgio Arbelensi vulgo adscripta, t. II, Accedit Abrahae Bar Liphah Interpretatio officiorum* (CSCO 72, 76:scr.syri 29, 32, Paris and Rome 1913, 1915) 82-83. This nearly contemporary testimony is substantially confirmed in the questions on the liturgy, thought to be by Patriarch Išo 'yahb IV (1020-1025), that were edited by W. C. van Unnik, *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist by Išo 'yahb IV* (Amsterdam 1937) 181, qq. 105, 107.

¹³ Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies*, xii-xli.

¹⁴ The commentary speaks of only three prayers of inclination with regard to the anaphora, in contrast with the four of today that are found in the Mar Eša'ya Ḥudra of the tenth or eleventh century, and the formulae for the blessings after the fraction and before communion and for the administration of communion are much simpler than what we know to have been used in the thirteenth century; cf. Connolly, 23-24, 27 and 28.

¹⁵ Connolly, 2-3.

¹⁶ Brit. Museum Or. MS. 3336, f. 195ab. His interpretations are repeated by Abraham Bar Liphah (ed. Connolly, *Anonymi* II, 160).

¹⁷ The editor, Mingana, has relegated them to his footnotes; Connolly has ignored them altogether in his translation. In some cases these interpolations are lengthy comments and not mere subtitles.

dismissal of catechumens and penitents,¹⁸ rather than with the transfer of the gifts to the altar.

The first commentary to deal with the complete mass is that of Gabriel Bar Liphah Qaṭraya, who is presumably identical with the owner and collator of British Museum Additional MS. 14,471, that is dated 615 or 616.¹⁹ Unfortunately, this work has never been edited. Only one manuscript is known, British Museum Oriental MS. 3336 (1268). However, an abbreviated version of Gabriel's commentary made by a relative, Abraham Bar Liphah Qaṭraya, also of the seventh century, has been edited,²⁰ and it includes from Gabriel's work, even word for word, all that is essential for a knowledge of the Chaldean mass of the early seventh century, which, it may be noted, is in substantial agreement with the modern Chaldean mass as it is celebrated now by the Nestorians. As for Gabriel's commentary as such, it represents a departure from the tradition of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Narsai in that it attempts to interpret particular ceremonies in a systematic way in terms of Christ's entire life from his annunciation and nativity (initial psalms) to his ascension (final blessing).²¹ The resulting interpretations, as one might anticipate, are open to the criticism of arbitrariness. The description of particular ceremonies is not as detailed as one could have wished. It is not clear, moreover, to what extent the possibility of subsequent interpolation and adaptation can be excluded.

The last commentary of importance is also the most detailed. Unfortunately, the author never identifies himself, and none of the attempts at identification by scholars has proved convincing.²² Hence I shall content myself by calling his Anonymous. He mentions the introduction by Timothy I of the final Our Father²³ and so cannot have terminated his commentary before 780, when Timothy was elected. The *terminus ad quem* is more difficult to fix, except that the work cannot have been terminated after 1267, the date of our oldest manuscript.²⁴ However, the impression that the author gives is that Timothy I's innovations are relatively recent, so that a mid or late ninth century date seems the most probable. The type of mass that Anonymous has in view is a pontifical mass celebrated with considerable splendor, such as would have been possible only for a relatively large and wealthy Christian community in a city like Baghdad or Mosul.

¹⁸ A further argument for genuinity. A thirteenth century author would surely have commented on the entire mass.

¹⁹ W. Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838*, vol. 1 (London 1870) 53, no. 77.

²⁰ See n. 12 above.

²¹ Cf. My article, "The Liturgy" (n.1 above) 181-185.

²² Cf. Connolly, *Anonymi I*, transl., 1-3, and II, transl., 1-3.

²³ See n. 12 above.

²⁴ A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn 1922) 239, n.7.

The ceremonies are celebrated in a highly symbolic manner, and the references to the concrete details are often bewilderingly obscure. For example, when the congregation kneels or stands, Anonymous says that it dies or rises from the dead, and he constantly refers to the two principal deacons as the archangels Michael and Gabriel, whom they symbolize. This is the most detailed commentary on the Chaldean mass, but it is also the most difficult to exploit from our point of view. Its interpretations, like those of Gabriel and Abraham Qaṭraya, are systematic, although less rigorously so, but the system is different. Pivotal are the processions of the clergy from the sancturay (heaven) to the *bema* (Jerusalem)²⁵ and back again, which symbolize descents from heaven to earth and ascents from earth to heaven. This leads to a twofold cycle of interpretation from the coming of John the Baptist (initial psalmody) to the ascension (entry of the celebrant into the sancturay) and from creation (beginning of the anaphora) to the consummation (thanksgiving after communion).²⁶

