THE ANAPHORAS OF MAR THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA IN THE EAST SYRIAC RITE AND OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM IN THE BYZANTINE CHURCH – STRUCTURE AND THEOLOGY: COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT. The Liturgy (Mass) is the very life of the Church and its way of existing. In the core of the Liturgy there is the Anaphora, specific to each rite. Regarding the East Syriac Church, one mainly knows three important anaphoras – of Mar Addai and Mari, of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Mar Nestorius. This paper is focused on the Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia in the East Syriac rite, analysed in parallel with that of St. John Chrysostom, the most used anaphora in the Byzantine Tradition. Both of the authors are significant representatives of the Theological School of Antioch. This subject was scarcely analysed by the contemporary scholars and it gets a plus of importance in my case for accompanies an on-going process of translating the Syriac text of Theodore's anaphora into Romanian, for the benefit of the Romanian theologians. The paper will be divided into two sections – the first one colligated to the authorship of the two anaphoras, and the second, focused on their structure and theology. Concrete conclusions regarding the identification of some liturgical-theological constants in both the anaphoras will end my research.

Keywords: Anaphora of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Anaphora of John Chrysostom, liturgical theology, epiclesis, Theological School of Antioch.

Theodore of Mopsuestia's and John Chrysostom's Anaphoras. Premises

The most well-known and used liturgy in the Byzantine Church is the so-called liturgy 'of St John Chrysostom'. This liturgy got its name from the Anaphora attributed[1] to St John (Chr), bishop of Constantinople (died 407), one

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[1] The oldest manuscript of the anaphora dates from the 8th century, `Barberini Gr. 336`. For the text edition see S. Parenti – E. Velkovska, *L'Eucologio Barberini Gr. 336*, (Roma: Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae"/ Subsidia 80, Ed. Liturgiche, 1995), 24-45.

of the most prolific patristic authors. What is interesting regarding this text is its Syriac-Antiochene origin and the connection with the Anaphora 'of the Apostles' (AP), celebrated at Antioch. Supposedly, John Chrysostom knew this Anaphora and celebrated it as a priest in Antioch and later, as bishop of Constantinople, he introduced it into the cult of the city[2]. From the existing studies dedicated to this subject, one can claim that Chrysostom's Anaphora is not simply a translation of the Antiochene Greek Anaphora of the Apostles, but rather its development, with different contextual dogmatic additions, done either by Chrysostom himself or by another author who was familiarised with his theology.

The second author, Theodore of Mopsuestia, was also an exponent of the Antiochene School. While studying rhetoric under the pagan sophist Libanius of Antioch, John Chrysostom was his fellow student. In 381, Theodore was ordained priest of the Church of Antioch and 11 years later he was named bishop of Mopsuestia in the south of Caesarea, place of St Basil. Leontius of Byzantium, in his attack against Theodore, makes reference to two anaphoras – of Basil and of the Apostles. He does not mention the existence of Chrysostom's anaphora[3], but criticizes the occurrence of a new heretical one – that of Theodore of Mopsuestia[4]. So, Theodore must have known the Anaphora of Basil and other Antiochene anaphoral texts, including that of the Apostles.

Regarding the question of authorship, we learn from the title of some manuscripts that it was translated from Greek by Mar Aba Catholicos, with the assistance of Mar Thoma, the Doctor of Edessa[5]. It was later that Patriarch Mar Iso'yahb III established the season of its use from the first Sunday of the Annunciation to the Sunday of Hosannas. And yet, the majority of scholars, despite the numerous convergences between Theodore's writings and the liturgical text, advance the idea that AT is the result of the compilation of different sources (including AP and Chr[6]), and, among these, the liturgical text

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[2] The Antioch-Constantinople relationship was strongly present throughout history. For instance, the patriarchs of Constantinople during the 4-5th century were of Antiochene origin.

[3] G. Wagner explains this in the sense that he speaks about the rite in the region of Mopesuestia and not Constantinople/ *Der Ursprung der Chrysostomusliturgie* (Münster Westfalen: Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen, 59, 1973), 7.

