

Aphrahat's Christology. A Contextual Reading

by

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of
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The present study represents an attempt at reading the views on Christ of fourth-century Syriac writer Aphrahat, author of 23 *Demonstrations*, within the context of coeval developments in Christian thought, especially in Syria. Given the breadth of the set of questions posed by the topic, these pages are not conceived as an exhaustive treatment, but rather as a series of incursions into a complicated terrain. The first chapter shows how scholars studying Aphrahat's Christology have often worked, more or less outspokenly, on the basis of confessional and dogmatic assumptions. I will argue for a change in this regard. The second chapter discusses the Syriac version of the so-called "Eunomian interpolation" found in Pseudoclementine *Recognitions* 3.2-11, and attested in Latin and Syriac. Through a work of contrasting and comparing the two versions of the text, I will examine the strategies of which the Syriac translator availed himself to moderate the anti-Nicene peaks of the Greek original. The peculiar characteristics of this translation need to be understood, I will suggest, as a token of the livelihood and conflictiveness of Syriac Christianity around the middle of the fourth century. Against the same backdrop, presenting competing models for understanding the figure of Christ, I will propose that we read the complex Christological speculation developed by Aphrahat in his *Dem.* 17. The third chapter of the study interprets the seventh paragraph of this *Demonstration*, recounting the story of the creation of Adam in a highly unusual manner, as a coherent Christological discourse, rather than a mere digression. In that section we witness, I will argue, a synthetic integration of Adamitic Christology with the scheme of the *prolatio* of the Logos, and a dynamic engagement, on the part of the Persian Sage, with contemporary theological debates. The study does not reach overall conclusions about the tenets of Aphrahat's Christology, rather presenting itself as an invitation to take this author out of the intellectual isolation in which he has long been kept by scholars.

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1. HOW TO READ APHRAHAT?

1.1. LOOKING FOR A CREED

Modern scholars¹ began longer than one century ago to remark on the atypical position, in relation to the Council of Nicaea, of the theological views of Aphrahat, the Persian Sage². Thus R.H. Connolly wrote as early as 1906³: “In date the *Homilies* of Aphraates are post-Nicene (A.D. 337-345). But I think their teaching has been shewn to be quite independent of Nicene language; and any traces of a creed-formula found in them may safely be set down as ante-Nicene”⁴. Connolly, whose concern, expressed in the title of his writing, was for the recovery of an “early Syriac creed”, set out on a quest, in Aphrahat’s *Demonstrations*, for “creed-like passages, agreeing in general character with early creeds known to us—especially Greek creeds—and at the same

¹ As an ancient instance of rejection of Aphrahat’s views as heterodox one could quote the outrage of seventh-century Bishop Georges of the Arabs at the “many aberrations and very crass statements” of the writings of the Persian Sage—with particular reference to his pneumatology—, presented in BUCUR 2009, 161-163.

² Little is known about the life and the work of “one of the giants of early Christianity” (PETERSEN 1992, 241), “the self-effacing author of twenty-three acrostically ordered Syriac demonstrations in rhetorical prose” (BARNES 1999, 304) that Isho‘bar Nun (d. 828) called, for the first time in our sources, “Aphrahat”. The author of the *Demonstrations* is known in the mss. that transmit them as *ḥakkimā parsāyā* (= “Persian sage”) (ms. A); *mār Ya‘qub ḥakkimā parsāyā* (= “Jacob, Persian sage”) (ms. B); and *Ya‘qub ḥasyā d-Mar Mattay* (= “Jacob, bishop of Mar Mattay”) (ms. C). On the question of the name *cfr.* PIERRE 1988, 33-38 and SCHAFF et WACE 1898, 154-156. For the Syriac text of the *Demonstrations cfr.* WRIGHT 1869 and PARISOT 1894. For English translations of the *Demonstrations cfr.* WRIGHT 1869; GWYNN 1898 (only *Dem.* 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 17, 21, and 23); NEUSNER 1971, 19-119 (only *Dem.* 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 21); VALAVANOLICKAL 1999. For authoritative French and German translations *cfr.* PIERRE 1988 and BRUNS 1991 respectively (for a comparison of the different translating styles of Pierre and Bruns *cfr.* CAMPLANI 1990, 473). Lastly, for an Italian translation of the first ten *Demonstrations cfr.* PERICOLI RIDOLFINI 2006. Translations of other *Demonstrations* have sparsely appeared in articles and books. For an exhaustive introduction to Aphrahat’s life and writings *cfr.* PIERRE 1988, 33-199; and BRUNS 1991, I, 35-73. *Cfr.* now also BROCK 2010.

³ I am obviously not suggesting that Connolly was the first modern scholar to comment on the topic.

⁴ CONNOLLY 1906, 202.

time displaying marked individual peculiarities”. “[I]f we find these peculiarities reproduced consistently in other Syriac writings and even in formulas of Faith”, Connolly continued, “there will be a strong *prima facie* presumption that the passages in Aphraates contain allusion to an actually existing Symbol”⁵.

In that which is, to the best of my knowledge, the latest article published on the theme of Aphrahat’s Christology, J.E. Walters, while declaring his reliance on Connolly’s “list of Christological quotes”, informs us that he does “not necessarily agree” with the scholar’s “search for a proto-Nicene creedal formula in Aphrahat’s writing”⁶. Although his methodological suggestion is certainly agreeable, Walters seems to miss here the point of Connolly’s intention, which was not to scavenge for “proto-Nicene”⁷ creedal formulations through the *Demonstrations* (neither with the confessional goal of proving the orthodoxy⁸ of the Persian Sage, nor to more dispassionately determine on what side of the Nicene ridge he stood), but rather to make a recognition of *any* sort of creed-like materials found in the corpus, be they pro- or anti-, ante- or post-Nicene. To be sure,

⁵ CONNOLLY 1906, 202-203.

⁶ WALTERS 2010, 112, n. 47. I, in turn, will rely heavily, though “negatively”, on Walters’ essay in the first part of this introductory chapter. The reason for this resides 1) in the interest of the author’s argumentation; 2) in a certain, so to speak, representativeness of his position (without, of course, denying any of his writing’s originality); 3) in the width of the array of issues that this engagement allows to problematize. I want to express my gratefulness to the author for having sent me a draft of his article before its publication.

⁷ Of course, the very adoption of a chronological language, such as that represented by the prefix *proto-*, is problematic, as at stake is not the possibility of the retrieval, in the *Demonstrations*, of a *Nicene Christology ante litteram* (as noted, Nicaea predates Aphrahat), but rather of a *potentially Nicene Christology*. On this issue *cfr. infra*.

⁸ In order to make the reading of these pages smoother, I chose not to put in defensive scare quotes such problematic words as *orthodox/orthodoxy*, *heterodox/heterodoxy*, *Nicene*, *anti-Nicene* etc. Hopefully the reader, grateful for being put in front of a more easily readable text, will return the favor by granting the writer a quarter of his or her own awareness of the problematic nature of the use of these terms, and of his or her own knowledge of the multiple historical and theoretical questions that surround them.

the risk of anathematism connected to Connolly's project is apparent; yet, the operation does not seem per se illegitimate (at worst, it could be fruitless).

Interestingly enough, looking for a proto-Nicene theology in the *Demonstrations* is the unconfessed, nay, explicitly denied yet manifest purpose of Walters' own enterprise. However, he is not seeking out specific Nicene phrasings⁹. Rather, it is orthodox concepts that the author is searching, while availing himself of a curiously distorting historical-hermeneutical lens. "By 'orthodox'", he writes, "we mean [...] that Aphrahat's Christological statements, while not as developed as the Nicene formulation, do not preclude any of the Nicene canons"¹⁰.

1.2. THE DIALECTICS OF ORTHODOXY

Since the assumptions upon which apologetic readings of the development of the Christian dogma rely seem to have worked more or less latently in the minds of some of those who have approached the issue of Aphrahat's Christology, it appears expedient, in the introductory lines of this study, to at least set the terms for a reflection on this topic. Triumphalistic and dogmatic-dialectical narratives describing the unfolding of

⁹ *Cfr.* WALTERS 2010, 11: "If Aphrahat is ignorant of the Christological controversies and of the Council of Nicaea, we must question the extent to which *the language of the Nicene Creed* is an appropriate litmus test for the orthodoxy of Aphrahat's Christology" (italics mine).

¹⁰ WALTERS 2010, 112, n. 48. Similarly does PERICOLI RIDOLFINI 1979, 101 express himself. In the conclusion of Walters' article we find again: "Aphrahat's Christology is not un-orthodox, even if it is not as 'developed' as the Christological debates of the West—that is, nowhere does Aphrahat's Christology preclude Nicene Christology" (WALTERS 2010, 17). Not more convincing, with their appeal to a not better determined biblical coherence, are the positive statements; e.g. WALTERS 2010, 17: "Positively, [...] Aphrahat, throughout his writings, displays a coherent Christology based on the biblical narrative of Jesus Christ, who came, lived and suffered death, rose on the third day, and was ultimately exalted to the right hand of the Father where he waits to judge all humanity".

Christian doctrine in the first centuries of existence of Christianity as a providentially driven sequence of twists and turns, inevitably culminating in the Chalcedonian formulation, have long been dominant, at times barely concealed under a coat of historicism. I am not referring here to forceful efforts to demonstrate the substantial doctrinal identity of the New Testament as a whole with fourth- and fifth-century orthodox creeds, but rather to the more refined attempts at distilling a higher logic out of the meanders of early theological controversies¹¹. These narratives oftentimes celebrate the orthodox doctrinal formulation as the elaboration most adequately seizing some of the deepest intuitions and instances found in the earliest Christian understanding of the person of Jesus. Granted—they admit—, orthodoxy re-reads and writes anew the original faith given; however, they claim, it never completely upsets it, rather showing itself more respectful of its spirit than the heresies it fights.

As late as 1975, A. Grillmeier, in the second edition of his monumental and influential work on the figure of Jesus in the faith of the Church, referred to the Chalcedonian enterprise in the following fashion: “It had now become necessary to find the formula which *like a hidden entelechy*¹² had accompanied the wearisome struggles of centuries to interpret the *mysterium Christi*. The Fourth Council could only consider that

¹¹ An interesting variation on this theme is the formulation adopted at the end of the instructive survey of the “long road to Chalcedon” found in MCGUCKIN 2002, 41 (published in Italian). Here, through the musical metaphor, the author seems to imply that only a theologically oriented intellect could grasp the euphony represented by fourth- and fifth-century theological debates: “[È] importante rendersi conto che qui vediamo non solo la struttura della *Paradosis* cristiana, ma anche più di questo (o forse proprio per questo), la forma di una melodia che una volta fu cantata con passione per la bellezza della visione mistica che racchiudeva. I critici che non hanno orecchio musicale dovrebbero essere molto prudenti sia nel loro rigetto che nella loro interpretazione delle note storiche dello spartito”.