The other commentaries that have survived deserve only a passing mention. The thirteenth century commentary of John of Mosul²⁷ is concerned, not so much with the ceremonies of the mass as with the pious attitudes of those attending it; it has nothing to offer for our purposes. The work of John Bar Zo'bi, also of the thirteenth century,²⁸ is merely a metrical paraphrase of the commentary of Gabriel Qaṭraya²⁹ and adds details of only minor interest.³⁰ At the end of this century comes the extremely jejune commentary of 'Abdišo' of Nisibis (died 1318),³¹ that adds nothing to our knowledge. A bit later, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, we have another by Patriarch Timothy II (1318-?), which has an

²⁵ The Chaldean *bema* was a raised, spacious platform, located in the center of the nave, on which the liturgy of the word was celebrated; it was large enough to accommodate seats for the priests participating in the liturgy.

²⁶ Cf. Macomber, "The Liturgy" (n. 1 above) 182-186.

²⁷ Edited by E. J. Millos, *Directorium spirituale ex libris sapientialibus desumptum* (Rome 1868) 105.

²⁸ As far as I am aware, it remains unedited. It has been translated into French, however, by A. Khoraiiche, "L'explication de tous les mystères divins' de Yohannan Bar Zo'bi, selon le manuscrit Borgianus Syriacus 90," in *Euntes Docete* 19 (1966) 386-426.

²⁹ Not of Abraham Bar Liphah's commentary, as is implied by W. de Vries, "Die Erklärung aller göttlichen Geheimnisse' des Nestorianers Johhanes Bar Zo'bi," in *OCP* 9 (1943), 189-190; Bar Zo'bi versifies some of Gabriel's comments that were omitted by Abraham.

³⁰ Cf. De Vries, 190-193.

³¹ The text is still unedited. A Latin translation is given by J.-M. Vosté, *Ordo iudiciorum ecclesiasticorum . . . a Mar 'Abdišo', Metropolita Nisibis et Armeniae* (S. Congr. Per la Chiesa Orientale. Codificazione canonica orientale, fonti, serie II, fasc. xv: Caldei. Diritto antico II, Vatican City 1940).

interesting discussion of vestments, but otherwise adds nothing of note.³² Finally, there is a work by the Catholic Patriarch Joseph II (1696-1712), *Exposition of the Ecclesiastical Offices*,³³ which has never been analyzed in print, as far as I am aware. I might also add here the thirteenth century *Book of the Fathers*,³⁴ attributed to Saint Simeon Bar Šabba'e (died 343), but perhaps really by Simeon of Šanqlabad, which is not a commentary on the mass, but does have precious indications about liturgical vestments.

Apart from the commentaries, the most important literary sources for a knowledge of the Chaldean mass are the canonical collections. I had occasion in my first article to cite one significant canon of the Synod of Isaac (410), found in the so-called *Synodicon orientale*.³⁵ This collection contains, in addition, a letter of Patriarch Išo'yahb I (582-595) to James, bishop of Darai, in which he gives important information about the anaphora, describes in detail the fraction and discusses the communion of celebrant and clergy.³⁶ The canons of Patriarch John Bar Abgare (900-905), which contain prescriptions on the preparation of the gifts,³⁷ might also be mentioned here. As for the systematic collections of the canonists, only *The Law of Christianity* by Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyyib, which has precious details on the anaphoras of the Chaldean Church,³⁸ is worth mention.

The casuistic literature on the mass has never been adequately studied. Only the questions attributed to Patriarch Išo'yahb IV (1020-1025) have been edited,³⁹ but there are others that have never been properly analyzed or even studied.⁴⁰ Išo'yahb gives interesting details on the preparation of the elements

³² Cf. W. de Vries, "Timotheus II (1318-1332) über 'Die sieben Gründe der kirchlichen Geheimnisse,'" in *OCP* 8 (1942) 40-94. Unfortunately, de Vries's summary fails to enter into liturgical details.

³³ Found in Chaldean Patriarchate MS. 252 (18th c.).

³⁴ Unedited, but translated into Latin by J.-M. Vosté, "*Liber Patrum*" (S. Congr. Per la Chiesa Orientale. Codificazione canonica orientale, fonti, serie II, fasc. xv: Caldei. Diritto antico III, Vatican City 1940).

³⁵ J. -B. Chabot, *Synodicon orientale, ou recueil de synodes nestoriens* (Paris 1902) 266-267, canon XIII.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 427-430, canons I-III. Note the erroneous translation of *pasoge* (text, 169:3), which does not designate here "fractions," as Chabot has it, but "sections." It refers to the prayers of inclination (*ghanata*) of the anaphora, not to the fraction of the Elements.

³⁷ Two recensions of his canons are known. One in Syriac was edited by J. E. Y. Kelaita, *The Liturgy of the Church of the East* (Mosul 1928) 208-218 (page reference kindly supplied by Tobert F. Taft). The other in Arabic translation is included in W. Hoenerbach and O. Spies, *Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyyib: Fiqh an-Naṣrānīya. 'Das Recht der Christenheit,' ; I (CSCO 161, 162; scr. Arabici 16, 17, Louvain 1956) 208-211.*

³⁸ *Ibid.* t. II (CSCO) 167, 168: scr. arabici 18, 19, Louvain 1957) 93.

³⁹ By van Unnik, *Nestorian Questions*, 74-153.

⁴⁰ Cf. the various treatises in the manuscripts analyzed by van Unnik, 64-68. To these should be added Chaldean Patriarchate MS. 209 (16th c.) 93-113.

and on accidents and defects in the distribution of communion, but only a little on the mass itself.

To conclude this enumeration of nontextual sources, I might mention contemporary descriptions by Anglican missionaries,⁴¹ by Maronite students⁴² and by myself,⁴³ of which only the first has been published. Heidt has published some very interesting photographs of the Nestorian mass,⁴⁴ and Liesel has others of a Catholic mass.⁴⁵ Finally, the invariable chants of the ordinary of the mass as sung by Catholics have been published in modern musical notation by Pierre Youssef.⁴⁶

Before turning to the textual sources, we must first consider the liturgical books that are used in the celebration of a Chaldean mass. The Chaldeans, in fact, never quite arrived at the point reached by the pre-Vatican II Western Church, in which everything necessary was contained in a single missal.⁴⁷ One reason for this is that, especially among the non-Catholic followers of the rite, the roles of the subordinate ministers have never been absorbed by the celebrant. Hence distinct books are necessary, not only for the celebrant, but also for the deacons, the lectors and the choir.

The celebrant's book in the Chaldean rite has more commonly been the *Ṭaksa*, a sort of euchologium that contains most of the prayers and ceremonies that a simple priest is expected to say or perform in the ordinary course of his ministry; it includes the sacerdotal prayers of the office and the ceremonies of the mass, baptism and penance (not, however, marriages and funerals), plus various blessings. The rite of the mass in the *Ṭaksa* contains only the prayers and rubrics of the ordinary and the three anaphoras, excluding all variable parts, save occasionally a solemn precommunion chant for great feasts, "Thou art dread," but indicating in full all the responses of the people and at least the *incipit*'s of the deacon's acclamations.

⁴¹ A. J. Maclean and W. H. Browne, *The Catholicos of the East and his People* (London 1892) 247-266.

⁴² Mimeographed notes of masses celebrated at the Church of Saint George, Beirut, about 1969.

⁴³ Manuscript notes of masses celebrated at the same church in 1964 and 1970.

⁴⁴ A. M. Heidt, "Les Églises syriennes orientales, assyrienne et chaldéenne," in *Afrique Vivante* 253 (1967) 29 and 36-37.

⁴⁵ N. Liesel and T. Makula, *The Eucharistic Liturgies of the Eastern Churches* (Collegeville 1962) 242-283.

⁴⁶ P. Youssef, *Cantus Missae SS. "Apostolorum" juxta ritum Chaldaeorum* (Rome 1961). I have magnetic tapes of chants for the mass recorded privately in Rome about 1971 by the Jacques Isaac of Mosul.

⁴⁷ The *Missale chaldaicum ex decreto Sacrae Congregationis de propaganda Fide editum* (Rome 1767) approaches this occidental ideal, for it includes in separate sections of the same volume a missal, a diaconal and a lectionary.

The oldest copies of the *Ṭaksa* that have survived are two undated manuscripts of the fifteenth century, Mardin, Chaldean Episcopal Residence MS. 19, which has very detailed and rather archaic rubrics, and Diarbekir, Chaldean Archiepiscopal Residence MS. 48, whose rubrics are also quite interesting. From the end of this same century come Beirut, University of Saint Joseph, Syriac MS. 42, and the closely related Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sachau MS. 167 (1496), which anticipate the form of the mass that was to become traditional in the Alqoṣ patriarchate, and perhaps also Chaldean Patriarchate MS. 36 and Rouen, Bibliothèque de la Ville, Oriental MS. 21, which express the simpler tradition that would prevail for centuries in the rival Simonian patriarchate.⁴⁸ In 1890 and 1892, the Anglican mission at Urmia in Iran published a two volume edition of the *Ṭaksa*, the first volume of which contains the mass with the three anaphoras and baptism.⁴⁹ A better, more complete edition of the *Ṭaksa* was published in 1928 by the Nestorian deacon, Joseph Kelaita.⁵⁰ In his introduction he describes and discusses the manuscripts he makes use of, which include the second oldest exemplar of the Alqoṣ form of the Chaldean mass, Notre-Dame des Semences MS. 92 (1578)⁵¹ and also Sachau MS. 167, mentioned above.

The sections of the *Ṭaksa* that concern the mass are often found apart in missals. University of Cambridge Oriental MS. 2046B (probably fifteenth century) seems to be the oldest surviving example. The first printed edition, in a much latinized form, was published at Rome in 1767 for the Chaldean Catholics,⁵² and an even more latinized version appeared there in 1774 for the Catholics of Malabar.⁵³ The subsequent Chaldean Catholic editions of 1901 and 1973 and the Malabar Catholic editions of 1960 and 1968 have already been sufficiently presented in my previous article.⁵⁴ Finally, the Nestorians of India in 1959 put out a bilingual Syriac-Malayalam missal that reproduces Kelaita's text with almost no variations.⁵⁵

All of these are complete texts for the celebrant's part of the mass. There are still older partial texts that are of great importance for a knowledge of the

⁴⁸ Cf. my article, "A History of the Chaldean Mass," in *Worship* 51 (1977) 114 ff. (reprinted in JASS, vol. XI, no.2, 70-81.)

⁴⁹ *Liturgia sanctorum Apostolorum Adaei et Maris* (Urmia 1890). I have seen only one copy of the complete *Ṭaksa* entitled, if I remember rightly, *Manuale sacerdotum*, 2 vols. (Urmia 1892), at the Chaldean episcopal residence at Mardin in Turkey.

⁵⁰ See note 37 above.

⁵¹ The Oldest is British Museum Additional MS. 7183 (A.D. 1570), which, however, is interestingly atypical regarding one blessing of incense.

⁵² See note 47 above.

⁵³ *Ordo chaldaicus beatorum Apostolorum iuxta ritum Ecclesiarum Malabaricarum* (Rome 1774).

⁵⁴ Macomber, "History" (n. 48 above) 115 and 117-118.

⁵⁵ *Ṭaksa d-quddaše* (Trichur 1959).

Chaldean mass before the fifteenth century. The oldest is a sixth century fragment of an otherwise unknown anaphora that was discovered in the binding of another manuscript.⁵⁶ I myself had the thrill of discovering the next oldest text in the tenth or eleventh century Mar Eša'ya Ḥudra, which contains the three anaphoras currently used in the Chaldean mass, together with a considerable part of the ordinary between the anaphora and the communion.⁵⁷ Finally, Diarbekir, Chaldean Archiepiscopal Residence MS. 57 (1240) contains at the end of the office for Wednesday of the Ninivite Fast a bilingual Syriac-Arabic text of the mass from the trisagion to the end,⁵⁸ but apparently omits some rubrics and secret prayers of the celebrant, so that the argument from silence must be used in the case of this manuscript with the utmost circumspection.

Traditionally, the deacon's book has been the Psalter, which contains not only the psalms, but also the litanies and other proclamations that deacons make during the Chaldean mass and divine office, plus certain hymns. The twelfth century Diarbekir, Chaldean Archiepiscopal Residence MS. 36 seems to be the oldest that has survived.⁵⁹ True diaconals are all but unknown in the manuscript tradition,⁶⁰ but a few have been published in print. One was included in the Chaldean Catholic missal of 1767 and another in the 1774 edition of the Malabar Catholic missal. Kelaita also published the parts of the deacon in his 1924 edition of the *Turgame* and *Soghyatha*,⁶¹ and the Chaldean Catholic deacon, Yusuf Meyre, edited a booklet for deacons and mass servers in 1950.⁶²

The prescribed scriptural lessons are contained in lectionaries, one for the lessons from the Old Testament and from Acts destined for lectors, another for the Pauline epistles destined for deacons and a third for the gospels destined for the celebrant. There seem to have been two principal systems or cycles of lessons, a cathedral system concerning which I have published a study that indicates both the surviving manuscripts and the pericopes destined for particular liturgical days,⁶³ and a monastic system, attributed to James, the founder of the

⁵⁶ Edited best by R. H. Connolly, "Sixth-Century Fragments of an East-Syrian Anaphora," in *Oriens Christianus*, neue Serie 12-14 (1922-1924) 99-128.

⁵⁷ Cf. my article, "The Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari," in *OCP* 32 (1966) 335-371.

⁵⁸ It is combined with the first part of vespers.

⁵⁹ There is apparently a very similar manuscript in Peking. I have seen a recent manuscript copy of it somewhere in England.

⁶⁰ The only exception that I can point to is Mardin-Diarbekir MS. 32.21, a nineteenth century Catholic manuscript from Malabar, probably brought back from India by Bishop Elias Mellus.

⁶¹ J. E. Y. Kelaita, *Turgame w-ṭaksa da-mšammšanuta w-soghyata* (Mosul 1926).

⁶² Y. Meyre, *Ktaba d-tešmešta d-raze* (Baghdad 1950).

⁶³ W. F. Macomber, "The Cathedral Lectionary System of the Cathedral Church of Kokhe," in *OCP* 33 (1967) 485-516.

monastery of Beth ʿAbhe, who flourished around the year 610.⁶⁴ This latter is still used by both the Nestorians and the Chaldean Catholics.⁶⁵

The variable antiphons chanted at mass by the two choirs are found in the dominical and festal antiphonaries, the *Hudra and the Gazza*,⁶⁶ at the end of each office. The Mar Ešaʿya codex mentioned above is the oldest known copy of the *Hudra*, and there is a two volume copy of the *Gazza* of the fourteenth century at Mardin.⁶⁷ The antiphons for mass have been published both in breviaries and apart by Nestorians and Catholics.⁶⁸ The chants, called *Turgame*, that introduce the epistle and gospel lessons are found in a book that is without a special name and are very often combined with another collection of hymns, called *Soghyatha*, that are sung at communion. The oldest surviving manuscript seems to be Diarbekir, Chaldean Archiepiscopal Residence MS. 60 (1571); Kelaita's edition of 1926 seems to be the only one that has appeared in print.⁶⁹ Other hymns, called *Tešbeḥatha*, are sung as a thanksgiving after communion and are found in the Psalter.

Thus we have a fairly abundant documentation available to us for our study of the Chaldean mass. We do not have the many ancient textual witnesses

⁶⁴ I should add here to what I have written on the subject in the article just cited, 483-486. It was most kindly pointed out to me by the great archeologist and historian of the Church in Iraq, Père Jean Fiey, that there is a story that sheds considerable light on the origins of the monastic lectionary system reported by Thomas or Marga in his *Book of Governors I*, 29 (edited by E. A. W. Budge, *The book of Governors: The Historia Monastica of Thomas, Bishop of Margā*, A.D. 840 [London 1893], vol. II, 97-100). The monastery of Beth ʿAbhe was being visited by Babai the Great, who decided that Mar Yaʿqob, the founder of the monastery, should “abolish the glorious order of the service of readings which were read on the holy first days of the week in honour of the atoning Mysteries, inasmuch as it was not a thing appropriate for monks, but only for the clergy and the laity” (ibid. 98); next day, however, God worked a miracle and persuaded Babai to change his decision. The story clearly implies that scriptural lessons were not read during eucharistic liturgy in monasteries, even on Sundays, until the founder of Beth ʿAbhe introduced them into his monastery.

⁶⁵ Edited in an appendix to A. J. Maclean, *East Syrian Daily Offices* (London 1894), 264-283.

⁶⁶ These books are described by J. Mateos, *Lelya-Şapra, Essai d'interprétation des matines chaldéennes* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 156, Rome 1959) 5-12.

⁶⁷ Mardin-Diarbekir MSS. 31.25 and 31.63.

⁶⁸ The Nestorian breviary is: *Ktaba da-qdam wa-d-batar, wa-d-ḥudra, wa-d-kaškol, wa-d-gazza . . .*, 3 vols. (Trichur 1960-1962); that of the Catholics is: *Breviarum iuxta ritum Syrorum Orientalium, id est, Chaldaeorum*, 3 vols. (Paris 1886-1887, and Rome 1938). The edition of the Nestorians is: *Rušma d-qeryane, w-šurraya wa-šliḥa w-zummara w-evangaliyon . . .* (Mosul 1924); that of the Catholics is: *Proprium missarum de tempore et de sanctis juxta ritum Ecclesiae Syrorum Orientalium, id est, Chaldaeorum* (Mosul 1901).

⁶⁹ See n. 61 above.

that are found for the study of the Latin, Byzantine, Syrian and Coptic masses, it is true – the oldest complete text is only of the fifteenth century – but this lack is largely compensated for by the detailed commentaries we have from the fifth to the ninth centuries.