[4] *Adversus Nestorianos et Eutychianos* III.19, PG 86.1: 1386C; for details see *Der Ursprung der Chrysostomuskiturgie*, 7-10; discussion mentioned also by Taft R., "The Authenticity of the Chrysostom Anaphora Revisited. Determining the Authorship of Liturgical Texts by Computer", *OCP* 66 (1990), 11-13.

[5] J. Vadakkel, *The East Syrian Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia: A Critical Edition, English Translation and Study* (AT), (Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies India Publications, 1989), 77.

[6] Ibn al Tayyib (11th century) mentions the existence of an Anaphora of Chrysostom used in the East Syriac Church/ W. Hoenerbach – O. Spies (eds.), *Ibn at-Taiyib. Fiqh an-Nasrânîya*, *Das Recht der Christenheit*, CSCO 167-168/ 18-19 (Louvain, 1957), 93.

attributed to him[7]. As its existing manuscripts are all Syriac and one may also find typical linguistic features, the scholars seem to agree that it is a Syriac composition, with the Theodorian theology in it. This anaphora is one of the three used in the East Syriac liturgy.

Structure and theology

Regarding the aspect of methodology, I will mostly use the ***structural*** and ***thematic*** approach in my study, followed by the ***verbal one*** (textual similarities). If the structural approach seeks to identify the distribution and relocation of the material within the text of one anaphora which does not immediately correspond to the text of the other, the thematic one, in consequence, envisages the identification of different themes present in the texts, again in correspondence. These two approaches appear to be complementary, from my viewpoint. Finally, the third method, which involves an exact word-for-word assessment of the texts, will enable me to make a more complete analyse.

The anaphora will be divided into seven structural sections: prayer of acceptance of the gifts, preface dialogue, ante-Sanctus prayer and Sanctus, post-Sanctus prayer, institution narrative and anamnesis, epiclesis and intercessions[8].

a. ***Prayer of acceptance of the gifts***. Structurally speaking, one may identify content similarities in the texts. Despite the different language involved, the theme and scope of the prayer are similarly expressed: even we (I) *are unworthy* (ܠܐ ܫܘܝܢ)/ (ἀχρεῖον), *we dare to celebrate* the mysteries by means of the Holy Spirit's presence and the manifestation of the divine mercy: *fill us with the **grace of the Holy Spirit***, *so that when **we stand before** you with a pure conscience and offer you this living, holy, rational, acceptable and bloodless*

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[7] A special role in this discussion is occupied by Theodore's commentary on the Eucharist, where one may find similarities with AT. The commentary reflects the Antiochene liturgy at the end of the 4th century. See A. Mingana (ed.), *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* (Cambridge, 1933), Homilies XV-XVI. There one may not find a liturgical order, but a commentary on different liturgical moments. Also Narsai (*Homilies of the Mysteries*, ed. by A. Mingana, *Narsai doctoris syri homiliae et carmina* I, Mosul, 1905, 284f) and Cyrus of Edessa (*Explanation of the Pascha*, ed. by F. Macomber, *Six Explanations of the liturgical feasts by Cyrus of Edessa*, CSCO 355-6/ 155-6, 57/ 49) give a liturgical prayer attributed to Theodore, and yet, not the exact text.

[8] For the AT, J. Vadakkel, *The East Syrian Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuesti* (ft 5), and for Chr, Parenti, E S.-Velkovska E., *L'Eucologio Barberini* (ft 1).

sacrifice, we may find **grace** *and* **mercies** *before you* (AT)/ *Enable me by the* **power of Your Holy Spirit** *so that, vested with the grace of priesthood, I* **may stand before** *Your holy Table and celebrate the mystery of Your holy and pure Body and Your precious Blood* (Chr). In both situations, this prayer is recited while being inclined[9]. Reflecting the classic structure, the ritual of embracing and giving peace one to another is present [10] in both orders.

b. The preface dialogue begins in both cases with the same archaic Pauline salutation (2 Cor. 13:13). An interesting difference is observed in the answer of the people – *Let our mind[11]/ ܪܥܝܢܐ be in the upwards* (AT)/ *Let us lift up our hearts/* καρδίας (Chr). In the AT one may find some specific additions, while trying to describe God in biblical terms, 'of Abraham, Isaac and Israel', and His Kingdom, glorified by the celestial hosts. The last part of this section reflects the destination of the Offering[12], 'To God, the Lord of all', respectively, of the Eucharist as thanksgiving[13] 'To the Lord'. The answer is quite identical – *It is meet and right[14]/ It is proper and right[15].*

c. Ante-Sanctus prayer and Sanctus. As a continuation of the former admonishment, comes the Pre-Sanctus prayer addressed to the Father, glorified in the Trinity. It is a sober thanksgiving for creation and redemption. One can identify clear similarities between these two anaphoras, arguing their common Antiochene origin.

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[9] This prayer is calledin AT ܕܟܘܦܐ – of inclination; *I come with bowed neck* (κλίνας τὸν ἐμαυτοῦ αὐχένα)/ Chr.

[10] In AT one may find an intercession for clerics, for the congregation, for those who departed from the Church, as the offering may be accepted for all of them. In AT it follows the reading of the diptychs of the living and dead, which in Chr's order may be assimilated with the ritual of Proscomidy, once celebrated before the Great Entrance (nowadays before the Liturgy of the Word).

[11] *Homily 16:2;* see also John Chrysostom *In Hebr. Homilia XXII, 3* (PG 63, 158) and Greek anaphora of Jacob/ A. Hänggi – I. Pahl, *Prex eucharistica. Textus e variis liturgiis antiquioribus selecti* (Fribourg 1968), 244, Anaphora of Addai and Mari/ A. Hänggi – I. Pahl, *Prex eucharistica,* 375, Maronite anaphora of St Peter/ A. Raes, *Anaphorae siriacae. Quotquot in codicibus adhuc repertae sunt*, Cura Pontificii Instituti Studiorum Orientalium (Roma, 1939-73), vol. 2, Fasc. 3, 293-4.

[12] ܩܘܪܒܢܐ.

[13] See the verb Εὐχαριστήσωμεν.

[14] ܐܐ ܘܦܐܐ.

[15] Ἄξιον καὶ δίκαιόν ἐστι.

	AT	Chr
Connection with the preface	It is *meet* and *right*… to give thanks to your holy name[16]… to *worship*	It is *proper* and *right* to sing… bless, praise, thank (2 Ts. 1:3) and *worship* You
Addressed to the Father, through the Son in the Holy Spirit	*God*, the Father of truth the being from everlasting, and *Your Only Begotten Son* our Lord Jesus Christ and the *Holy Spirit*	You are *God*… You and Your Only Begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit… we thank You and *Your Only Begotten Son* and Your *Holy Spirit*[17]
The object for thanksgiving – creation, redemption	The *author* of all things visible and invisible… have *created* and established heaven and earth and all that is in them (Heb. 1:2; Ex. 20:11; Ps. 145:6)[18]… all rational nature visible and invisible are strengthened and sanctified	You *brought us into being* out of nothing (Wisdom 1:14), and when we fell, You *raised us up again*. You did not cease doing everything until You led us to heaven and granted us Your kingdom to come
Time and space	Every hour, *every region, every place*	*All places* (Ps. 102:22) *of Your dominion*
Angelic worship	*Thousands* of thousands of heavenly beings and a myriad of holy angels (Dan. 7:10; Heb. 12:22)	*Thousands* of Archangels and tens of thousands of Angels (Dan. 7:10; Heb. 12:22), by the Cherubim and Seraphim, six-winged (Is. 6:2), many-eyed, soaring with their wings

One may find the four divine attributes in this prayer, which are specific to Chrysostom's theology, addressed to the Father – ineffable, inconceivable, invisible and incomprehensible[19]. This fragment clearly reflects his theology. He enlarges the use of the attributes to the whole Trinity. We shall mention here some other typical expressions for Chrysostom: *You brought us into being out of nothing* (frequent theme in the baptismal catechesis), *when we fell, You raised us up again*; *You did not cease doing everything until You led us to heaven and*

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[16] 'Your holy name' – see here the theology of the name, specific to the Semitic tradition.

[17] The Trinitarian repetition is a clear sign of a re-worked text provoked by the Arian crisis.

[18] Here one may find the theme of praising the Lord commemorating the creation done by the Father, as reflected in the Jewish *berakoth* and the early anaphoras. The Trinitarian dimension is clearly expressed by confessing the three qnome (ܩܢܘܡܐ), co-equal and un-divided.

[19] The Apophatic Credo – ἀνέκφραστος, ἀπερινόητος, ἀόρατος, ἀκατάληπτος (*Sur l'incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, Hom. 3, 54-5, SC 28bis).

granted us Your kingdom to come. Finally, specific to him is the conclusion in which the people gives thank *for all things that we know and do not know[20], for blessings seen and unseen that have been bestowed upon us*.

The Sanctus is more complex in AT with its East Syriac characteristics. I will highlight the specificities of AT in the table below:

Holy, holy, holy, the Lord mighty God, *that heaven and earth are full of his glories* (Is. 6:3) and of the nature of his being and of the excellency of his glorious splendour. *Hosanna in the highest*. Hosanna to the Son of David. *Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to God in the highest*	*Holy, holy, holy*, Lord Sabaoth, *heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to God in the highest*

d. Post-Sanctus prayer

One first observation regarding this prayer is that it is visibly shorter in Chr as compared to AT. There are mainly two ideas expressed in both prayers which go together – the holiness of God and the fragility of human who, by himself, is not capable to stand before God, and, as a consequence, one needs divine dispensation so as to be able to make the sacrifice.

Holy are you, God the Father of truth, from who all fatherhood in earth and heaven is named. *Holy are you the eternal Son*, through whom al things are. *Holy are you the Holy Spirit*[21] by whom all things are sanctified.	*You are holy and all-holy, You and Your only begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit.*
And through him (Christ) he *fulfilled* and perfected this great and wonderful *dispensation*[22] which had been prepared by your foreknowledge before the foundation of the world.	All who believe in Him may not perish, but have eternal life. He had come and *fulfilled* all the *dispensation*[23] for us.

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[20] This expression has clear Syriac origin, which one may find at the end of a prayer for the deceased (Anaphora of James). In the Syriac anaphoras one of the traditions of asking forgiveness using this expression is usually found at the end of the anaphora.

[21] An addition in the context of the Trinitarian and Christological disputes/ *Hom*. 16:10.

[22] ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ.

[23] οἰκονομία.

The possibility of celebrating the divine mysteries comes from this dispensation that is, theologically speaking, Christ's Providence/ Economy. In order to describe Christ's incarnation and salvation, AT quotes Philippians 2:5-7[24], insisting on kenosis as necessary for Christ's coming into the world, and, consequently, the assuming of the mortal and rational body[25] and the immortal and intelligent soul from the Virgin by the power of the Spirit. Finally, it gives praise for all the graces, for creation, gift of dignity of freedom, intelligence, sustenance of humans' life and Christ's Economy. Everything is described in the light of Christ's sacrifice.

Regarding Chr, the postsanctus prayer has no complex account of Christ's Economy. It is a simple narration that begins from John 3:16 and introduces the act of institution, similar with the Anaphora of Basil. It highlights the salvific acts, centred on the crucifixion.

e. Institution narrative and Anamnesis

The context of both prayers – the Last Supper – is clearly expressed, when, accompanied by the 'holy apostles' – *in the night in which he was betrayed* (AT) and *in the night he had handed himself over* (Chr)[26] –Jesus took the bread and the cup with his *holy* hands[27]. The four specific verbs – gave thanks, blessed, broke and gave – are present in both texts. One may find some differences between the institution formulas, as follows in the table.

This is my Body which is broken (Mt. 26:26) for the life of the world (Jn. 6:51), *for the remission of sins* (Mt. 28:28).	Take, eat, *this is my Body which is broken* (Mt. 26:26) for you (Lk. 22:19) *for the forgiveness of sins* (Mt. 26:28).
This is my Blood of the new Covenant which is shed for many, for the remission of sins (Mt 26: 27-28). Take therefore all of you and eat from this bread and drink from this cup.	Drink of it all of you; *this is my Blood of the new Covenant which is shed* for you (Lk. 22:20) *for many, for the forgiveness of sins* (Mt. 26: 27-28).

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[24] Quoted also by Greek Basil.

[25] Put on our humanity (ܠܒܫ ܐܢܫܘܬܢ). For the *theology of clothing* see S. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition", *Studies in Syriac Christianity*, (Variorum, 1992), XI, 11-38.

[26] 1 Cor. 11:23-24.

[27] Chr adds *pure and spotless.*

In both cases, the text refers to the Eucharist as **Christ's memorial**. AT's anamnesis quotes 1 Cor. 11:25-26 – *Do thus whenever you are gathered for my memorial*, while Chr omits it, but the explicit reference to *this saving commandment* from the introduction of anamnesis (traditional for the Antiochene order) expresses the same idea. *Remembering* is followed in this case by the very anamnesis in an extended list of mysteries: death, tomb, resurrection, ascension, session at the right hand, second coming. It is worth mentioning the uniqueness of this list in Chr (and ApSyr), next to the compressive expression *for the things that were done for us*[28].

There is an important term involved at the very incipit of the institution narration in AT, but not present in Chr – *mystery*[29]. The celebration of the mystery actualises the divine realities; therefore all what is said afterwards is made present by means of the sacramental offering.

f. Epiclesis

Regarding the Epiclesis, there is a structural difference – in AT, the intercessions follow after the anamnesis, in accordance with the East Syriac Anaphoral structure, and only then comes the epiclesis.

The classical tripartite Antiochene structure seems to be present in both texts[30] – a prayer addressed to the Father (AT calls him *Lord*) to send the Holy Spirit on the gifts/ offering and on the assembly, and, by that, to make the wine and bread into the body and blood of Christ, so they may be for the salvation of those who participate to them in the communion. Modern western liturgists distinguish between a more *primitive communion epiclesis* and the *developed or consecratory epiclesis*, containing clear petitions for the hallowing of the gifts and their changing into Christ's body and blood. Juan Mateos seems to bring a structural nuance in reference to the second dimension, arguing that *epiclesis is nothing else than the same consecration considered, especially, from the point of view of the divine action that occurs here. It is the dogmatic repetition of the historical narration. There are two aspects of the same reality: with one it is highlighted the visible rite; with the other the invisible action*[31]. Let's see the three parts compared in the table:

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[28] καὶ πάντων τῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν γεγενημένων.

[29] ܐܝܢܐ ܗܢܐ ܐܘ ܘܪܐܙܐ ܘܩܕܘܫܐ ܘܡܫܒܚܬܐ.

[30] In the Slavonic and the Romanian Orthodox Churches, the troparion of the *Third Hour service* was added before Epiclesis.

[31] J. Mateos, "L'action du Saint-Esprit dans la liturgie dite de Saint Jean Chrysostome", *Proche Orient Chrétien* 9 (1959), 193-208.

We *beseech* You… And we persuade You… may the grace of the Holy Spirit come (ܬܐܬܐ) *upon us* and *this Qurbana*… and may she dwell and rest upon this bread and upon this cup and may she bless (ܬܒܪܟ), sanctify (ܬܩܕܫ)[32] and seal (ܬܚܬܡ) them in the name[33] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And by the power of your name may this bread become (ܢܗܘܐ) the holy body of our Lord Jesus Christ and this cup the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.	We ask, pray, and *beseech* You: send down (κατάπεμψον) Your Holy Spirit *upon us* and *upon these gifts* (τὰ δῶρα) here presented. And make (ποίησον) this bread the precious Body of Your Christ. And that which is in this cup the precious Blood of Your Christ. Changing (μεταβαλὼν) them by Your Holy Spirit.

From the table above one can easily identify some differences. Firstly, AT is more detailed and longer. For the intercession of the Holy Spirit, AT asks for the grace of the Spirit and uses the expression *may come*[34], while Chr asks for the Spirit himself through an imperative verb *send down* (as in Basil). Then, regarding the action on the gifts, AT uses again the same verbal form *may become* under the action of God's name, expressed in the Trinitarian form, while Chr involves two connected verbs– *make* and *change*, by the direct intervention of the Father in the Spirit. Lastly, there is a visible difference in terms of the effects of the communion: in AT, *for the pardon of debts, the remission of sins, the great hope of resurrection from among the dead, the new life in the kingdom of heaven and glory for ever*, and in Chr, *for vigilance of soul, forgiveness of sins, communion of Your Holy Spirit, fulfillment of the kingdom of heaven, confidence before You, and not in judgment or condemnation*.

g. Intercessions

This section is the most specific part for each liturgical prayer. Therefore the differences are quite important. I will primarily evoke two aspects that are visibly common, mentioned by Vadakkel – namely, the intercessory role of the Eucharist (AT – *this Qurbana is offered… for,* Chr – *we offer you this rational worship for*) and the intercession for the hierarchy, despite the different formulation[35].

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[32] See the anaphora of Basil.
[33] See the theology of the name in the Semitic tradition.
[34] *Hom*. 16:23.
[35] *The East Syrian Anaphora*, 188-9.

Let us see the categories of petitions in both texts:

▪ *Church*/ its welfare ▪ *The Patriarch/ metropolitan/ local bishop/* ▪ *Bishops*, periodeutas, *priests and deacons* ▪ For those the Qurbana is offered ▪ Fruits of the earth ▪ Categories of saints ▪ *Departed people*	▪ Holy Virgin, Saint John the prophet, the Apostles; for Saint(s) commemorated; and for all the saints ▪ *Departed people* ▪ *Clerics (bishops, priests, deacons)* ▪ Whole world ▪ *Church* ▪ Those from public service ▪ *Patriarch/ metropolitan/ local bishop* ▪ The city (village), country/ different categories of people (travelers, the sick, the suffering, and the captives… charitable work, who serve in Your holy churches, and who care for the poor)

Unique to Chr is the order of the intercessions, with the dead before the living, an assimilation of Basil's Anaphora, where the last section of Epiclesis is a petition for the communion with the saints in the Holy Spirit. And this leads to the commemoration of the dead, as the saints were also initially considered as *chief among the deceased*. The perspective that we pray *for* the dead and *to* the saints is emphasized by Taft, who asserts that this is *a later refinement based on theological reflection*, foreign to the original text of Chr, which had no commemoration of saints by name in the earliest manuscripts.

Both texts end with a Trinitarian doxological confession.

Conclusion

Being consequent to the methodological approaches involved in the analysis above, I will draw some short conclusions. Firstly, structurally speaking, one may identify the presence of the main classic anaphoral sections in both texts. The most visible difference is the place of the intercessions in AT before Epiclesis, whereas in Chr it is placed afterwards. Secondly, the text of AT is longer and more detailed in reference to that of Chr and the distribution of themes, despite the fact that many of them are common, is quite different.

From the thematic point of view, there are common themes distributed along the text, or organically present during the entire anaphoral prayers, which may indicate a mutual influence or, more precisely, common sources. I will mention the most important among them: the suitability of thanksgiving and doxology to God in all time and places; the Trinitarian character of thanksgiving; the celebration of the Eucharist possible only by means of divine intervention that enables the celebrant to make the sacrifice; the celebration connects the two realities, earth and heaven; the presence of the immaterial hosts in the celebration (presanctus prayer); the intercessory role of Christ, with the emphasis on the cross (postsanctus prayer); the faithfulness to the narrative institution recite (1 Cor. 11:25-25) and the Eucharist seen as Christ's memorial (institution narrative); the Epiclesis on the people and on the gifts; and the intercessory role of the Eucharist.

Regarding the verbal approach, the texts put in parallel above highlighted important terminological similarities that led us once more towards the conclusion of common sources. In this line, one may once again argue in favour of their common Antiochene origin. On this general structure, the authors/ compilers create a partial new anaphora or re-elaborated an existent one (an aspect visible more in the case of Chr and ApSyr), which occasionally expresses the doctrinal problems of their time. And this occurs within the natural development of the liturgical dynamic tradition of the Church itself.

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