¹² Italics mine (unlike the other italics in the quotation).

its task as [sic] had been fulfilled if it had stated in clear terms *how* both the unity and the distinction in Christ were to be understood. [...] The time had now come to make from them the right choice that would do justice to all claims”¹³.

It may be noticed that this dialectical approach, whose implicit corollary is the explanation of the existence of false or partial beliefs—and the sublation of its negative—by means of the appeal to the higher conquest of the dogma¹⁴, underlies also the thesis, proposed by W. Bauer in his groundbreaking book *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*¹⁵, that heresy precedes orthodoxy. This contention, agreeably rejected by D. Boyarin as an “absurd formulation” because presupposing that heresy and orthodoxy “are real entities and not merely the constructions of particular politically powerful religious parties at particular historical moments”¹⁶, relies upon an essentialist understanding of Christianity as a *quid* whose kernel is enshrined in a foundational idea, identified by Bauer with the Pauline kerygma, from time to time

¹³ GRILLMEIER 1975, 548. Part of this passage *cit.* in DALEY 2008, 888. DALEY 2008, 889 also quotes from KELLY 1978, and cites the following sentence of Grillmeier as exemplifying “the assumption that Chalcedon’s formulation is Christianity’s most complete expression of the apostolic faith in the person of Christ, the norm by which the adequacy of all earlier or later attempts to express who and what Jesus is must ultimately be judged”: “If we look backwards from the year 451, the definition of the Council doubtless appears as the culmination of the development that had gone before it” (BACHT et GRILLMEIER 1952, 5).

¹⁴ A more popular variant (especially among fourth-century theologians) of this scheme is that which identifies the dogmatic truth as *via media* between opposite mistakes. For this attitude, e.g., in Gregory of Nazianzus *cfr.* MCGUCKIN 2002, 29. On conceptions of heresy in late antique Christian literature *cfr.* LE BOULLUEC 1985.

¹⁵ BAUER 1934. For two dated yet still interesting accounts of the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Bauer’s thesis *cfr.* HARRINGTON 1980 and ROBINSON 1988, with relative bibliographies.

¹⁶ BOYARIN 2010, 39. n. 57. In similar yet not superposable terms does KING 2008, 28 express herself: “[O]rthodoxy and heresy are not essential qualities that groups or ideas possess, but correlative and mutually reinforcing categories belonging to the dynamics of social-political and intellectual processes of boundary-setting and identity formation”.

incorrectly or correctly (or: less or more faithfully) construed and elaborated upon¹⁷. For Bauer “[o]nly by – to some extent – imitating the ‘heretical’ process of manipulation and definition does ‘true’ religion survive, undergoing a sea-change as it identifies itself over against what it is not. Heresy is the necessary precondition for orthodoxy, yet orthodoxy may be as much a metamorphosis (or pseudomorphosis) of the foundational religious idea as heresy”¹⁸. Interestingly enough, this view bears resemblance to the heresiological conception undergirding the theory of the syzygies found in the Pseudoclementine writings. According to this theory, God’s pedagogical

¹⁷ For a definitely theological and confessional, yet still suggestive, take on the issue of the relationship between kerygma and dogma *cfr.* MOORE 2004-2005. For an interesting thematization of heresy and dogma in Heideggerian terms *cfr.* REISER 1975 and 1982.

¹⁸ WILLIAMS 1989, 3. It is worth quoting in its entirety, as an example of a maturely aware and speculative rendition of this dialectical perspective, a passage found in CANTALAMESSA 2006, 47: “Cos’è dunque la definizione conciliare antica nella sua essenza? È qualcosa di negativo; indica ciò che in un dato contesto è avvertito dalla Chiesa come non compatibile con la propria comprensione del dato rivelato. [...] Tuttavia, in quanto negazione di una negazione (*l’eresia è, appunto, scelta, rottura della globalità del dato e, quindi, limite di negazione*), la definizione dommatica è, di fatto, di una positività al quadrato. Essa rivela tutto il suo contenuto positivo rispetto alla tradizione, proprio in questo chiudere le false aperture sul cammino della fede. È una specie di catarsi che opera una chiusa nel fluire della tradizione, che fa fare alla fede un salto di livello e le permette di continuare il suo corso. Il livello, in cui si realizza il salto, è il livello di esplicitazione del dato. La definizione dommatica è la negazione di un’esplicitazione spuria del dato rivelato, negazione però che, assumendo la problematica che ha dato luogo all’eresia e le categorie razionali con cui essa si è espressa, *non si risolve in un ripristino dello status quo, ma determina ogni volta un equilibrio più avanzato, cioè un progresso nella formulazione della fede*” (italics mine). The idea of a retrieval of the pure original intention of the text is here replaced with that of an advancement in the formulation of the faith. CANTALAMESSA 2006, 47, n. 83 compares the traditional understanding of the chronological relationship between orthodoxy and heresy (marked by Tertullian’s opposition of *principalitas veritatis* and *posteritas mendacitatis* found in *De praescriptione haereticorum* 31) with the “radical” one, which he attributes to Bauer, allegedly claiming the priority of heresy. This characterization of Bauer’s perspective should be emended in the light of Williams’s presentation of it presented above. Overall, CANTALAMESSA 2006, 11-51 (“Dal Cristo del Nuovo Testamento al Cristo della Chiesa. Tentativo di interpretazione della cristologia patristica”) is a greatly remarkable contribution, in which an original profile of the *philosophical* logic guiding the early Christian Christological controversies is sketched out by means of a thoughtful use of categories such as ontologization, de-escatologization, dogmatization, and formalization. Of particular interest is the section concerning the interpretation of Nicaea and Chalcedon as moments of de-hellenization (CANTALAMESSA 2006, 40-41).

design for humanity would unfold in such a way that the truthful word is always sent forth to set right a mendacious statement¹⁹. This idea does not contradict the heresiological notion, widely shared by early Christian authors, of the aboriginal priority of the true doctrine and of its later, base corruption on the part of the heretics: what we witness is a continuous dynamic of retrieval of the pure intention of the pristine word of truth through a dialectical removal of the negative, whose existence is providentially ordained.

Since the days of Grillmeier much has happened in the field of the history of early Christian thought. Nowadays many are ready to acknowledge that “[t]he Christian understanding of the identity and role of Jesus is not the content of a proposition, which emerged slowly but steadily through a centuries-long process of conflict and debate”, and that “the formula of Chalcedon, its antecedents and its ultimate reception, is only one strand in a much richer and more complex theological fabric”²⁰. Religions are less and less often envisioned “as stable entities developing coherently over time, occasionally shedding unsuccessful ‘mutations’ (heresies) like so many exotic, extinct religious Neanderthals. This kind of evolutionary view of religions emerged in the

¹⁹ SCHOEPS 1949, 161 and 1956, 56-61 argued for a Jewish origin of the theory of the syzygies. SMITH 1965, 178 demolished the evidence with which Schoeps had propped up his thesis. For a reconnaissance of the heresiological theme in Pseudoclementine *Homilies* *cfr.* REED 2008 (*part.* 298, where very suggestive conclusions are drawn about the placement of the writing in the late-antique scenario).

²⁰ DALEY 2008, 900. The author continues: “To understand the full range of ancient Christology, we need to listen more attentively to the whole chorus, and to read individual authors not simply in the light of Chalcedon, but as Christological sources in their own right”. Analogously PIERRE 1988, 144-145 proposes to study the creed of the asker and that of Aphrahat “dans leur propre milieu, sans céder à la tentation de les réduire à des expressions postérieures de la foi, auxquelles nous sommes maintenant accoutumés. En laissant se déployer leur étrangeté, peut-être parviendrons-nous à entrer au cœur de ce qu'ils expriment”.

nineteenth century, ‘scientifically’ rewriting what were at root colonialist discourses of theological self-description”²¹.

1.3. “THEOLOGIA INDOLIS VALDE PRIMITIVAE”

Going back to Walters’ treatment of Aphrahat, it should be noticed that the question of concern there is not the possibility of the repossession, on the part of the Christian believer(s), of the theological views of an author predating the time of definition of the orthodox dogma, and therefore either failing to confess it or contradicting it²²—a problem upon which Christian thinkers, in particular Catholic ones, have exercised throughout history all their hermeneutical prowess. If that were the case, interpreters whose preoccupations are akin to Walters’ would need to go out of their way to show that the *Demonstrations* are reconcilable with, or at least “do not preclude”, the dogmatic definitions of Christian councils later than Nicaea as well.

Rather, the problem posed by Aphrahat lies in his postdating the Council of Nicaea, whose resolutions he does not seem to know. What to make of this ignorance? Of

²¹ JACOBS 2008, 171. *Cfr.* also CHIDESTER 2000 (*cit. ibidem*).

²² For an instance of criticism of the tendency to judge the thought of an author with the wisdom of hindsight, based on later theological developments, see B.E. Daley’s brief treatment of R.P.C. Hanson’s and A. Grillmeier’s rejection of Athanasius’s alleged “*Logos-sarx*” Christology. Hanson and, more moderately, Grillmeier are culpable of “distort[ing] his [= Athanasius’s] intentions by judging them in light of fifth-century issues, standards he never intended to meet” (DALEY 2008, 892). It can be noticed that, prescindig from the overall non-confessional tenor of this contribution of Daley (and, in general, of his scholarship), the positionality of this judgment of his is at least ambiguous. If, in fact, one could see it as an attempt at correcting *ab extra* a logical flaw in Grillmeier’s and Hanson’s reasoning without embracing this latter, on the other hand it may be construed as internal to a logic where the concern about the theological adequacy of the thought of an author is still present, and as only excepting about the fitness of the scale used for this assessment—so that, if Athanasius had lived in the fifth century, Grillmeier’s and Hanson’s appraisal would be deemed correct.

course, I am not concerned with this question from a theological-systematic, or even theological-historical, point of view. Rather, I am interested in exploring the ways in which the perception of the difficulties posed by Aphrahat's non-Nicene²³ Christology has affected scholarly reconstructions of its contents.

One interesting outcome of scholarly engagement with this thorny issue has been the tendency to qualify Aphrahat's Christology as either archaic, primitive, or Semitic. Marie-Joseph Pierre, in the voluminous introduction to her translation of the *Demonstrations*, noted that Aphrahat "est entièrement traditionnel, c'est-à-dire qu'il transmet l'enseignement reçu"²⁴. Ortiz de Urbina wrote in 1965: "A[phraates], scribens in loco a cultura hellenica remoto, tradit theologiam indolis valde primitivae"²⁵. Claims of this sort have interacted diversely with the different accounts of the Sage's theology. The judgment of archaism is almost coterminous, in Ortiz de Urbina as well as in other scholars, with that of lacking any Hellenistic influence. Aphrahat, thus, would be independent from the "Entwicklung der griechisch-römischen Christologie"²⁶ (yet, oddly enough, this constatation did not prevent Ortiz de Urbina from declaring

²³ I do not employ here "non-Nicene" as a synonym of "anti-Nicene", but rather as a broader category, including also theological constructions, such as Aphrahat's, seemingly unconcerned with the kind of debates that led to the formula of Nicaea and that ensued its promulgation.

²⁴ PIERRE 1988, 66. In more recent years also B.G. Bucur paid tribute to this scholarly tradition, at the beginning of his thorough and very convincing study on *Angelomorphic Pneumatology in Aphrahat: "[Aphrahat's] Demonstrations are noted for their 'archaism' or 'traditionalism', and represent, as has been said, a unique treasure-trove of older exegetical and doctrinal traditions"*²⁴. This is why, even though he flourished in the fourth century, Aphrahat provides invaluable insight into earlier Christian doctrines and practices" (BUCUR 2009, 159). Similarly, for PIERRE 1988, 145 "[the asker's and Aphrahat's creeds in the *Demonstrations*] sont en effet de rares et précieux témoins de la foi chrétienne primitive".

²⁵ ORTIZ DE URBINA 1965, 49.

²⁶ ORTIZ DE URBINA 1933, 140. Cit. in PETERSEN 1992, 241.

Aphrahat's Christology perfectly orthodox). On the other hand, saying non-Hellenized Christianity or saying Jewish Christianity is, for certain scholarship, one and the same. For this reason, Aphrahat has often been linked to a speculated Jewish Christian tradition, constructed as a witness of the primeval Church²⁷. Against "an imposed dichotomy between so-called 'Jewish Christianity' and so-called 'Gentile Christianity'" has written A.Y. Reed, arguing in favor of an approach which may "aid us in recovering the complex dynamics of reaction, influence, and interaction with the range of late antique traditions [...]"²⁸.

Petersen, who took Ortiz de Urbina to task for his views on the point of Aphrahat's orthodoxy²⁹, did not disapprove of the claim of archaism, or of the definition of Aphrahat as "ein reiner Semit"³⁰. Rather, throughout his article on *Dem. 17* he expressed

²⁷ A (non-scholarly) example of this very traditional view about the ties between Aphrahat and nothing less than "the Mother Church of Jerusalem" is represented by the words spoken by Pope Benedict XVI during a General Audience: "Aphraates was from an Ecclesial Community situated on the frontier between Judaism and Christianity. It was a community strongly linked to the Mother Church of Jerusalem, and its Bishops were traditionally chosen from among the so-called 'family' of James, the 'brother of the Lord' [...]. They were people linked by blood and by faith to the Church of Jerusalem. Aphraates' language was Syriac, therefore a Semitic language like the Hebrew of the Old Testament and like the Aramaic spoken by Jesus himself. Aphraates' Ecclesial Community was a community that sought to remain faithful to the Judeo-Christian tradition, of which it felt it was a daughter. It therefore maintained a close relationship with the Jewish world and its Sacred Books. Significantly, Aphraates defines himself as a 'disciple of the Sacred Scripture' of the Old and New Testaments (*Expositions 22, 26*), which he considers as his only source of inspiration [...]" (RATZINGER 2007).

²⁸ REED 2008, 277. Although A.Y. Reed is referring there to another text (the *Pseudoclementines*), her protest can be very well applied to scholarly discourse on our case study.

²⁹ For ORTIZ DE URBINA 1965, 49 "[l]icet ignoret concilium Nicaenum, A[phraates] orthodoxe docet Christum fuisse Deum."

³⁰ ORTIZ DE URBINA 1933, 5 (*cit. in* PETERSEN 1992), 241. PETERSEN 1992, 251 wrote: "Aphrahat offers [...] a glimpse of [...] a relic inherited from primitive Semitic or Judaic Christianity".

the wish that Ortiz de Urbina had been consequent with his Semitic characterization of Aphrahat by admitting to what Petersen called the Persian Sage's subordinationism³¹.

Unlike Petersen, Peter Bruns, certainly not a partisan of the correspondence of Aphrahat's beliefs to Nicene orthodoxy, criticized their dismissal on the part of scholars as archaic and tardy. These characterizations were inspired, in his opinion, by "dem verengten Blickwinkel der spätern dogmengeschichtlichen Entwicklung des Christentums im griechischen Sprach- und Kulturraum"³². Camplani considered Bruns' critique unconvincing, arguing that "arcaismo è spesso usato *in senso assolutamente non negativo* per indicare la presenza di fenomeni di vario tipo in testi redatti in aree geografiche marginali o in circoli e comunità rimasti svincolati dalle correnti culturali dominanti, che, ad una data epoca, risultano in generale regresso"³³.

But what conception of the path of the unfolding of Christian thought does the usage of the term *archaism* bespeak? Is it possible to speak of archaism—a term, of course, bearing within itself the mark of chronology—without falling into the trap of theological evolutionism? In order to offer a theoretical framework for addressing this question, a

³¹ Cfr. PETERSEN 1992, *passim*.

³² BRUNS 1990, 220.

³³ CAMPLANI 1992, 472 (Italics mine). I would like to draw attention to the fact that the allegation of archaism does not automatically translate into an admission to the non-Nicene nature of Aphrahat's theological views. Actually 1) Ortiz de Urbina; 2) Bruns; 3) Camplani; and 4) Walters exhaust the spectrum of the possible combinations of the takes on these two issues (of course, within a non-nuanced, binary logic) by respectively 1) calling Aphrahat archaic yet considering him orthodox; 2) rejecting the label of archaism and denying Aphrahat's orthodoxy; 3) agreeing on the Persian Sage's heterodoxy but considering acceptable the use of the term "archaic"; 4) denying (WALTERS 2010, 12) both Aphrahat's archaism and his heterodoxy. It is easy to see how it is possible to use the alleged primitiveness of an author as a justification for his terminological imprecision, thus affirming his orthodox intentions and understanding. Of Aphrahat as theologically well-intended speaks CROSS 2005: "[Aphrahat's] writings show that [...], at least in intention, he was orthodox in his theology" (Cross's authorship of the entry is suggested in PETERSEN 1992, 251, n. 9, quoting S. Brock).

parallel could be usefully drawn from the debates about the notion of “folkloric relic” spurred among—mostly Italian—ethnographers and historians of religion by the publication of the works of E. De Martino. In De Martino’s treatment of popular religious formations as presented in his *Sud e magia* the “folkloric relic” is considered a negative of high culture, a marker of its limits and “difficulties of expansion and hegemony”³⁴. M. Brelich took a different stand on the “folkloric relic”. For him “the relic is never inert”. Moreover, “whereas in De Martino the removal of the relic goes hand in hand with that of the conditions of disenfranchisement of the masses [...], in Brelich we witness the idea of a social and cultural substratum [...] which is able to organically coexist with the intellectual *élite*. For De Martino, then, the «relic» exists (albeit only as an abstracting fiction, as a dialectic antithesis to be superseded), whereas for Brelich it dissolves, or tends to do so, in the *coherence* of a global replasmation”³⁵.

Let us now try to *mutanda mutare* and to wrap up this all too long parenthesis. Over and against, on one hand, an understanding of a non-Nicene Christology in Nicene times that³⁶ sees the former as a negative destined to be *aufgehoben* by a later (and *ipso facto* superior) truth; or, on the other hand, an irenic posture construing such

³⁴ RIVERA 1988, 60. For an acute problematization of this knot *cfr.* the broader context in RIVERA 1988, 59-64. “Il relitto folklorico-religioso può [...] acquistare il suo senso storico o come stimolo documentario che aiuta a comprendere una civiltà scomparsa di cui esso formava, una volta, elemento organico, ovvero come stimolo documentario che aiuta a misurare i limiti interni e la interna forza di espansione di una civiltà attuale in cui è conservato come relitto: al di fuori di queste due possibilità di conquista da parte del pensiero, il materiale folklorico-religioso resta storiograficamente una sorta di terra di nessuno” (DE MARTINO 2001, 11-12). On the relationship between folkloric relic and hegemonic culture *cfr.* also MONTANARI 1985.

³⁵ MONTANARI 2001, 62-63.

³⁶ Whether enthusiastically (*à la* Grillmeier) or against their will: *ducunt fata volentem, nolentem trahunt*.

Christology as organically coexisting with, and asymptotically dissolving in, the dominant theological structures, I will attempt here to envision Aphrahat's Christology as an unsublatable intellectual singularity, embedded in a dynamic relationship—one involving both resistance and assimilation—to the *trahentia fata* of dogmatic development.

1.4. "KEINE SYSTEMATISCHE CHRISTOLOGIE"

This brief study is not conceived as a systematic treatise of Aphrahat's Christology—and this for two reasons. First, such a study would exceed both the confines of the genre of the present work and, more importantly, the limits of its author's competence. Peter Bruns' *Das Christusbild Aphrahats*³⁷, though—after nearly twenty years—a somewhat dated book, remains a hardly matchable endeavor in this regard.

The second reason is that, to put it in Bruns' words, when dealing with Aphrahat "[d]er Leser darf [...] keine systematische Christologie erwarten"³⁸. The explanation for this fact, however, must not be provided on essentialist grounds—namely, Aphrahat's purportedly being a Semite, unable to reason according to Hellenistic categories. As a matter of fact, Aphrahat did share, as I shall attempt to show, some ideas that can be considered part of the philosophical *koine* of the Hellenistic world. Nevertheless, he does not seem to share the interest in the kind of theological speculation in which all

³⁷ BRUNS 1990. On Bruns's book *cf.* the long and appreciative review of CAMPLANI 1992 as well as that, in some points critical, of DRIJVERS 1994.

³⁸ BRUNS 1990, 87.

the protagonists of the Trinitarian controversy engaged. Rather than being interested in the definition of the essence of Christ—whether with a more zetetic attitude, like the earliest Alexandrian Christian thinkers, or, as the theologians partaking in the debates over the *homoousios*, with the purpose of the dogmatic identification of the truth—, Aphrahat nurtures an acute interest in Christ’s manifesting himself to the humankind.

Arguably, this favoring of the *oikonomia* over the *theologia* has something to do with the emphasis on soteriology that a community such as that of the *bnay qyāmā*, to which Aphrahat had at least strong ties³⁹, must have displayed. Chapter 3 of this work represents my attempt to approach Aphrahat’s interest in Christ’s ways of revealing himself to the world. I will investigate this topic through a series of samplings into relevant texts revolving around the connection between Adam and Christ⁴⁰.

Chapter 2 constitutes an aside about the so-called Eunomian interpolation in Pseudoclementine *Recognitions*. The presence of this chapter can be understood in the light of the purpose, expressed in the title of this thesis, of pursuing a contextual

³⁹ For BARNES 1999, 305 Aphrahat “evidently belonged to the *qyama*”. More caution shows PIERRE 1988, 40. On the institution of the *bnay qyāmā* in Aphrahat *cfr.* BROCK 1973, 10-11; PIERRE 1988, 93-111; and GRIFFITH 1995, 235-236.238. On Aphrahat’s ascetic ideal *cfr.* BRUNS 1990, 87-92; and LEHTO 2006.

⁴⁰ I had originally designed to include in this study an exploration of the connections between Aphrahat’s Christology and the dimension of the ascetic practice preached and taken up by the Persian Sage. Unfortunately, I have not been able to expand on this topic in the present work. For my development of the idea of a strong connection between Christological beliefs and asceticism the reading of DAVIS 2008 has been important (for an exposition of the main lines of the author’s way of reading Coptic Christologies *cfr. ibid.*, v-vii). However, my interest, unlike Davis’s, lies less in the liturgical, ritual, and visual enactment of the theological belief, and more in the relationship between the latter (in particular, in the case of Aphrahat, as it relates to the conception of the Spirit) and the community’s peculiar understanding of salvation. I do hope to be soon able to write an essay showing “wie bedeutsam bei Aphrahat die Pneumatologie für die anthropologischen und soteriologischen Vorstellung ist” (DRECOLL et HAUSSCHILD 2004, 189, n. 150).

understanding of Aphrahat’s Christological views, by setting them against the backdrop of the turmoil triggered, within the Church(es) of Syria, by Trinitarian controversies. The first scholar to argue for a Syriac origin of the *Recognitions* was, in 1890, J. Langen, followed by H. Waitz⁴¹ (who thought more specifically of Antioch), O. Cullman⁴², and G. Strecker⁴³ (who suggested Palestine as an alternate possibility).

Admittedly, justifying with a generic reference to the common backcloth of “Syriac Christianity” the drawing of historical connections between disparate texts, possibly penned in far-apart centers, may be imprudent. As L. Van Rompay wrote, “[w]hile Edessa, the capital of Osroene, is often seen as its main centre, the geographical area of Syriac Christianity in its heyday was quite vast, extending from the hinterland of the Hellenized city of Antioch in the west to the political heartland of the Persian Sasanids, around Seleucia-Ctesiphon, in the east”⁴⁴. Moreover, a definite answer about the place of composition of the *Recognitions*—let alone about that of Aphrahat’s *Demonstrations*⁴⁵—is far from being reached.

However, the common geographical origin of one of the manuscripts preserving Aphrahat’s *Demonstrations* (B, copied in Edessa in September 474)⁴⁶ and of the earliest of

⁴¹ Cfr. WAITZ 1904, 372. Cit. in JONES 1982, 78.

⁴² Cfr. CULLMAN 1930, 164. Cit. in JONES 1982, 78.

⁴³ Cfr. STRECKER 1981, 270. Cit. in JONES 1982, 78.

⁴⁴ VAN ROMPAY 2008, 366.

⁴⁵ Although of course we know that Aphrahat writes, “ipso teste, sub imperio Saporis II” (ORTIZ DE URBINA 1965, 47).

⁴⁶ Ms. London, British Library, Add. 17, 182, ff. 1-99. This ms. only contains the first 10 *Demonstrations*, whereas the remaining 13 are carried by the ms. attached to it, B (Ms. London, British Library, Add. 17, 182, ff. 100-175), dated AD 510. The other two mss. are A (Ms. London, British Library, Add. 14, 619), datable in the 6th century and containing all the 23 *Demonstrations*; and the much later C (Ms. London,

the two transmitting the Syriac *Pseudoclementines* (copied, again in the Blessed City, in November 411), notwithstanding the chronological gap between them, seems to indicate that these texts circulated far beyond the walls of the cities where they (or their translations) had been composed—even across the Sassanid-Roman border. This is not to suggest that Aphrahat could read the sources of the final redactor of the *Recognitions*, or that the latter could have, available in front of him, the *Demonstrations* of the Persian Sage, but rather that there is no need to assume cultural segregation among different Syriac dioceses. Furthermore, if the hypothesis of the Heteroousian use of the Pseudoclementine novel that will be proposed in Chapter 2 is correct, it shows that at least by the '70 of the fourth century the Trinitarian controversy was lively in Osrhoene⁴⁷, a region half-way between Antioch, city much involved in post-

British Library, Orient. 1, 017, f. 159r-170r), dated AD 1364 and only containing part of *Dem.* 23. Fol. 7 of ms. B, being of a different, ninth-century hand, is identified as B*. *Cfr.* PIERRE 1988, 11; WRIGHT 1871, 403a-404a (*cit.* in VAN ROMPAY 2008, 374).

⁴⁷ Edessa, one of the most important centers of Osrhoene, was represented at Nicaea (*cfr.* SEGAL 1970; on the Eastern representation at Nicaea *cfr.* also SUTHERLAND WALLACE-HADRILL 1982, 165-166). An Edessene bishop is in fact known to all the lists of subscribers of the proceedings of the Council of Nicaea. His name—traditionally rendered by scholars as Aithallaha—is attested in sometimes notably different ways in the lists. Since, to the best of my knowledge, no effort has been made so far to collect all the different attestations of Aithallaha's name together, I will provide here such an inventory (limiting myself to Latin, Greek, Syriac, and Coptic sources—thus excluding Arabic and Armenian ones). I will include in brackets the reference to the manuscripts, when needed. Our bishop is known in Latin sources (*cfr.* CUNTZ, GELZER et HILGENFELD 1898, 20-21) as Ethilaos Edesenus (ABDEF); Ethlaos Edesenus (C); Aetilas Edeasenus [*sic*] (G); Aechilaas Edesenus (H); Aetholus Edisinus (I); Aetilaus Adesenus (KM); Etilaus Edesenus (L); Eutalius Edesenus (N); Aetilaus Aedessenus (O); Ethilaus Aedesenus (P); Aetholaus Edissae (Q); Aetholaus Edesenus (R); Aetholaus Aedessae (STU); Aethelus Aedissa [*sic*] (X); Aetholus Edissa [*sic*] (Y); and Anatholius Edissa [*sic*] (Z). In the Greek list of Theodorus Anagnostes he is known as Ἀειθαλάς Ἐδεσῶν (*cfr. ibid.*, p. 64 [nr. 78]), whereas the Vatican Codex has him as Ἀείφιλος Ἐδέσσης (*cfr. ibid.*, p. 74 [nr. 173]). In the Coptic catalog he is called Ⲭⲉⲗⲗⲁⲥ ⲕⲏ ⲈⲔⲈⲤⲤⲁ (*cfr. ibid.*, 84 [nr. 84 in the Latin translation]), and in the Syriac list of the Monastery of Scetis (BL, Add. 14258, ff. 18^a-25^a; *cfr.* WRIGHT 1870-1872, II, 1030-33; *cit.* in CUNTZ, GELZER et HILGENFELD 1898, xxiii) ܐܝܬܗܠܗܐ ܥܘܣܪܗܘܢܐ (*cfr. ibid.*, 102 [nr. 78]) Surprisingly, in 'Abdisho' bar Brikha's Syriac inventory of Nicene bishops (*Nomocanon* 1, 1, 5; on this list

Nicene Christological debates, and Nisibis, the town in north-eastern Mesopotamia whose bishop Jacob appears as one of the signatories of the canons of Nicaea⁴⁸, and where Ephrem began his activity of anti-heretical (including anti-Arian) writer.

1.5. A DYNAMIC ENGAGEMENT

The canons of Nicaea were not officially introduced among the Christians of Persia until the Council of Seleucia-Ctesiphon of 410⁴⁹, when they were ratified on the initiative of Marutha of Maypherqaṭ⁵⁰. Walters made the important observation that “[w]hether or not it can be proven that leaders in the Oriental churches knew of the

cfr. CUNTZ, GELZER et HILGENFELD 1898, xxiv) he is listed as *ܡܝܪܝܬܐ ܡܝܫܝܩܐ* (*cfr. ibid.*, 126 [nr. 78]). Curiously, the *Chronicum Edessenum*, which cites both the existence of Aithallaha and the gathering of the Council of Nicaea, makes no mention of the former’s participation in the Council: “XIII. Im Jahre 635 (324) wurde der Kirchhof (κοιμητήριον) von Orhâi gebaut, in den Tagen des Bischofs Aitallaha, ein Jahr von der grossen Synode in Nicaea”; “XIV. Im Jahre 636 (325) wurde Aitallaha Bischof in Orhâi; er baute den Kirchhof (κοιμητήριον) und die Ostseite der Kirche”; “XV. In dem nachfolgenden Jahre versammelte sich zu Nicaea die Synode von 318 Bischöfen” (HALLIER 1892, 94-95). A letter about the Nicene faith sent by Aithallaha to the Persians is preserved only in Armenian translation (THOROSSIAN 1942; German translation: BRUNS 1993; both *cit.* in POSSEKEL 1999, 24, n. 89). For a study of its theological outlook *cfr.* BRUNS 1992 (*cit. ibidem*). For a general account of the situation of the city of Edessa in the fourth century *cfr.* POSSEKEL 1999, 24-26, besides the classical SEGAL 1970, 110 *seq.*

⁴⁸ I will offer here for Jacob of Nisibis the same inventory provided in n. 48 for the Edessene bishop. Jacob is known to Latin lists (*cfr.* CUNTZ, GELZER et HILGENFELD 1898, 20-21) as Iacobus Pesthebius (AE); Iacobus Pertebios [*sic*] (BD); Iacobus Pestehebios (C); Iacobus Pestebios (F); Iacobus Nibiensis [*sic*] (GI); Iacobus Nisibiensis (HLNOPQRSTU); Iacobus Nubiensis [*sic!*] (K); Iacobus Nisipiensis (M); Iacobus Nisibi (XY); and Iacobus Nezibi (Z). In Theodorus the Lector’s catalog he is found as *Ἰάκωβος Νισίβιος* (*cfr. ibid.*, 64 [nr. 79]), whereas he is (*excepto errore*) absent from the Vatican list (*cfr. ibid.*, 71-75). In the Coptic listing (*cfr. ibid.*, 84 [nr. 85 in the Latin translation]) he is *ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃⲟⲥ ϩⲏ ϮⲓⲠⲒⲛⲟⲥ* (the editor, *ibid.* 84, n. 2, notes: “*CIPINOC* nomen ex *<NI>CIBINOC* corruptum est”. In Syriac he is, as expected, *ܝܥܘܒܐ ܕܢܝܫܝܩܐ* both in the list of the Monastery of Nitria (*cfr. ibid.*, 102 [nr. 79]) and in that of ‘Abdisho’ of Nisibis (*cfr. ibid.*, 126 [nr. 79]).

⁴⁹ *Cfr.* ORTIZ DE URBINA 1947, 102. As a proof of the delay with which news got to Syria, Ortiz de Urbina (*ibid.*) mentions the fact that in *Dem.* 19, composed in 344, Aphrahat is not abreast of the solemn dedication of the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, occurred seven years before.

⁵⁰ On this council *cfr.* CHABOT 1902, 259 and GRIBOMONT 1977 (both *cit.* in WALTERS 2010, 109, n. 18).

Council's decisions before 410 AD, the fact that the Council's decisions were accepted at the Synod of Isaac demonstrates that their acceptance was a process that required some 'official' action"⁵¹. In my opinion, however, this fact is more likely to represent a hint to the controversiality of the Nicene creed among the Christians of Persia than to the symbol's complete lack of penetration among those communities.

This contentiousness may have been related both to the presence of Christians taking an anti-Nicene stand on the Trinitarian issues (such as the "Arians" to whose refutation Ephrem attended since his Nisibene period) and to that of Christians of different orientations, who were not part of this debate. These Christians may have been interested in stressing other aspects of the Christian faith—in the case of Aphrahat, as already mentioned and as we shall see in greater detail in Chapter 3, the forms of Christ's manifesting himself to the world.

The question, thus, ceases to be whether Aphrahat knew or knew not the contents of the symbol of Nicaea (there is no evidence to affirm that he did⁵²), but rather whether from his failure to adopt the discourse typical of any of the parties of the Trinitarian controversy it must automatically be concluded that he was speaking from a position of cultural seclusion, incognizant of the debates going on in Syriac Christianity⁵³. This assumption appears to me to betray a reliance of some sort on the evolutionistic understanding of the development of Christian thought denounced before, worried of

⁵¹ WALTERS 2010, 109, n. 18.

⁵² At the same time, of course, the denial of such knowledge reposes on an *argumentum e silentio*.

⁵³ If an analogy can be drawn (of course *mutatis mutandis*), the publication of the relatively traditional novel *La nausée* in 1938 should not necessarily induce us to believe that J.-P. Sartre had never heard of A. Breton's *Manifeste du surréalisme*, published in 1924.

granting Aphrahat, an author considered orthodox in modern times, capability of insight into the triumphant dogmatic logic. Since the presence of such an insight is hard to prove on textual basis, the last resort is to exculpate the Persian Sage on the ground of geographical segregation—an equivalent of chronological precedence, to which in this case it is impossible to appeal. I will try to exit this logic by suggesting to understand Aphrahat's adoption of a certain philosophical scheme, found in one of the texts sampled, as a form of engagement, surely in need of further qualification⁵⁴, with this convulsed theological environment, and as a way chosen by the Persian Sage to explain⁵⁵ the tradition of faith of which he was an exponent in culturally synthetic terms.

⁵⁴ Is this engagement reactive? How does it relate to the characterization of many of the *Demonstrations*, and in particular of *Dem.* 17, as a defense from the attacks of the Jews?

⁵⁵ I am indebted to Albert McClure for the use of the language of “self-explanation”.

2. UNDOING HERESY. THE “EUNOMIAN INTERPOLATION” IN

THE SYRIAC VERSION OF PSEUDOCLEMENTINE *RECOGNITIONS*

2.1. THE SYRIAC *RECOGNITIONS* AND THE “EUNOMIAN INTERPOLATION”

The Syriac version¹ of the Pseudoclementine corpus² contains sections corresponding to the first three books and part of the fourth book of the *Recognitions* [=

¹ As far as the time of composition of the translation is concerned, JONES 1992, 239 wrote that the presence of several scribal errors seems to point to a dating considerably earlier than 411. Also LAGARDE 1884, 52, n. ** affirmed that the text appears to have passed under several hands before being copied in 411. JONES 1992, 242 initially suggested that the translation may have been produced in the School of the Persians, under Qiyore of Edessa, around the year 380. In the light of the conclusions of LANGE 2008 about fifth-century additions to Ephrem’s *Commentarii in Diatessaron*, we may need to verify anew the setting of 373 (Ephrem’s death) as *terminus ante quem* for the final redaction of SR (JONES 1998, 437-438) based on the quotations contained in Ephrem’s *Commentarii* (21.5 cites RS 1.41.3 *verbatim*, and 16.22 seems to presuppose R 1.54.2). As for the identification of the translator(s), P. de Lagarde (PÖLCHER 1959, 29-30) cautiously manifested his impression that the Syriac translation of the *Homilies* [= SH] derived from a different hand than SR’s. Also FRANKENBERG 1937, viii-ix asserted, with generic references to stylistic and lexical evidence, that two different Syriac translators must have been at work—one for H (who would have taken greater freedom with the original Greek) and one for R. Frankenberg’s judgment was repeated by SCHWARTZ 1932, 153 and IRMSCHER 1965, 535, whereas VÖÖBUS 1950, col. 707 motivated his persuasion of the existence of two different translators for SH and SR with the respective recurring, for Gospel’s quotations, to the *Vetus Syra* and to a textual typology that can be traced back to the *Peshitta*. JONES 1992, 241 considered unconvincing Vööbus’s remarks, which had also been rejected by previous scholars (BLACK 1952 and KERSCHENSTEINER 1970), and instead demonstrated the existence of two different translators by availing himself of the concordances of the *Pseudoclementines* realized by STRECKER 1989. In fact, Jones highlighted the different—and, within each text, almost entirely consistent—rendering of the verbs depending on δύναμαι (ܕܘܢܐܝܝܢ in Syriac) in SH and SR: while we find an infinitive preceded by a Δ in SH, a conjugated verb is employed in SR.

² The *Pseudoclementines* are a group of Christian writings pseudo-epigraphically attributed to Clement, bishop of Rome. In them we read about his journeys with Peter the apostle, their disputations with Simon Magus, and Clement’s serendipitous reunion with his long-lost family members, according to the Hellenistic literary topos of the *agnitio*. The final redaction of the Greek text, whose sources’ origin spans over three centuries, is generally considered to have occurred in Syria in the fourth century (*cfr.* UHLHORN 1854, 381-429).

R]³, and to almost five books of the *Homilies*⁴. The text is attested by two independent manuscripts, the first of which is the earliest dated Syriac one, completed in Edessa in November 411⁵.

R was translated into Latin by Rufinus of Aquileia after 397. St. Jones suggested that the Syriac version of R [= SR] could be used alongside Rufinus' translation to reconstruct the now-lost corresponding sections of the original Greek text [= *GR]⁶. Since R 3.2-11 is missing in part of the manuscript tradition, scholarship has come to identify this section with the dissertations concerning "the unbegotten God and the begotten" (*de ingenito deo genitoque*) that Rufinus, in the *Prologue* to his translation, affirmed he had preferred to leave out⁷. This exclusion, justified by Rufinus with his own failure to understand this section, is probably due to the marked anti-Nicene nature of its theological exposition, attributed to Peter. The majority of scholars agree upon the interpolated nature of these chapters, which were later translated into Latin by a different hand, but their doctrinal character has long been debated. Some, following the account offered by Rufinus in *De adulteratione librorum Origenis*, maintain

³ *Recognitiones* 1-4.1.4.

⁴ *Homiliae* 10-12.24; 13-14.12.

⁵ London, British Library, *Add.* 12, 150. The *Pseudoclementines* occupy the first 72 folios. Copied (*cfr.* fol. 255r) by a certain Jacob, it contains a *martyrologium* and Syriac translations of Titus of Bostra's *Contra Manichaeos* and of Eusebius of Caesarea's *De theophania*, *De martyribus Palaestinae* and *Encomium martyrum*. The second Syriac ms. (London, British Library, *Add.* 14, 609) is dated by WRIGHT 1872, 1089 and BAUMSTARK 1902, 38 (as well as 1922, 68, n. 4) to the year 587; also [CURETON] 1845, 65 assigns it to the sixth century. (Other scholars considered it to be as late as the ninth century: so BICKELL 1871, 46; FRANKENBERG 1937, vii; LAGARDE 1861, v).

⁶ JONES 1995, 46.

⁷ *Prologus*, 10-11: "Sunt autem et quaedam in utroque corpore de ingenito deo genitoque disserta et de aliis nonnullis, quae, ut nihil amplius dicam, excesserunt intelligentiam nostram. Haec ergo ego, tamquam quae supra vires meas essent, aliis reservare malui quam minus plena proferre".

that the text has a Eunomian origin, whereas others contend that evidence does not allow for assigning to it more than a simply “Arian” content⁸.

Over the next pages, I will provide my own translation⁹ of the Syriac and Latin versions of the second half of the interpolation, which presents the greatest Christological interest. Then I will move on to introduce my hypothesis about the Syriac translation.

2.2. TRANSLATION OF THE CHRISTOLOGICAL SECTION (R 3.7.4-3.11.12)

S Y R I A C

3.7.4. He is, then, the being that has not come into existence (ܠܐܡ ܠܐ ܠܒܘܬ), and it is not by a simple name [only] that He is honored. For, He is also without beginning. That one without beginning and that being that has not come into existence (ܠܐܡ ܠܐ ܠܒܘܬ), who is God, is glorified by

L A T I N

3.7.4. That which is unbegotten (*ingenitum*) must not be honored with a sole name: He is, indeed, also without beginning. Now, this [reality] without beginning and unbegotten (*ingenitum*) is God, which [reality] by the sole notion of those who have been made (*facta*) is announced [only], whereas it is [fully]

⁸ *Cfr.* JONES 1982, 77 (and more generally, for the question of the “Eunomian interpolation”, 76-79). It could prove useful to verify the debate about the theological views displayed by this interpolation in the light of recent scholarly acquisitions about the absence of any significant *trait d’union*, outside of the heresiological discourse, between the so-called “Arians” and the Heteroousians (traditionally named “radical Arians” or “Anomœans”). Lewis Ayres warns against the tendency to read ancient theological debates through heresiological labels inherent in the texts. These labels, Ayres explains, “enabled early theologians and ecclesiastical historians to portray theologians to whom they were opposed as distinct and coherent groups, and they enabled writers to tar enemies with the name of a figure already in disrepute” (AYRES 2004, 2). On the terminological question of “Arianism” *cfr.* HANSON 1988, xvii-xviii.

⁹ Throughout this paper I will be quoting from my translation of the Syriac and the Latin versions of these chapters, in parallel columns. A translation in a modern language of the Syriac version has never appeared (for a questionable Greek retroversion *cfr.* FRANKENBERG 1937; on the general limits of Frankenberg’s edition and the indispensability of Lagarde’s *cfr.* JONES 1982, 5, n. 10). The Latin, instead, has been translated multiple times (for a recent, reliable French translation, see GEOLTRAIN- KAESTLI 2005), but R 3.2-11 has always been left out of the translation.

those who have come to existence [*scil.* the creatures] (ﻟﻌﺎﻟﻤﻴﻦ) only within the limits of [His] fame [*scil.* of the notion they have of Him], while by Himself He is [fully] understood.

3.7.5. For, He does not find anything of Himself which existed previously, nor anything that is going to come into existence afterwards, so that He would [purportedly] see Himself in the fact that He is, and that He is without beginning¹⁰.

3.7.6. For, such is the inquiry and the investigation [characteristic] of those who have come into existence [*scil.* creatures] (ﻟﻌﺎﻟﻤﻴﻦ). For, because of this reason, as for His concealment (ﻛﻮﻧﺘﻮﻟﻮﻧﺎ), namely the fact that He exists and is not spoken of, He has no room for investigation to previously inquire into His existence [*lit.*: into the fact that He exists]. For, for Him the fact that He exists is not subsequent to the fact that He inquires into His existence [*lit.*: into the fact that He exists].

3.7.7. Therefore, [God] knows Himself, and does not continue to inquire into Himself.

3.7.8. But we said these

understood by Him.

3.7.5. [God] will not find, indeed, that something of Himself has existed previously, [nor] does He find that something of Himself has come into existence afterwards, since it is the case that He is without beginning.

3.7.6. Rather, such is the inquiry [characteristic] of those who have been made [*scil.* creatures] (*quae facta sunt*), because that which is ineffable [*scil.* God] (*ineffabile*) does not have, for [His] investigation about Himself, a space to foresee what He was before He was: indeed, the curiosity about His own essence is not made second by the one who is [*scil.* by the fact that He is] (*non secundatur ab eo qui est*).

3.7.7. Therefore, the one who does not interrogate Himself on His own regard [*scil.* God] knows Himself.

3.7.8. But we said indeed these

¹⁰ I must here declare, with Frankenberg (FRANKENBERG 1937, 163): “Die Übersetzung ist nicht sicher”. For this sentence Frankenberg proposes the following Greek retroversion: οὐ γὰρ εὐρήσει ἑαυτοῦ τι μὲν προυπάρχον, ἄλλο δέ τι μεταγενόμενον τοῦ ὄραν ἑαυτὸν καθ’ ὃ ἔστι καὶ καθ’ ὃ ἀναρχός ἐστιν. He also reports Schaefer’s translation: οὐ γὰρ εὐρήσει ἑαυτοῦ τι μὲν προυπάρχον· τὸ δὲ ἄλλο ὕστερον γενόμενον <ὄρα ἑαυτὸν> ὄρων καθ’ ὃ ἔστι καὶ καθ’ ὃ ἀναρχός ἐστιν.

things even beyond that which is just and appropriate. For, it is preferable for that being that has not come into existence (ܠܥܡ ܠܕܝ ܠܒܘܪ) to be honored only in stillness and silence.

3.7.9. You [pl.] learned then without danger from us, in the measure of our possibility, that that substance (¹²ܚܘܒܘܬܐ) is without beginning.

3.8.1. Thus, that God who is without beginning begot (ܠܕ) His first-begotten Son (ܚܘܒܘܬܐ ܠܒܘܪܝܢܐ) before all creatures as it behooves God: [while remaining] unaltered, unchanged, undivided, not flowing and not lacking anything.

3.8.2. For, you [pl.] remember how these passions of the body are those that we avoided to attribute also to the soul, since we feared that, after they would be attributed [to it], its immortality would be voided.

things even more [extensively] than it is opportune: that which did not come to being (*ingenitum*), in fact, loves to be honored only with silence¹¹.

3.7.9. You [pl.] learned then without danger, insofar as we could understand, that this substance (*substantia*) [is] without beginning.

3.8.1. The one, then, who did not begin to be, the aforementioned God, begot (*genuit*) the first-begotten (*primogenitus*) of all the creation as it behooved God: not altering Himself, not converting Himself, not dividing Himself, not flowing, not extending anything.

3.8.2. Remember [pl.], indeed, that these are the passions of the bodies, which we avoided to attribute also to the soul, because of the fear that immortality might be taken away from it by these attributes.

¹¹ *Seu*: “in silence”.

¹² ܚܘܒܘܬܐ (with the meaning of “substance”, “particular property”, even “person”) is one of the four terms constituting the technical theological vocabulary used in Ephrem’s *Sermones de fide* to describe Trinitarian relations (LANGE 2005, 70-75, 100-103). The other three words are ܠܒܘܪܝܢܐ (“self-existing being”), for whose use in our text *cfr. infra*; ܚܘܒܘܬܐ (“nature”, “kind of being”), absent from SR 3.7.4-3.11.12; and ܠܒܘܪܝܢܐ ܘܢܘܢܐ (“essence [of the Father]”). In the Syriac Commentary on the *Diatessaron*, traditionally attributed to Ephrem, these three terms, sometimes assuming slightly different meanings, are accompanied by ܠܒܘܪܝܢܐ ܘܢܘܢܐ (“coessential” or even *ὁμοούσιος*), not found in our text. It must be noticed how the term ܠܒܘܪܝܢܐ ܘܢܘܢܐ has in the Syriac Commentary on the *Diatessaron* the twofold sense of “form of existence” (similar to that of ܚܘܒܘܬܐ) and “essence [of the Father]” (*ibid.*, 73), whereas in the *Sermones de fide* its meaning is restricted to the latter (*ibid.*, 101). *Cfr. infra*, n. 72.

3.8.3. God, then, begot (*genuit*) that which we¹³ learned to call also ‘creation’ (*factura*). To call then this very [reality] ‘begetting’ (*genitura*) and ‘creation’ (*factura*) and other such terms allows to consider a model of begetter (*genitor*) that which happens to be shapeless (*sine schemate*).

3.8.4. By those, in fact, who have a difference of shapes (*schemata*) it is necessary to distinguish a generation (*genitura*) and a creation (*factura*).

3.8.5.a. God, therefore, begot (*genuit*) while remaining [the same] (*manendo*), not suffering any division.

3.8.5.b. That which is [*scil.* that which comes to existence through this begetting, namely the Son] is not more honorable than God and than this unbegotten [that God is] (*ingenitus/ingenitum*), because [God] is not like the begotten (*genitum*).

3.8.5.a. In the very condition of [His] being (ﺑﻨﻰ ﺃﻣﺎ , ﺑﻨﻰ ﺃﻣﺎ , ﺑﻨﻰ ﺃﻣﺎ), therefore, did God beget (ﺑﻨﻰ) while being [*scil.* remaining the same], and it is not the case that He suffered any division.

3.8.6. For, in His willing (ﺑﻨﻰ), His power (ﺑﻨﻰ)¹⁴ was not found lame toward His will (ﺑﻨﻰ), neither did His power (ﺑﻨﻰ) outdo the goal of His will (ﺑﻨﻰ), but rather, in agreement, as He

3.8.6. In fact, in [His] willing (*volens*) He did not have [His] power lazy for [the carrying out of] that which He wanted, neither did [His] power exceed [His] will (*voluntas*), but rather, according to measure, [a being]

¹³ *Seu*: “God, then, begot (*genuit*), that [*scil.* the fact that He begot] which we... ”.

¹⁴ Frankenberg considers ﺑﻨﻰ the translation of ἰσχύς. I suggest to see in it an attempt to render the Greek ἐνέργεια, a term, along with βουλή (the ﺑﻨﻰ of SR), on which Eunomius insisted in his *Apologia*, distinguishing both from the essence of the divinity. The perfect conformity of the Son to the intents of his begetter, instead, was a widespread theme, not confined to the Heteroousian speculation—it is found, e.g., in Basil of Ancyra (Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion*, 73, 19).

wanted (כָּסַף), thus did He beget (בָּרָא) too, while remaining [the same], in the condition of [His] being (הָיָה, מְאֵלֵהוּ) and without suffering (לֹא הָיָה לוֹ עֲצָבָה).

3.8.7. For, if the bodies, which obey the necessity of thickness, produce the existence (קִיּוּם) of shadows, how much more will we concede to that power (כֹּחַ), [namely to] the being that has not come into existence (לֹא הָיָה לוֹ קִיּוּם), that that only-begotten (יְחִידוֹנִי) which [is] from it comes along (בְּרָא) with him?

3.8.9. Therefore, then, [the Son] is truthfully [and] rightly called ‘begetting’ (בָּרָא): because, in his substance (מַהוּת), he is not Father (אָב).

3.8.10. I remember that Simon criticized the fact that we said that Christ is the Son of God, and accused us of blasphemy¹⁵ [saying]: ‘For, you [pl.] equate God to men and plants’. But you [pl.]

such as He wanted (*voluit*) did He beget (*genuit*) too, while remaining [the same] (*manendo*) [and] not suffering (*patiendo*).

3.8.7. In fact, if the bodies that serve under the necessity of thickness make shadows exist, how much more would we concede that the only-begotten (*unigenitus* / *unigenitum*) is subsequent (*subsequentem*) to the unbegotten power (*ingenita virtus*), since [God’s] will precedes (*voluntate praecedente*)?

3.8.8. As, then, the bodies are pre-known by means of the shadows, thus, and even more, is pre-known also the unbegotten substance [by means of] the begotten [one], even if [the latter] received the fact that it was from the one who was [*scil.* the unbegotten God].

3.8.9. Therefore [the Son] is indeed appropriately called ‘begotten’ (*genitura*), ‘product’ (*factura*) and ‘creature’ (*creatura*), because, as for the substance (*substantia*), he is not an unbegotten [reality] (*ingenitum*).

3.8.10. I remember well that Simon accused us of blasphemy because we would say Christ ‘Son of God’, as though [we were] equating God to men and plants. But you [pl.] hasten to learn willingly.

¹⁵ *Seu*: “and he said a blasphemy about us” (less likely).

hasten to learn with all yourselves.

3.9.5.a. Be it, then, known to you [pl.] that, as it behooved God, [He] begot (ولد) His only-begotten (والمولود) and first-begotten (والمولود الاول) before all creatures.

3.9.6. For, it is not the case that He [*scil.* God] proceeded to the making of Himself and begot Himself. For, He would have not remained impassible and unharmed if He had done this within Himself.

3.9.7. For, these things are impious, [namely] that one thinks about that being that has not come into existence (كأنه لم يولد) like these things [*scil.* in such a way]. For, those impious are in danger who schemed as

3.9.4. It being the case that the unbegotten (*ingenitus*) God is inviolable by itself, He has preserved the operation virginally (*virginaliter*) by [His] will (*voluntate*). That which, instead, is not unbegotten (*ingenitum*) cannot be by itself virgin (*virgo*). In fact, it [*scil.* the Son] was created (*factus est*) induced, so to say, under the effect of the begetter (*genitor*) and creator (*factor*).

3.9.5.a. Be it understood, though, how it behooved God to beget (*generare*) an only-begotten (*unigenitus/unigenitum*) and first-begotten (*primogenitus/primogenitum*) of all the creation,

3.9.5.b. but not as if [He begot him] from something; this [*scil.* being begotten from something], in fact, is the serfdom of the animate and inanimate beings.

3.9.6. But He himself did not beget something of Himself by proceeding to the operation; in fact, produced¹⁶ within himself, He would not remain inviolable and impassible.

3.9.7. These things, [namely] to suspect of the unbegotten, are, instead, full of impiety; truly, the sons of the impious are in danger when, thinking they piously understand, they produce a great blasphemy towards the unbegotten,

¹⁶ *Seu*: “sacrificed”.

though it were right, and [in reality] blaspheme immoderately against the being [that has not come into existence] (ܠܗܘܐ), [by saying] that it is androgynous. I remember that I admonished you [pl.], my brethren, about this, too.

3.10.1. God, then, begot (ܐܠܗ) while being [*scil.* remaining the same] (ܘܡܘܠܗܘܐ ܘܡܘܠܗܘܐ), as it was foresaid. Therefore, [the Son] has been truthfully called ‘only-begotten’ (ܠܗܘܐ ܘܠܗܘܐ)—his essence (ܠܗܘܐ) is in fact from the being [that has not come into existence] (ܠܗܘܐ)—and has been truthfully called ‘Son’ (ܠܗܘܐ)—he was in fact begotten (ܐܠܗ) by the being that has not come into existence (ܠܗܘܐ ܘܠܗܘܐ).

3.10.2. Soothe, then, humbly and gradually that harmful shamelessness of those who dare to distinguish that being [that has not come into existence] (ܠܗܘܐ) solely by means of the name of ‘being’ [that has come into existence (applied to the Son)] (ܠܗܘܐ), and, for that being [that has come into existence, *scil.* the Son] (ܠܗܘܐ), which distinguishes itself with an opposition of name, boast around with the substance (ܠܗܘܐ) of the

deeming Him androgynous. I remember well the one who admonished us, brethren.

3.10.1. God, then, begot (*genuit*), remaining [the same] (*manendo*), [His] will preceding [the Son’s] (*voluntate praecedente*)¹⁸, like it was foresaid. Therefore, [the Son] is truthfully called ‘only-begotten’ (*unigenitus*)—he has, in fact, from the unbegotten (*ingenitus/ingenitum*) the fact that he is—and is truthfully called ‘Son’ (*filius*)—he was born (*natus est*), in fact, from the unborn (*innatus/innatum*).

3.10.2. Soothe, nevertheless, willingly, slowly, and mitigating, the harmful dispute of those who dare to say that the uncreated (*infectus/infectum*) differs for the sole name from the created (*factus/factum*), and to affirm that that which was distinguished against [*scil.* from] the unborn (*innatum*) through the begetting (*genite*) is, as to the substance (*substantia*), unbegotten (*ingenitus/ingenitum*).

¹⁷ Unlike in §§ 3.10.4 and 3.11.3, where ܠܗܘܐ signifies the uncreated essence of the Father, in this case the word simply means the “form of existence” of someone (specifically, the Son). For the twofold meaning of the term in the Syriac Commentary on the *Diatessaron* (yet not in Ephrem’s *Sermones de fide*, where only the sense of “essence [of the Father]” is attested) *cf. supra*, n. 67.

¹⁸ *Seu*: “[His] will coming forth”.

being that has not come into existence (രന്ന രാ രൂര).

3.10.3. <And, if> one says so [scil. that the distinction between the being that has not come into existence and the being that has come into existence is only a nominal one, and they share the same substance], that one [scil. God] is called [with the name of] something that He is not (രൂര ര), and that [same] one is not called [with the name of] something that is [scil. that is such that has not come into existence] (രൂര).

3.10.4. For, [God] is from the essence [that has not come into existence] (¹⁹രൂര) in His substance (രൂര). If, instead, He is called ‘being [that has come into existence]’ (രന്ന), He is insulted, because He is called something that He is not (ര രൂര). All the more, since God is rational (രൂര) from Himself²⁰, and from Himself²¹ without beginning, how is not this [scil. calling Him ‘begotten’] impious?

3.10.5. But, now, it is [not only impious, but] also impossible that one would say—being [He] a being [that has not come into existence] (രൂര) and being rational—that He, for Himself, does not prefer to be in agreement rather than fall

3.10.3. Since, if one says this, certainly that which is said is not, while that which is not said.

3.10.4. [God] is truly an uncreated [reality] (*infectum*) as to the substance (*substantia*), whereas, if He is said [to be] a created thing (*factum*), He is insulted, [being] called that which [in reality] He is not (*quod non est*). On the other hand, above all, being it the case that God is by Himself rational and by Himself without beginning, how would it not be impossible—it is even more impious [to suppose it possible!]

3.10.5. that that which is by itself rational and by itself unbegotten would not want to be conjoined to itself rather than stand the order of duality, [purportedly] considering the begetting more honorable than the unborn perseverance [in the being where there is no

¹⁹ *Cfr. supra*, n. 14.

²⁰ *Seu*: “by Himself”.

²¹ *Seu*: “by Himself”.

into the disorder of duality, since He established that begetting (γεννᾶ) is more honorable than non-begetting (ἄγεννᾶ).

3.10.6. For, He is not one²², neither did He persuade Himself and said: ‘Sit at My right, until I will put your enemies as a stool under your feet’.

3.10.7.a. But neither does He get into contentions within Himself, so that a part of Him would remain a being [that has not come into existence] (ἄγεννητος), and [a part] of Him would be led towards the being [that has come into existence] (γεννητός).

begetting]?

3.10.6. [He], truly, is not one, neither did He order to Himself saying: ‘Sit at My right, until I will put your enemies as a stool under your feet’.

3.10.7.a. But neither does He contend against Himself, as if something of Him would have remained unbegotten (*ingenitum*), while something [else of Himself] would have undergone begetting (*nativitas*),

3.10.7.b. [as if], indeed, [He] also knew²³ and pre-knew that something of Himself is going to be born without a begetting, while something [else], instead, is going to be begotten;

3.10.8. not at all failing to know, evidently, that He was going to be more honorable than Himself, [and] that something [within Himself] would have certainly ordered, while something [else within Himself] would have received the order—that which, for example, was said:

3.10.9. ‘Sit at my right’, but also that which regards the mission, or that by expressing which He would have [purportedly] praised Himself, saying ‘And God saw that they were good

²² While next paragraph seems to attack the ὁμοούσιος, this one seems to be directed against the Sabellian ταυτοούσιος.

²³ This passage appears rather obscure.

things', after that those things, that it is the case that have been created, were created in six days by the only-begotten, seeing [God] His immutable will [translated into] the fulfillments of the divine operation of the only-begotten.

3.11.1. If, therefore, the unbegotten did not become Father or creator of Himself, as we [just] showed [by listing the contradictions imported by this option], how, anyway, would have the one who did not receive begetting and creation, not even as a name, created and begotten something from Himself?

3.11.2.a. Truly, He [*scil.* God] does not have the fact of being through these things [*scil.* through His alleged self-begetting].

3.11.2.b. Now, to say these things about God [*scil.* that He begot Himself] is impious. That impassible, unborn substance of the unbegotten is, indeed, manifest to those who can see even [only] a little.

3.11.2.b. It is a big impiety to say these things about God [*scil.* that He begot Himself]. For, this is clear, and all those who can understand even [only] a little confess the substance (فصله) of the being that has not come into existence (لا يولد له)—that, in the begetting (ولده) that [occurs] from Him, does not suffer.

3.11.3. And if, indeed, not even after the begetting (ولده) did they rise up against each other (مضاد) in disagreement, [even] after having [purportedly] been divided in number—for, He is not the Father of Himself—, how would that being [that has not come into existence]

3.11.3. If, indeed, not even after the begetting (*nativitas*) did the substance (*substantia*) ever rise in contradiction (*ad dissensionem surrexit*), even [being purportedly] divided because of this number—and He is not, in fact, 'autopator', namely father to itself—, how would not rather like to remain in the uncreated harmony

(ܩܕܝܫܐ) by His substance (ܩܕܝܫܐ) not have preferred to remain in the harmony of the essence [that has not come into existence] (ܩܕܝܫܐ) and, by means of begetting (ܩܕܝܫܐ), would have been counted as a duality (ܩܕܝܫܐ)?

3.11.4. Of this foolishness is mother the ignorance that regards God, while its cooperator and sister is that carelessness [about] the Spirit of Holiness,

3.11.5. that which is pawn and custody of those things that were given to us by our Lord—which [pawn] we received not many days after his ascension.

3.11.6. That [*scil.* the Spirit of Holiness] is the seal (ܩܕܝܫܐ) of the only-begotten (ܩܕܝܫܐ) and the exact resemblance (ܩܕܝܫܐ) of his power, as well as the only-begotten and first-begotten Son (ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ), who is before anything, is the exact image (ܩܕܝܫܐ) of the unaltered, of the power that is (ܩܕܝܫܐ) and has not come into existence (ܩܕܝܫܐ), and provides with an exclusive and unaltered image (ܩܕܝܫܐ) and a vision (ܩܕܝܫܐ) of that being that has not come into existence (ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ), making itself visible to the intelligible and to the sensible [beings] as well.

(*innascibilis consensus*) that which was truly unbegotten (*ingenitum*) by substance (*substantia*), [once purportedly] divided in a duality (*dualitas*), instead, by the begetting (*genitura*)?

3.11.4. And, truly, of this incongruence is certainly mother the ignorance about God; [its] cooperator and sister is, instead, the carelessness about the Holy Spirit.

3.11.5. Now, the Holy Spirit, pawn of the custody of those things that were given to us by the Lord—which [pawn] we received not many days after his ascension—,

receives the fact of being from the only-begotten (*unigenitus/unigenitum*), [being] the fullest declaration (*declaratio*) of his [*scil.* the Son's] power. 3.11.6. As the only-begotten and first-begotten (*unigenitus et primogenitus*) of all things is image (*imago*) of the immutable²⁵ unbegotten power (*ingenita virtus*)—that is, the unique image (*imago*), that remains spotless, by being seen offers the vision (*visio*) of the unbegotten (*ingenitus/ingenitum*) to the intelligible and to the sensible [beings]—;

²⁴ Cfr. *supra*, n. 72.

²⁵ *Seu*: “immutable image of the...”.

3.11.7. as, [again], someone who, for example, wants to show the sun or something else to those who cannot see it by themselves—let us assume that those need to see the sun—, moderating to the glances that very necessity, hastens indeed to show the sun through a mirror, and does not make the sun enter the mirror, pulling [the sun] towards himself,

3.11.8. thus, likewise, the only-begotten (*unigenitus*) himself certainly is not unbegotten (*ingenitus*), but shows in himself all the power of the unbegotten (*ingenitus/ingenitum*), being [God] such and so big for godhood (*deitas*).

3.11.8. For, the being that has not come into existence (ἄσῳ ἄν ἄδῳ) is not but the entire power of the [very] being (ἄδῳ) in its essence [that has not come into existence] (²⁶ἄδῳ) and in its godhood (ἄδῳ); and this all shows how it is [*scil.* it is such that has not come into existence] (ἄδῳ).

3.11.9. And [the Son] seemed a being that has not come into existence (ἄν ἄδῳ ἄσῳ) to those who do not inquire diligently, whereas, as for those whose inquiry is preceded by God's fear, not only do they refrain from saying so, but they refrain from thinking [so] as well.

3.11.10. Since, then, one is the being that has not come into existence (ἄν ἄδῳ ἄσῳ), and one is that true begetting (ἄδῳ), it is impossible that that Spirit of Holiness (ἄδῳ ἄδῳ) be called 'Son' (ἄδῳ) or 'first-begotten' (ἄδῳ). It is instead considered, along

3.11.9. [The Son] was alleged [to be] unbegotten (*ingenitus*) by those who did not inquire diligently, while, as for [those] by which God's fear precedes the very inquiry, not only do they refuse to say anything like this, but they refrain from thinking [so] as well.

3.11.10. Since, then, one is the unbegotten (*ingenitus*) and one is the begotten (*genitus*), the Holy Spirit (*spiritus sanctus*) cannot be said 'Son' (*filius*) or 'first-begotten' (*primogenitus*)—it was in fact made by a made one (*factus est enim per factum*)—; it is, instead, considered below (*subconnumeratur*) the Father

²⁶ Cfr. *supra*, n. 18.

with (أب) the Father (أب), and the Son (ابن), as adorned, first seal (الختم) of the power of the second [scil. the Son].

3.11.11. For, also, the Son (ابن) of the Father (أب), His power (سلطان), His likeness (شبهه), and His image (صورة), representation (تمثيل) of His essence [that has not come into existence] (أشياء) in equal will (شأن), appears justly together with Him (أب) as a begetting (ولادة) of the essence [that has not come into existence] (أشياء)."

3.11.12. And, then, he said many things, and other, about the Father and the Son and the Spirit of Holiness, and he instructed us all. And he did not attribute truthfulness, in a matter, from the opinion of the eye to the sense of hearing. Thus we all, upon listening, mourned over men—over how much they erred and turned away from truth.

(*pater*) and the Son (*filius*), as first, perfect sign (*signaculum*) of the power of the second [scil. the Son].

3.11.11. Moreover this one himself [the Son], carrying in image (*imago*), [endowed] with an equally heavy will (*voluntas*), the operation (*operatio*) of the unborn perseverance [in the being where there is no begetting] (*innata perseverantia*) of the Father (*pater*), was justly considered after the unbegotten (*post ingenitum*)".

3.11.12. Saying, then, many other things about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, he instructed us, not less than to judge according to the sight, intimating the understanding to our hearing, so that we all, while listening, mourned over how men moved away from truth.

2.3. THE CONTENTS OF THE INTERPOLATION: THE ΑΥΤΟΠΑΤΩΡ

Our interpolator is pursuing a double agenda²⁷. On the one hand, he is advocating, as we shall see, his anti-Nicene views. On the other hand, he is conducting a battle

²⁷ I will be here making reference to *GR 3.2-11 as a virtual *harmonia* of LR 3.2-11 and SR 3.2-11.

against the αὐτοπάτωρ, viz. the idea of God’s self-begetting²⁸. Throughout this section of the interpolation²⁹ the author contends that, had God begotten Himself, He could not have remained impassible, since two contradictory realities—one begetting and one begotten—would have arisen within Him. Interestingly enough, in one instance (§ 3.11.3) the Trinitarian theme and the preoccupation about the divine αὐτοπατορία get interwoven:

S Y R I A C

3.11.3. And if, indeed, not even after the begetting (ܐܘܬܘܪܐ) did they rise up against each other (ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ) in disagreement, [even] after having [purportedly] been divided in number—for, He is not the Father of Himself—, how would that being [that has not come into existence] (ܕܘܕܥܝܢܐ) by His substance (ܥܘܣܝܐ) not have preferred to remain in the harmony of the essence [that has not come into existence] (ܕܥܘܣܝܐ) and, by means of begetting (ܐܘܬܘܪܐ), would have been counted as a duality (ܕܥܘܣܝܐ ܕܥܘܣܝܐ)?

L A T I N

3.11.3. If, indeed, not even after the begetting (*nativitas*) did the substance (*substantia*) ever rise in contradiction (*ad dissensionem surrexit*), even [being purportedly] divided because of this number—and He is not, in fact, ‘autopator’, namely father to itself—, how would not rather like to remain in the uncreated harmony (*innascibilis consensus*) that which was truly unbegotten (*ingenitum*) by substance (*substantia*), [purportedly] divided in a duality (*dualitas*), instead, by the begetting (*genitura*)?

Those aware of the risks, inherent in the concept of αὐτοπάτωρ, of sundering the divine μονάς, and willing to safeguard the integrity of this unit, should refrain from accepting the Homoousian solution. The ὁμοούσιος, in fact, by predicating an ousia shared by the Father and the Son, necessarily imports a divisive outcome. God, the

²⁸ This notion is repeatedly defended in the Pseudoclementine *Homilies*, and the interpolator’s insistence on its erroneousness must be understood as an intention to correct this view.

²⁹ *Cfr.* §§ 3.9.6, 3.10.7.a and 3.11.1.

reader is told, prefers to remain alone in His substance, and to distinguish the Son's substance from His own.

2.4. THE RELIGIOUS CONTEXT IN EDESSA

The paragraph just quoted draws a connection between the αὐτοπάτωρ and the ὁμοούσιος³⁰. This link might be the result of a rhetorical strategy, aimed at associating Nicaea with the Gnostic heresy³¹.

Thanks to the testimony of Emperor Julian, we learn in fact that in the second half of the fourth century Edessa witnessed a remarkable Valentinian presence. The “Arians”, reveling in their richness, had laid hands upon the followers of Valentinus, committing outrageous acts against them:

But the followers of the Arian church [οἱ δὲ τῆς Ἀρειανικῆς ἐκκλησίας], in the insolence *bred by their wealth*, have attacked the followers of Valentine [τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ Οὐαλεντίνου] and have committed in Edessa such rash acts as could never occur in a well-ordered city. Therefore, since by their most admirable law they are bidden to sell all they have and give to the poor³², that so they may attain more easily to the kingdom of heavens, in order to help those persons in their effort I have ordered that all their funds, namely, that belong to the church of the people of Edessa, be taken over, that they may be given to the soldiers, and that its property be confiscated to my private purse³³.

³⁰ It is interesting to note how the first attestation of both terms is Gnostic. For the first, extra-Trinitarian attestation of ὁμοούσιος in a Valentinian setting *cfr.* ORTIZ DE URBINA 1942. For the Αὐτοπάτωρ as the second figure of the pentad described in the Gnostic *Epistle of Eugnostos* *cfr.* TURNER 2001.

³¹ However, its combination with the presence, in this section, of a polemic against the androgynous conception of the Godhead (§ 3.9.6) suggests not to dismiss *a priori* the hypothesis that *GR—with its multipronged polemical agenda—would have originally contained §§ 3.2-11 as an anti-Gnostic treatise, subsequently remodeled to serve anti-Nicene purposes. This treatise could have either been one of the sources utilized by the final redactor of *Recognitions*, or could have been composed by him.

³² The sarcastic reference is evidently to Lk 18:22.

³³ Julian, *Epistula ad Hecebolium* (Ep. 40). Translation slightly modified from WRIGHT 1923, 127 (italics mine).

Thus, Gnostics at this time were still among the main actors on the lively religious stage of the “Blessed City”, along with other Christian and non-Christian groups mentioned by Ephrem in his *Hymns against the Heretics*: Bardaisanites, Marcionites, Manichaeans, Arians, Sabellians, Photians, Audians, and Messalians³⁴.

But “Arians”, whose violence Julian condemns, were certainly not the only contenders in the Trinitarian controversy who brought strife to the life of the towns of Syria: their Christologically more moderate opponents were no less combative in disputing the authority over the church of the city. To the best of my knowledge, no specific study about the prevalence of one or the other Trinitarian party in fourth-century Edessa or in the cities in close proximity (especially Harran, Mabbog, and Apamea) has ever been carried out. Yet on the basis of Ephrem’s complaint about the silence of the “catholic” Christians in front of the loudness of the “Arians”³⁵, we can assume, with Lange³⁶, that the party sharing the views expressed by Ephrem—described by Lange as close to the Homoiousian second formula of the Synod *in encaeniis* of Antioch (341)³⁷—was a minority in the city. According to the *Chronicle of Edessa*, in the

³⁴ Ephrem, *Hymni contra haereses*, 22, 3-4. Ephrem himself mentions the presence of Gnostics (Valentinians and Quqites). To these groups we must add those representative of local Syrian cults, for which *cfr.* DRIJVERS 1980, and possibly of Greco-Roman religion. On the relationship between Bardaisan and Gnosticism *cfr.* EHLERS 1970. *Cfr.* also Bauer’s judgment: “What persisted as Valentinianism in the areas known to Aphrahat apparently became absorbed in Edessa by the teaching and the community of faith of Bardaisan (translation slightly modified from BAUER 1996 [1934], 30).

³⁵ *Hymni de fide* 60:6: “The true [Christians] became silent while the audacious ones talk about publicly”. *Cit.* in LANGE 2005, 24, n. 82.

³⁶ LANGE 2005, 24.

³⁷ LANGE 2005, 117-119. For the theological significance of the Antiochene creed of 341 *cfr.* SIMONETTI 1975, 153-159. The validity of the creed of Antioch 341 was later reaffirmed in the councils of Serdica 343, Sirmium 351 and Ancyra 358.

year of Ephrem's death the "Catholics"³⁸ had to leave Edessa because of the persecutions of the "Arians"³⁹—an event that testifies to the religious turmoil in the city and to the conflicts between anti-Nicene and (vaguely) pro-Nicene groups.

The Roman power had often a decisive role in orienting the destiny of this sort of "civil war"⁴⁰. During the incumbency of Emperor Valens (364-378), who favored the Homœan attempts at promoting a political yet fundamentally anti-Nicene solution to the Trinitarian conflicts, the "Arians"—more likely Homœans than Heteroousians—are said to have taken over Edessa⁴¹. In 372 the anti-"Arian" Christians of Edessa gathered at the shrine of St. Thomas, outside the walls of the city, under the guide of bishop Barsai, defying the Emperor Valens. A massacre was reportedly prevented by the courage of a woman, and Barsai was exiled⁴².

According to his *Vita*, bishop Rabbula, who was appointed in 411, the same year of the compilation of our first Syriac manuscript, brought back all the "Arians" into communion with the church. This is evidently an indirect clue to the fact that he must have still had his share of problems with the anti-Nicene Christians of the city⁴³.

³⁸ It is highly doubtful that this expression "Catholics" need to be identified with Homoousian.

³⁹ *Chronicon Edessenum*, 31.

⁴⁰ For a conceptualization of the role of the imperial authority in the solution of Christian controversies, intended as conflicts between "interpretive communities" *cfr.* CLARK 2004, 562.

⁴¹ *Cfr.* SEGAL 1970, 90ff..

⁴² *Cfr.* Sozomen, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 6, 18; Theodoretus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 6, 15; