

The Lord's Prayer in the Syro-Malabar Liturgical Enarxis

The Lord's Prayer is the model and summit of all Christian prayer. It formed the *arcanum* handed over to the neophytes as “the summary of the whole Gospel” (Tertullian) and therefore, the Our Father was considered to be the prayer *par excellence* of all baptised. There are clear evidences of its liturgical use in the Eucharistic celebration – in the pre-Communion services – of East and West by the end of the 4th century.¹ All the same, in the East Syriac tradition the liturgical use of Lord's Prayer was gradually introduced into the opening (*enarxis*) and ending of Church Services too.

The scope of the present article is to offer a concise liturgical history of the Lord's Prayer and its purpose in the East Syriac liturgical enarxis. Its usage in the Communion rite and at the end of Services is not object of our discussion. The article is divided into two parts. The first part analyses the early Syriac documents and the East Syriac liturgical commentaries in a historical perspective. The second part examines the Syriac version of the Lord's Prayer in a theological, biblical and musical perspective.

1. Liturgical History of the Lord's Prayer

1.1 Private and Monastic Usage

(1) The earliest testimony to the Lord's Prayer, apart from the New Testament, is *Didache VIII, 2-3*. According to this ancient Church Order (ca. AD 150), early Christians recited the Our Father with final doxology, entrusted to them at baptism, three times a day. Similarly another Church Order, *Apostolic Constitutions VII, 24* (ca. 380), well known in the Persian circles, confirms the same.² But both these witnesses seem to be a direct parallel with the Jewish spacing of daily prayer and continue to reflect private devotion rather than a liturgical setting.³

(2) The early third-century apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*, originally written in Syriac and possibly in Edessa, places the Lord's prayer but without doxology, in the mouth of Judas Thomas who recites it in a standing posture. Generally speaking the text agrees with the Old Syriac version.⁴ Some

¹ R. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, V: The Precommunion Rites*, OCA 261 (2000), p. 139. E. J. Cutrone anticipates it to the middle of 4th century in the Syrian liturgy: “The Lord's Prayer and the Eucharist. The Syrian Tradition”, *Eulogema: Studies in Honor of Robert Taft*. Rome 1993, pp. 93-106.

² A text parallel to Book VIII of *Apostolic Constitutions* was referred to in the Persian Synod of 420. Therefore this pseudo-apostolic teaching was already circulated in the Persian Church by the beginning of the fifth century, soon after its compilation. H. Kaufhold, “La littérature pseudo canonique syriaque”, *Les Apocryphes syriaques, Études syriaques II*, M. Debié, A. Desreumaux, C. Jullien, F. Jullien (éds.), Paris 2005, pp. 147-167.

³ E. J. Cutrone, “The Lord's Prayer and the Eucharist. The Syrian Tradition”, *Eulogema: Studies in Honor of Robert Taft*. Rome 1993, pp. 102-104; P. F. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church: A Study of the Origin and Early Development of the Divine Office*, London 1981, pp. 25-26.

⁴ Noteworthy is the plural “wills” (ܟܢܝܢܝܢ) which is also found in Theodore of Mopsuestia's Catechetical Homilies and the liturgical addition “and our sins” from the Lukan version, which is also found in the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai.

scholars have pointed out a possible liturgical context in its formulation.⁵ We quote the full text because it is one of the earliest witnesses of the Lord's Prayer in its complete form.

And when he had finished saying these things, he stood up to pray and spoke thus: "Our Father who (is) in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; and your will be (done) on earth as in heaven; and give us the constant bread of the day; and forgive us our debts and our sins that we may too forgive our debtors; and bring us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil (one). My Lord and my God and my hope and my confidence and my teacher and my comforter, you taught us to pray thus."⁶

(3) Aphrahat's *Demonstration IV on Prayer*, written between 336-345, is the one earliest Christian treatise on prayer. This work, unlike those well-known works on Prayer by Tertullian, Origen and Cyprian, is not primarily concerned with the Lord's Prayer but the need of purity of heart if prayer is to be acceptable to God.⁷ Nevertheless, Aphrahat advises to pray the Lord's Prayer, in preference to Old Testament sacrifices, at the beginning of every prayer.

See, my beloved, how sacrifices and offerings have been rejected, and prayer chosen in their place. From now on love pure prayer, and labour at petition. At the beginning of all your prayers you should pray the prayer of your Lord (IV:19).⁸

The writings of Aphrahat is the first detailed witness to the Syriac 'proto-monastic' spirituality. Unlike the anchoritic and cenobitic experiences in Egypt and in Palestine, early Syriac form of 'proto-monasticism' was lived very much within the rest of human society. By the fourth century we see them as a recognizable body within the Church, some living at home, others in small communities, but not yet isolated from the laity. It is likely that ascetic vows were undertaken at the time of baptism which, in the fourth century, was still predominantly a rite undertaken as an adult. The vow is termed *qyāmā* (ܩܝܡܐ) and the person who took such a 'covenant' is an *ihidāyā* (ܝܚܝܕܝܐ), follower of the 'Only-Begotten'.⁹ Aphrahat seems to be the spiritual leader of the "sons of *qyāmā*", and a figure of some authority within the Church. It seems that he stipulates the recitation of Lord's Prayer at the at the beginning of every proto-monastic prayer rather than Cathedral liturgical service.

⁵ Maria-Barbara von Stritzky, *Studien zur Überlieferung und Interpretation des Vaterunseres in der frühchristlichen Literatur*, Münster 1989, pp. 17-19.

⁶ *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text and Commentary*, A. F. J. Klijn (ed.), Leiden 2003². The *Acts of Thomas*, usually dated to the early third century, is originally written in Syriac and possibly in Edessa. The book is aimed to promote the ideal of an encratite life style.

⁷ S. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*, Kalamazoo 1987, p. 2.

⁸ S. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*, Kalamazoo 1987, pp. 24-25.

⁹ Other terms like *btulē* (virgins: unmarried) and *qadišē* (holy ones: married) were also used to designate such states of life, mainly of sexual continence. But later on, by the sixth century *ihidāyā* simply meant 'solitary' or 'hermit' (as opposed to *dayrāyā*, a cenobitic monk) – ironically, the one sense it did not have in the early texts of Aphrahat and Ephrem. But already in the days of Ephrem, the anchoritic life also made its appearance in the Syriac speaking world in the person of Julian Saba, whose life Ephrem would celebrate in hymns. As various recent studies have brought out with varying emphasis, there are three elements in the meaning of *ihidāyā*. 1) singleness by leaving family and being celibate, 2) single-mindedness and 3) a special relationship to the Only-Begotten Son, who the consecrated ascetics 'put on' in a special way. R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition*, revised edition, New Jersey 2004, pp. 13-14.

(4) John the Solitary of Apamea, a monastic author belonging to the first half of the 5th century, in his *Letter to Hesychius* advises the young monk to begin the prayer with the Seraphic hymn (Is 6:3) that later became *qanonā* of the Lord's Prayer. This means that there existed a monastic practice of reciting the angelic thrice-holy in addition to the Lord's Prayer at the beginning of prayer services. Interestingly, John quotes it in its liturgical form which includes "heaven", where as the biblical version has only "earth".

At the beginning of your prayer have it in mind to say in God's presence, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord almighty, with whose glory both heaven and earth are filled".¹⁰

(5) Sahdona (Martyrius), a monk from the monastery of Beth Abe and later on Bishop of Beth Garmai (ca. 630), in his *Book of Perfection*, recommends to initiate the cenobitic prayer with the Our Father but in an adapted form. It may be noted that Sahdona followed the Rules of the Great Monastery of Mount Izla, the mother convent for all later monastic institutes in Persia. According to Sahdona, the Lord's prayer is the model prayer of the children of God and is to be said in the hiddenness of their heart.

These are the things we should have in mind at the beginning of our time of prayer. So let us pray 'Our Father who are in heaven' (Mt 6:9), we have 'sinned against heaven and before you, and are not worthy to be called your sons' (Lk 15:18-19) or to praise your holy name... You should pray as follows: Our Father in heaven, may your name be sanctified, may your kingdom come...' These are words appropriate for the children of God to pray, having their minds raised up from earth, as they dwell in heaven in the Kingdom with their Father, assembled as though in the chamber of the heart's hiddenness, away from the sight of anyone outside. This is the model we should imitate in our prayer, when our mouths give thanks before God our Father.¹¹

(6) Dadisho Qatraya, one of the most famous monastic writers of the Syriac Orient who lived in late 7th century, gives the best witness to the use of the Lord's prayer at the beginning and at the end of cenobitic prayer. In his *Memrā on Solitude of Weeks* Dadisho prescribes the cenobitic order for Saturday Communion service¹² thus: before leaving one's cell, one must genuflect before the Cross in his cell, recite *one's own* "Our Father" (that is, in an adapted form), kiss our Lord on his Cross, and make many prostrations; during the way, he must recite psalms and make the sign of the Cross; after receiving Communion, returned to his cell, he must again genuflect, recite the Our Father, and finally his own thanksgivings.

When the bell has sounded (for Saturday Communion service), quickly and immediately stir your soul with the ardour of love and awe, and fall upon your knees and genuflect before the Crucifix, recite the Lord's Prayer with understanding and concentration, and

¹⁰ S. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*, Kalamazoo 1987, p. 96.

¹¹ S. Brock, *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life*, Kalamazoo 1987, p. 206 and pp. 236-237.

¹² The solitaries in the Great Monastery of Mount Izla led a solitary life during the week-days, with no communal liturgy, and the seven Hours were recited privately. But on Sundays (from Saturday evening onwards), solitaries came together in the cenobite for the regular liturgy and common meal. Sunday eve they were occupied in keeping vigil, prayers and Services, and reading of Scriptures as well as writings of the Fathers. Dadisho's *Memrā on Solitude of Weeks* deals particularly with solitaries who took seven weeks solitude, who had normally no common liturgy, including the Sunday Mysteries during that whole period. But if not living in perfect solitude, Dadisho allowed these solitaries to receive the Holy Communion on Saturdays, but not to participate in any other community Services.

say thus: “Our Lord and our Father, which art in heaven, make us worthy to sanctify, magnify and exalt Thy name continuously and without distraction, night and day (...). Immediately after having returned in peace to your cell, fall down and genuflect before the Crucifix, and recite the Lord’s Prayer, as we have described above. Recite also words of thankfulness of your own composition...”¹³

(7) Among the monastic literature our last witness is an early 8th century author called Simon of Taibutheh. In his *Memrā Spoken on the Day of the Consecration of a Cell*, Simon attests to the liturgical use of Lord’s Prayer as a “sealing prayer” in the concluding rite of Compline service just before *hutāmā*.¹⁴

Thus the Lord’s Prayer, since it was the model prayer of all baptised, was recited at the beginning of all monastic services, both solitaries private prayers as well as cenobitic community services. The monks used their-own adapted form of the Our Father and often added angelic hymns and doxologies to it. Through the monastic tradition the Lord’s Prayer gradually became an indispensable part of all monastic liturgical services.

1.2 Liturgical Use of the Lord’s Prayer

1.2.1 Commentary of Pseudo-Narsai

Theodore of Mopsuestia’s very detailed description of the pre-Communion rite has no *Pater*, but he cites the Lord’s Prayer (*Catechetical Homilies* 16:31) in the context of worthiness to receive Communion.¹⁵ The first possible evidence of the liturgical use of the Lord’s Prayer outside the Communion rite is found in Pseudo-Narsai’s Commentary on the Mysteries, written around 6th century.¹⁶ The Lord’s Prayer is found in this text between the priestly prayer after Communion and the final blessing.

Then all in the altar and without in the congregation pray the prayer which that life-giving mouth taught. With it do (men) begin every prayer, morning and evening; and with it do they complete all the rites (mysteries) of Holy Church. This, it is said, is that which includes all prayer, and without it no prayer is concluded (or performed).¹⁷

But according to R. H. Connolly, this is a later interpolation in Narsai’s text, and seems to refer to those controversies after its official introduction by Catholicos Timothy I (780-823).¹⁸ A close

¹³ “A Treatise on Solitude by Dadisho Katraya”, A. Mingana (tr.), *Early Christian Mystics*, Woodbrooke Studies 7, Cambridge 1934, pp. 135-137.

¹⁴ For Compline Simon gives the content of the service: Psalms 91 and 121, *tešbohtā* attributed to Abraham of Kashkar, *Trisagion*, genuflection-*metanoia*, prayers, sealing with the Lord’s Prayer and *huttāmā*, “let your Cross, O our Saviour, be for us a refuge”. *Simone di Taibutheh, Abitare la Solitudine*, S. Chialà (ed.), Magnano 2004, pp. 22-23.

¹⁵ R. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, V: The Precommunion Rites*, OCA 261 (2000), pp. 135-140, especially note 54. In East Syriac Liturgy, the Lord’s Prayer is an integral element of an unmistakably penitential pre-communion rite.

¹⁶ The extant Commentary on Mysteries, in the present form can not really be from the pen of Narsai, but perhaps dates to the sixth century when catechumenate was still a practice. S. Brock, “Diachronic aspects of Syriac Word Formation: An Aid for Dating Anonymous Texts”, *V Symposium Syriacum* 1988, OCA 236 (1990) pp. 327-8.

¹⁷ R. H. Connolly (ed.), *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, R. Connolly (tr.), Text and Studies VIII, Cambridge 1909, p. 30.

¹⁸ For Connolly, this passage can scarcely be an authentic part of the text of Narsai. Besides, according to him, the Syriac verse, ‘this, it is said, is that which includes all prayer’ has an awkwardness that is alien to the style of Narsai. R. H. Connolly (ed.), *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, R. Connolly (tr.), Text and Studies VIII, Cambridge 1909, p. 82.

examination of the above text attributed to Pseudo-Narsai clearly shows that it is a later addition, by all means after AD 786, as we will establish in the following heading, and probably reflects events after the death of Timothy in 823.

1.2.2 Commentary of Abdisho bar Bahriz on Ecclesiastical Services (CES)

The most extensive liturgical commentary of East Syriac liturgy is the commentary on the Ecclesiastical Services (CES), written in the threshold of 8th and 9th century. The author is generally known as “Pseudo-George of Arbela” or “Anonymous Author”, but according to modern scholarship, the author is by all probability Abdisho bar Bahriz, Metropolitan of Mosul (died ca. 828).¹⁹

According to CES Tract II chapters 7 and 18, Catholicos Ishoyahb III did not command the Lord’s Prayer neither at the beginning nor at the end of the daily Service (but only in the pre-Communion service), and he wanted the first part of the Service to typify the ‘worldly’ (Old Testament) dispensation, that is, no *Evangelion* is said therein.

The blessed Ishoyahb did not command that ‘Our Father’ should be said at the beginning of the Service. Rather he commanded that it should depict the ‘worldly’ service, that is, the *Evangelion* is not said therein, which is the New Covenant which symbolizes the future world. But, it should begin with the ‘priestly voices’, and then enter into the ‘series of songs of the Old’ (= psalms). And we should not anticipate the New (Covenant) at the beginning of our words, nor return again to the Old. One Typifies with the recitation all that is above, and then that will come; and when we begin from the beginning of the New, we follow one after another; the same way, before the beginning (of the New), we take care of the first things.²⁰

Why some say ‘Our Father in heaven’ at the end of Service and some do not say it? (...) Those who do not say (Our Father at the end), as I said, do not (want to) break (the Order) of Ishoyahb, ‘not to say Our Father in the beginning nor in the end, but in the time of Mysteries with Communion (ܟܘܨܡܘܨܝܘܬܐ)’. Those who say it, (do it) according to that ordered by Timothy.²¹

The Commentary of Gabriel Qatraya (CGQ)²², though is not referring at all to neither initial nor final Lord’s Prayer, has the same principle of Ishoyahb regarding the symbolism of Services: once

Since Timothy died ca. 823, Commentary of Abdisho bar Bahriz on Ecclesiastical Services (CES) is dealing with comparatively recent events. According to Connolly, “this, it is said” in the above (interpolated) text may point to arguments used by the faction of Timothy. Again, “this, it is said, *is that which includes all prayer*” in the text has a parallel with CES II,8 while dealing on the meaning of the Lord’s Prayer. “And those who are unable to learn the Scriptures and to pray, should pray this prayer, *which contains all things that a man should ask God*, whether for this world or that to come”: CES I:157,17-20. . This is the first and only interpolation confirmed in Ps-Narsai’s Commentary.

¹⁹ For details see J. Alencherry, “The Author of Pseudo-George of Arbela”, *Urha* 4 (2010), pp. 53-61.

²⁰ All translation of CES are from the Syriac original: *Anonymi auctoris Expositio officiorum ecclesiae Georgio Arbelensi vulgo ascripta*. I-II, R. H. Connolly (ed.), CSCO 64, 71, 72, 76, Scriptorum Syri, series 2, t. 91-92, Paris-Roma 1911-1915. The text of CES is quoted as: Volume + Syriac pagination + number of lines. Here CES I:151,12-22. All translation of CES are ours.

²¹ CES I:191,21-28.

²² The liturgical commentary of Rabban Gabriel Qatraya bar Lipah is the earliest and most comprehensive witness to East Syriac daily liturgy. The unedited text is found in a unique Ms Or.3336, conserved in the British Library, London. The author is not yet clearly identified, but it is certain that he wrote the commentary in the early decades of the seventh century, before the liturgical reforms of Ishoyahb III. The region of Qatar was an intellectual centre during this period.

the rites that symbolizes the New Testament (NT) has begun, then no more return to Old Testament (OT) texts.²³ For the same reason, it was not possible to have the Lord's prayer at the beginning of Services in CGQ; but in a sense it gives the possibility to recite it after the Mysteries. Thus we find in CES Tract IV chapter 27, soon after it has spoken of the blessing of dismissal after the Communion, the Lord's Prayer is said in two choirs, between those in the sanctuary and those outside.²⁴

It was Patriarch Timothy I (780-823) who introduced the Lord's Prayer with his own *qanonā* in East Syriac Liturgy. CES further mentions that many refused to obey Timothy, and adhered to the more ancient usage. Even those obeying Timothy were further divided: between those who recited first the Lord's Prayer and then the priest's collect, and those who did the contrary, first the priest's prayer and then 'Our Father'; again, among those who recited the Lord's prayer with *qanonā* and without *qanonā*.

But there are also those that did not obey the order of Timothy, but persisted in that which Ishoyahb had handed down. But even those that accepted to say the 'Our Father' at the beginning are divided in two ways. Some, (first) the priest prays (= collect), and then 'Our Father'. Others, say (first) 'Our father' and then the priest prays. Those that pray (collect) first say thus, 'it is fitting for the priest to pray (first) as ordered by Ishoyahb, and then say 'Our Father' as ordered by Timothy'. But those who say 'Our Father' (first) and then the priest prays say thus, 'it is fitting that we first say the prayer 'Our Father' in common, and then the priest should pray and begin the necessary Service, in order that the prayer of our Lord and our Service do not come to be considered one thing'.²⁵

But the Church that has accepted the Order of Ishoyahb and has become hostile to the command of Timothy does not yield to the words of Paul who says, 'that every man should be subject to the dominions of authority' (Rom 13,1). And if we are commanded to be subject to all authority, that which is elected by the Spirit to shepherd us, then why they are not subjected to him? And while they have despised Timothy, they have despised Ishoyahb as well, (because) both of them are equally Patriarchs. But those who (have) the priest pray first and then the prayer of our Lord, it seems that they have not done well, because they have given precedence to the prayer of the priest and only afterwards that of our Lord; and they have counted the prayer of the Lord as part of the Service, even though that of the priest comes before that of our Lord. But those that say prayer of our Lord should take precedence, and afterwards should the priest pray, follow quite well in reasoning, as it appears to me.²⁶

Why some say it without *qanonā*? (...) Those who do not say with *qanonā*, says thus: 'we say the psalms of David with *qanonē*, as they are from the Old (Testament); but why should we say *qanonā* in 'Our Father in heaven'. Is it better than *qanonā* or *qanonā* is

The literary genre of this commentary (*erotapokriseis*) and the title of its author (Rabban) hint at a School-cenobitic background in which the text was conceived.

²³ The background of such an explanation in CGQ was the introduction of OT psalms after the Mysteries under the (Egyptian) influence of solitaries. The same is witnessed in CGQ. Cf. S. Brock, "Gabriel of Qatar's Commentary on the Liturgy", *Hugoye: Online Journal of Syriac Studies* 6/2 (2003), [12] 87.

²⁴ "But again blessed Timothy has added here to the canons of Ishoyahb that they should say 'Our Father who art in heaven', which is the prayer of our Lord's (own) teaching, which fills up the enjoyment (bliss of heaven), and those within and those without (pray) it together (...)." Cited from: *A Commentary on the Mass (which has been attributed to, but it is not really) by the Nestorian George, Bishop of Mosul and Arbel (10th century)*, R. H. Connolly (tr.), R. Matheus (ed.), Kottayam 2000, pp. 139-140.

²⁵ CES I:151,26-152,11.

²⁶ CES I:153, 15-153,29.

better than it? If *qanonā* is better, then the prayer of our Lord is inferior. If (the Lord's Prayer) is better as great as said by the King, then it is to be said alone, not added by *qanonā*. For it is greater than the whole Service'. This is the mind of many of them.²⁷

The author of CES, recommends all his readers to obey Timothy, and he prefers 'Our Father' before the collect, and with *qanonā*.

"But again blessed Timothy has added here to the canons of Ishoyahb that they should say 'Our Father who art in heaven', which is the prayer of our Lord's (own) teaching, which fills up the enjoyment (bliss of heaven), and those within and those without (pray) it together (...)." ²⁸

CES gives two reasons for why the Lord's Prayer should be recited before the priestly collect: firstly, the Lord's Prayer is not part of the Service; secondly, the Lord's Prayer has precedence in time. It seems that CES' primary aim was to conserve the integrity of the Service. If the same principle is followed at the end of the Services, the Lord's Prayer is recited after the whole Service. This would lead us to assume that the present blessing rite was a further appendix added after the introduction of Lord's Prayer.

While answering back those who prays first (the collect): but if, from the prayer taught by our Lord is (part of) the Service, and in-between priest prays, why do not they pray (collect) after 'Our Father', and then they begin *marmitā*? If it is (part of) the Service, thus is the right way to be done. If it is not (part of) the Service, but (only) prayer taught by our Lord, place this prayer apart, and then follow closely the Service. Even if *kašišā* (priest) prays before 'Our Father in heaven', will also pray before *marmitā*. Otherwise, the priest prays as if the prayer is his own; however begins something that is partly better than the Service of the people. Which is better: the prayer of the Lord over the priest or that of priest than the Lord or both are equal? If the prayer of the priest is better, then the priest is better than our Lord. But rightly, that of our Lord is better than the priest?. Or if both of them are equal, and if equal by power, then there is the precedence in Order and succession between them. In fact, they are not instituted at the same time. Which of them is first in time and in Order, that of our Lord or that of priest? Certainly that of our Lord. Why is not possible to say, except this? Unless our Lord not even the priest, and not its inversion, unless priest not even our Lord; for he (our Lord) is the beginning of Covenant, and the priests are called in his name. 'Priest as the soul of Jesus' says one '*onitā*. Even if they are equal in power, one is first in Order among them. The honour is given according to the precedence of Order. For example, when three *kašišē* (priests) or Bishops are gathered, even if one is their priesthood, there is precedence in time and Order, we prefer who is first. Thus, even if the prayer of our Lord and that of priest are equal in power, that of our Lord comes first, because of its oldness. For he (our Lord) said it in Order before than this (collect). This is the Order in each and all Churches.²⁹

1.2.3 Later Witnesses

(1) The Arab canonical collection of Ibn At-taiyib (early 11th century) witnesses the use of the Our Father at the beginning and end of monastic office while referring to a Synod officiated by Timothy, probably that of 786, that condemned certain Messalian tendencies.³⁰ In the same

²⁷ CES I:191,23-24,28-192,8.

²⁸ CES I:151,12-151,26.

²⁹ CES I:152,11-153,15.

³⁰ *Ibn At-taiyib, Fiqh an-Nasraniya I-II*, W. Hoenerbach & O. Spies (eds.), CSCO 130-1, 167-8 = SA 14-15, 18-19, Louvain 1951-57, p. 188. We find the translation also in Assemani, "ut Canonicae preces oratione Dominica et incoharentur et terminarentur". *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana in qua manuscriptos codices syriacos*

collection, we find Patriarch John IV bar Abgare (900-905) ordering the Lord's Prayer at the beginning and end of all Services.³¹

(2) The Lord's Prayer was considered as people's prayer, and therefore, people could recite it even without being initiated by clergy; and the deacon used to recite it instead of priestly collects between psalms in the absence of priests. The *Nomocanon* of Gabriel of Basra (ca. 884-891) gives the first witness of this practice.

Not even (the people) should say 'let us pray, peace be with us', that is rightful to deacon; but they shall begin and end with 'Our Father'; and between each *hullālā*, the deacon repeats silently the same prayer of 'Our Father' or 'Holy God'.³²

(3) The liturgical casuistry of Ishoyahb IV (1020-25), written around 1010, confirms the absence of the Lord's Prayer in the ancient beginning of Services, and later when it was introduced it was without Timothy's *qanonā*.³³ The Lord's Prayer was recited three times in the Services of the Mysteries and of baptism, twice in *Ramšā* and in *Lelyā-Šapṛā*, but not in Betrothal-Wedding and Funeral Services.

(4) The liturgical Commentary of John bar Zo'bi, ca. 1235, mentions the Our Father before the initial *marmitā* of *Rāzē*.³⁴

(5) In Abdisho bar Brika's Commentary (CAB), written ca. 1315, the Lord's Prayer is placed after the priestly collect, while the deacon's invitation begins the Service of *Ramšā*.

Let us arise for prayer, let us pray, peace be with us'. (This) introductory (word) is to prepare the mind for the conversation with God. The prayer of the priest (collect) before "Our Father": is an interpretation of "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob" (Ex 3:6) that was said to Moses from the bush. The Prayer of 'Our Father' that is recited at the beginning of the services and at the end, on account of the sublime perfection of its divine composition, and (is given by) he who commanded and taught "like this, therefore, you pray" (Mt 6:9); (himself) is the Lord and the Renewer of the creation, Christ our God. And in its ten verses contain every 'mysteries' (ܠܝܫܘܢܝܘܬܐ) of the two worlds.³⁵

recensuit., I-III, J. S. Assemani (ed.), Romae: Sacra Congregatio Propaganda Fide, 1725-1728, Vol III/I, p. 101. Van Unnik gives the following comment, "Here we find only the Daily Offices mentioned but not the other liturgies". *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, p. 272.

³¹ "Darüber, das am Anfang und Ende des Gebetes das Pater noster gesprochen werden soll, denn es ist das Gebet, das uns unser Herr gelehrt hat, beim Abend-, Nacht- und Morgengebet und bei der Liturgiefeyer." *Ibn At-taiyib, Fiqh an-Nasraniya I-II*, W. Hoenerbach & O. Spies (eds.), CSCO 130-1, 167-8 = SA 14-15, 18-19, Louvain 1951-57, p. 207.

³² *Die Rechtssammlung des Gabriel von Basra und ihr Verhältnis zu den juristischen Sammelwerken der Nestorianer*, H. Kaufhold (ed.), Berlin 1976, pp. 226-227. Translation is ours.

³³ Questions 105-107, 112-114 and 117. *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, pp. 181-185.

³⁴ *Yohanan Bar Zobi, Explanation of the Divine Mysteries*, Thomas Mannoramprampil (tr.), Kottayam 1992, p. 22.

³⁵ *Book on the Order of Church Regulations: Written by Mar Abdisho, Metropolitan of Nisibis and Armenia*, J. Kelaitha, Urmia, Persia 1918, 46a (Syriac text). Translation is ours. For Latin translation: *Ordo iudiciorum ecclesiasticorum*, collectus, dispositus, ordinatus et compositus a Mar Abdiso. Latine interpretatus est, notis illustravit Iacobus M. Vosté Codificazione canonica orientale, Fonti, ser. 2.15; Caldei-Diritto antico, 2) Vatican 1940, pp. 82-103.

This means that Abdisho is not following the reasoning of CES regarding the position of the Lord's Prayer. Abdisho's order is an exception to the early commentaries. He also attests its use at the end of *Ṣapṛā*.³⁶

(6) An interesting episode, attested by the *Book of Towers*, occurred in the late 11th century with regard to recitation of the Lord's Prayer between the night and morning Service.³⁷ The historian Mari relates the dispute in this regard between the Catholicos Makkiha I (1092-1110) and the people of Baghdad, headed by the physician Abul Farag Sa 'id ibn Ibrahim al-Wasiti. Prior to this dispute, the previous Catholicos Abdisho II (1074-1091), in an attempt to enforce uniformity of practice, had decreed that the Lord's Prayer be recited between the vigil office and *Ṣapṛā* and to the end with the concluding blessing everywhere in the Catholicate. Abdisho II was from Mosul, the 'northern' regions, and the usage he was acquainted with was different from the 'southern' regions, of Bagdad, that never recited the Lord's Prayer during the Services. His successor to the Catholicate, Makkiha I was from Bagdad and he returned to the older usage. In 1097, al-Wasiti probably due to personal opposition to the Catholicos refused the 'new change', and in order to justify his position, he put forth the following theological justification that "*Ṣapṛā* was an obligation for all Christians. It is not permitted to begin a prayer of obligation except by that instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ as invitatory and that mentioned in his Gospel".³⁸

To sum up, the Lord's Prayer was officiated into the Cathedral liturgy by Patriarch Timothy I, probably in AD 786. But there was no uniformity in its liturgical recitation: some recited the Lord's Prayer before the initial priestly prayer and others after it, and still others refused totally its use in Church Services.

1.3 "Cause" or Origin of the Lord's Prayer

In the sixth century a new and rather unique literary genre called *حكاية*, 'Cause', came into use in the curriculum of the School of Nisibis.³⁹ The subject matter of this genre concerned with the origin and meaning of Christian institutions, feasts celebrated during the ecclesiastical year, liturgical rites and hymns used in liturgy. In other words, "Cause" genre is not simply a historical reconstruction of past, and therefore, it is important to filter facts from legends. Nevertheless, it provides a theological motive for the origin of a liturgical rite. The Lord's Prayer too has a "Cause", a theological reason behind its origin and introduction into liturgy.

³⁶ "And "Our Father in heaven": exalted conclusion that is with the queen of prayers, and contain astonished intelligence and spirit of body of ten vesicles." *Book on the Order of Church Regulations: Written by Mar Abdisho, Metropolitan of Nisibis and Armenia*, J. Kelaitha, Urmia, Persia 1918, 51a (Syriac text).

³⁷ For this section: *Maris, Amri et Slibae de patriarchis nestorianorum commentaria. Ex codibus vaticanis edidit ac latine reddidit I-II*, H. Gismondi (ed.), Rome 1897/99, pp. 121-122; J.-M. Fiey, "Le Patriarche nestorien Makkiha Ier (1092-1100) et Ibn al-Wasiti", LM 91 (1978), pp. 461-463.

³⁸ J.-M. Fiey, "Le Patriarche nestorien Makkiha Ier (1092-1100) et Ibn al-Wasiti", LM 91 (1978), p. 462.

³⁹ It is not clear when exactly and by whom the genre was introduced in the School (probably by Narsai), but it is certain that the oldest specimens that have been preserved were initially transmitted orally by the teachers. G. J. Reinink, "The Cause of the Commemoration of Mary: Author, Date and Christology", *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone: Studies in Honor of Sebastian P. Brock*, G. Kiraz (ed.), Piscataway 2008, p. 517.

(1) Patriarch Isho bar Nun (823-828) in a letter written to Macarius (unedited Ms Mingana Syr. 586) relates the origin of liturgical use of 'Our Father' to John Chrysostom and Nestorius.

Should the Lord's Prayer be said at the beginning and at the end of the service? Officially it must be said. In this way one sticks to that Chrysostomus or Mouth of Gold, the blessed John and the blessed Nestorius. For they wrote as follows: "Every service of the church which does not begin or end with the Lord's Prayer that the Saviour delivered to the church, is sinful and mutilated, and not perfect".⁴⁰

(2) The same origin, referring *mainly* to its use in the end of the Mysteries, is repeated in the *Nomocanon* of Gabriel of Basra (ca. 884-891), reconstructed mainly from Ibn At-taiyib's canonical collection.

From where originated in the Church, in the Service of the Mysteries that we say in the end, 'Praise to the Lord in the sanctuary' (Ps 150:1) as well as other *qanonē* that were increasingly said in the monasteries of solitaries; whereas Patriarch John had fore-determined that each prayer which is not terminated by 'Our Father in heaven' is not complete. Also Mar Nestorius said this. And Timothy and Isho bar Nun determined this. The heretic Theophilus (of Alexandria), the step-brother of Cyril (of Alexandria), the speckled leopard, who is in opposition to John, the Gold Mouth, like Cyril against Nestorius, in opposition to the truth Faith and Gospel, they decided in their Churches, to ignore the Canon established by the Orthodox, and instead of the prayer 'Our Father' they placed at the end of the Service of Mysteries 'Praise to the Lord in the sanctuary' (Ps 150,1); and at the end of other (Services) they placed *kyrie eleison*, that is 'Lord have mercy'.⁴¹

Though we do not know the source for this patristic affirmation, it is well noted that, in both Antioch before 398, and Constantinople from 397-404, Chrysostom in his homilies had spoken of the use of the Lord's Prayer in the pre-Communion rite.⁴² But the one referred to above is at the end of the Mysteries, just as in the interpolated text of Ps-Narsai. CGQ refers to the use of psalms among solitaries, at the end of the Mysteries but no Lord's Prayer.⁴³ It seems that in order to counter the Alexandrian monastic tradition of OT psalms at the end, to save the NT symbolism of the Mysteries (after reading of Gospel no more OT texts) they may have introduced the Lord's prayer at the end of Mysteries under the Byzantine influence.

(3) The casuistry of Ishoyahb IV (1020-25) narrates the immediate cause of its introduction by one 'unnamed' Catholicos of the East. It was simply to overtrump the Miaphysites!

Why do all the services begin with the Lord's Prayer, while in the services of Betrothal and Marriage and in the Funeral service they never say the Lord's Prayer, neither at the beginning nor at the end? You must know that in former times they never said the Lord's Prayer, neither at the beginning nor at the end. There was once a Jacobite monk who began to dispute with a Catholicos of ours in the East, and that monk wrote in one of his books words of insult against us, saying: "You Nestorians do not recite in your services

⁴⁰ Question 62, quoted in *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, p. 271.

⁴¹ *Die Rechtssammlung des Gabriel von Basra und ihr Verhältnis zu den juristischen Sammelwerken der Nestorianer*, H. Kaufhold (ed.), Berlin 1976, pp. 239-240. Translation is ours.

⁴² R. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, V: The Precommunion Rites*, OCA 261 (2000), p. 139.

⁴³ S. Brock, "Gabriel of Qatar's Commentary on the Liturgy", *Hugoye: Online Journal of Syriac Studies* 6/2 (2003), [12] 87.

the prayer which our Lord has taught his disciples, as we recite at the end of our services". And when the Patriarch heard the insult of the heretic, the Catholicos ordered that his prayer "Our Father who art in heaven..." should be recited at the beginning and at the end of our services: a thing which is more than the Jacobites do, because they recite it only at the end of their services.⁴⁴

Who is this 'unnamed' Catholicos?⁴⁵ For Ishoyahb IV, it is not Timothy I, because even before Timothy there was the Lord's prayer in Services, not farced; Timothy had just introduced *qanonā* with it.⁴⁶ What does it mean that the Lord's prayer is recited formerly without *qanonā*? Is it referring to its ancient use in Services without *qanonā*? We have already seen that the Lord's prayer was ordered by Ishoyahb III in the pre-Communion rite but without *qanonā*. Moreover, even in daily Services there were those who were not reciting *qanonā* in the initial and final Lord's Prayer. Besides, in the private and monastic usage, Lord's prayer was recited without Timothy's *qanonā*. Therefore, Ishoyahb IV has reason when he says, "formerly this prayer was recited without the addition". But due to lack of proofs, it seems that it is Timothy himself who introduced officially the present form. We have three reasons to prove this fact: first, CES written not long after the death of Timothy I must be more reliable source than Ishoyahb IV; second, the witness of the Arab Canons of Ibn At-taiyib;⁴⁷ and third, though during this period, disputes were common between the two Churches, the only reference for such a possible debate is in Bar Hebraeus' *History* where he tells us that Timothy had a dispute with the Jacobite Patriarch George of Be'eltan.⁴⁸

2. The Liturgical Theology of the Syriac Lord's Prayer

2.1 The Biblical Analysis of the Peshitta Version

The current liturgical version of the Lord's prayer is translated from the Greek original, and is exactly Peshitta (P) Mt 6:9-13, except two additions: first, "(our debts) and sins" from P Lk 11:4;⁴⁹ second, the final "Amen". The latter addition is obvious, but how to explain the former? In Aramaic, but not in Hebrew of this period, the words for 'debt', 'debtor', are frequently used in the

⁴⁴ *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, p. 181.

⁴⁵ According to Fiey, basing on the witness of *Book of Towers*, this 'unnamed' Catholicos is Abdisho ibn al-Arid (1074-1090), from the region of Mosul. But this seems impossible. J.-M. Fiey, "Le Patriarche nestorien Makkiha Ier (1092-1100) et Ibn al-Wasiti", LM 91 (1978), p. 462.

⁴⁶ Question 119. *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, p. 181.

⁴⁷ "Darüber, das am Anfang und Ende des Gebetes das Pater noster gesprochen werden soll, denn es ist das Gebet, das uns unser Herr gelehrt hat, beim Abend-, Nacht- und Morgengebet und bei der Liturgiefeier." *Ibn At-taiyib, Law of Christianity I*, 207. Van Unnik (*Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, p. 272) gives the following comment, "Here we find only the Daily Offices mentioned but not the other liturgies"..

⁴⁸ *Bar Hebraeus, Chronicon Ecclesiasticum I-III*, J. B. Abbeloos & T. J. Lamy (eds.), Paris 1877, Vol. III, p. 181.

⁴⁹ While Mt 6:12 has 'forgive us *our debts* as we have forgiven our debtors', Lk 11:4 has 'and forgive us *our sins*, as we forgive everyone who is indebted to us'.

sense of ‘sin’, ‘sinner’; Matthew gives a literal translation of the underlying Aramaic words, while Luke, in the first half of the verse, there is a more idiomatic rendering.⁵⁰

Given that the original language of the Lord’s Prayer must have been Palestinian Aramaic, then its original form will be more close to the Syriac form than Greek, because Syriac is Edessene dialect of Aramaic. On that account, we note below the particularities of P Mt 6:9-13 compared to Gk original and Vg. The Greek ‘daily’ (ἐπιούσιος) of Mt 6:11 “give us this day our *daily (cotidianum)* bread”, literally refers directly to ‘super-essential’ (NVg: *supersubstantialem*), the Bread of Life (cfr. CCC 2837). It seems that Greek is giving a spiritual rather than literal meaning of the original Aramaic word. P instead, takes it in the qualitative sense, and is “give us the bread of our need (ܡܚܘܒܐ) today”. Thus, P renders better the Aramaic original that might literally mean, what is necessary for life, and more broadly every good thing sufficient for subsistence. The two clauses of Mt 6:12 “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” in Gk and Vg are both in present tense. But in P, to express well the sense of the phrase, the second clause is in past perfect, “forgive us our debts and sins as we too *have forgiven* our debtors”. Again ‘evil’ of Mt 6:13 in Gk (πονηροῦ) and in Vg (*malo*) may seem generic but in P it is personalized ‘the Evil one’ (ܡܘܨܘܪܐ). Besides, P contains the interpolated final doxology of Mt 6:13 “For yours is the kingdom, power, and glory, at all times for ever”.⁵¹

The antiphon or *qanonā* is inspired by the angelic hallowing of Is 6:3: “Holy, holy, holy are you. Our Father who is in heaven, *heaven and earth* are full of the greatness of your glory. The *wakers (irā)* and men cry to you: holy, holy, holy are you”. Indeed, it uses the same version of Trisagion, that refers to “heaven and earth” and not the biblical, “the whole earth” of Is 6:3. The term used to denote the angels is not the usual *mala’kā* (ܡܠܐܟܐ) but *irā* (ܝܪܐ). The first has the root meaning ‘messenger’ (*angelus*), is the most common designation of angels in the Scripture. It carries the specific characteristic function of angels in the biblical narration: acting as agents for God. The second term means ‘watcher’ or ‘waker’, is the most general designation of angels in Ephrem. But what exactly does *irā* connote? The term occurs twice in Aramaic Daniel (4:13. 23) but its origin is obscure.⁵² The term ‘watcher’ seems a note on angelic function rather than on their nature: it can either mean ceaseless angelic praise to God or watching in protection. The preference for *irā* in the antiphon reflects that the heavenly function of angels increasingly supplants the messenger function

⁵⁰ *The Hidden Pearl: the Syrian Orthodox Church and its Ancient Aramaic Heritage, I-III*, S. Brock (ed.), Rome 2001, Vol II, p. 13.

⁵¹ The first attested liturgical use of it in Syriac circles, is in *Didache* VIII:2, but without ‘the kingdom’. *Apostolic Constitutions* VII:24, ca. 380, has the complete text. It is known that the doxology concluded the Lord’s Prayer in the Antiochene eucharist before 398. Thereafter, doxology was with all certainty an integral part of the Syriac form of ‘Our Father’.

⁵² For W. Cramer, the term is rooted in Iranian conceptions of Amesha Spenta and Mithra, as heavenly beings who are constantly alert, never sleeping. For R. Murray, the Aramaic *ir* may be of Akkadian origin or from a lost Old Hebrew *yr* meaning ‘guard’, denoting a protecting deity. Cfr. W. CRAMER, *Die Engelvorstellungen bei Ephräm dem Syrer*, (OCA 173) Roma 1975; R. MURRAY., “The Origins of Aramaic ‘ir, ‘Angel’”, *Orientalia* 53 (1984), pp. 303-317.

in liturgy. Besides sin sleep, represents sin and death, its opposite wakefulness implies a focusing of the attention on God.

2.2 Liturgical Singing of the Lord's Prayer

In the East Syriac Liturgy, the Lord's Prayer is chorally sung, with antiphon and *Gloria Patri*. The Commentary of Abdisho bar Bahriz (CES), as stated above, is the first witness on the use and authorship of *qanonā* in the Lord's Prayer. *Qanonā* refers to the antiphon, and thus, it was sung antiphonally, alternated between two choirs, and ends with *Gloria Patri* (minor doxology). Antiphonal psalmody represents a later form of singing of psalms, developed from responsorial psalmody. In antiphonal chanting, the soloist intones the psalmody, and people who are divided into two choirs, respond alternatively with the antiphon. But this original form is no more in use, instead the antiphon is repeated at the beginning and end of each psalm. It seems that it was the desire to abridge that led to this suppression.⁵³

The liturgical casuistry of Ishoyahb IV, written ca.1010, describes the antiphonal singing of the Lord's Prayer in detail.⁵⁴ Timothy I, ca. 780, introduced the antiphonal psalmody of the Lord's Prayer with his-own *qanonā*. Choir is normally referring to clerics inside (priests and deacons) and outside (sub-deacons and monks) the Sanctuary. We reconstruct this ancient cathedral singing still conserved in the liturgical Text.

Choir I (inside Sanctuary)	first verse of the Lord's Prayer
Choir II (outside)	<i>qanonā</i>
people	Lord's Prayer
Choir I	<i>Gloria Patri</i>
Choir II	<i>Sicut erat</i>
Choir II	first verse of the Lord's Prayer
Choir I	<i>qanonā</i>

If the witness of Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286) is true, Patriarch Abdisho I (963-986) changed the then practice of choral recitation of the Lord's Prayer, between those inside the sanctuary and outside, and ordered it to be said by all together.⁵⁵

2.3 Theological Commentary of the Lord's Prayer

In East Syriac liturgical tradition, the Lord's Prayer is recited in ten verses. This is to denote the perfectness of this prayer, because in Semitic thought number ten is considered the most perfect number.

⁵³ J. Mateos, *Lelya-Sapra: Les offices chaldéennes de la nuit et du matin*, OCA 156 (1972), p. 371.

⁵⁴ Question 107. *Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist Isho'yabh IV*, W. C. Van Unnik (ed.), Haarlem 1937, p. 181.

⁵⁵ "Until the time of this Catholicos, those who were offered the offering inside the sanctuary were saying (one) part of 'we believe' and those outside the other part. Thus also he determined the prayer 'Our Father' to be said by all together." *Bar Hebraeus, Chronicon Ecclesiasticum I-III*, J. B. Abbeloos & T. J. Lamy (eds.), Paris 1877, Vol. III, pp. 252-254.

According to the Commentary of Abdisho bar Bahriz (CES), “Our Father” is a unique prayer because: 1) it is *oratio Dominica*, 2) it is the quintessence of Christian faith, and 3) it is the summary of the whole Gospel.

But the excellent Timothy, seeing that this prayer is so adorned with lofty rhetoric, ordered that it should be (said) at the beginning of our service for many reasons – one, being that our Lord himself taught it, another one, being on account of the splendid concepts, as this one, are plentiful in it. And those who are not able to learn the books and to pray, should pray this prayer - which contains all that which man requires from God, whether for this world or that which is to come. Thirdly, that there may be in our service from the strength of the *Evangelion*. While he looked upon all these things, he ordered it at the beginning of the service.⁵⁶

Abdisho bar Brika in his *Book on the Order of Church Regulations* composed in 1315/16 for the use of judges and directors of the ecclesiastical courts, gives a brief commentary on the Lord’s Prayer.⁵⁷ For Abdisho, the Lord’s Prayer contains “all mysteries of the two worlds”.

The Prayer of ‘Our Father’ that is recited at the beginning of the services and at the end, on account of the sublime perfection of its divine composition, and (is given by) he who commanded and taught “like this, therefore, you pray” (Mt 6:9); (himself) is the Lord and the Renewer of the creation, Christ our God. And in its ten verses contain all mysteries (ܠܕܘܢܐ) of the two worlds.⁵⁸

Theodore of Mopsuestia’s notion of two worlds is used by Abdisho to interpret the structure as well as the content of the Lord’s Prayer. It has the same structure of “heaven and earth” (Gen 1:1), the future and present world: hallowing of Father in the coming world (first three petitions) and supplication for all needs in the present world (last four petitions). We shall limit our comment on the content, selecting just the first verse of the Lord’s Prayer.

“Our Father who art in heaven”. The first verse is basically a cosmic prayer because we say “*our* Father” not “*my* Father”. The relationship Father-son and Creator-creature are interconnected. Since Adam is considered as *imago imaginis dei* or Adam was created in view of Christ, divine son-ship is potentially present in the creational order of mankind. All descendants of Adam are children of God in view of Christ, and in baptism this status is actualised. When the baptised pray this prayer, they pray in communion with the whole liturgical body, “the whole Christ”, thus including in a mystical way all who do not yet know Christ of all times (cf. CCC 2793).

Another interesting corollary is that, since divine sonship is founded uniquely on *imago dei*, though angels are rational beings they can never invoke God as “Father”, they are not “sons of God” but “servants/ministers of God” (cf. Mt 11:27); that is, the Lord’s Prayer is something exclusive of Adam’s generation. Nevertheless, they participate in this prayer through the antiphon used in its choral recitation, which is the same angelic sanctification of Is 6:3. The content and the nature of

⁵⁶ CES I:157,12-22. Translation is ours.

⁵⁷ This tract is divided into five chapters: (1) Prayer and its parts, on the semantron, adoration towards East, adoration of the Cross and on the cincture; (2) the service of *Ramšā*, (3) of Night Vigil, (4) of *Šaprā* and (5) the service of Mysteries.

⁵⁸ *Book on the Order of Church Regulations: Written by Mar Abdisho, Metropolitan of Nisibis and Armenia*, J. Kelaitha, Urmia, Persia 1918, 46a (Syriac text). Translation is ours.

antiphonal singing of the Lord's Prayer confirms that it is a cosmic praise of heavenly and earthly beings.

Conclusion

The Lord's Prayer is the specific preparatory prayer of a baptised person. It was already used as a liturgical prayer in the pre-Communion rite. Its initial use in daily service started as a private prayer in the Syriac proto-monastic background, and after the disappearance of catechumenate, it may have been introduced into the enarxis of daily Church Service. The solitaries used their-own or personalised form of Lord's Prayer. The present form used in the East Syriac liturgy was officiated in 786 by Patriarch Timothy I, with his-own *qanonā* for choral recitation. The antiphonal singing of the Lord's prayer not only solemnise the liturgy through choral music but also expresses the heavenly and angelic character of liturgy. It is certain that the Syriac version of the Lord's Prayer still in regular use today among the Malabar Christians is more close to the original Aramaic oral version than its Vulgate counterpart. In short, the liturgical use of the Lord's Prayer in the enarxis of the Syro-Malabar Church Services is a unique witness of its liturgical heritage and baptismal spirituality.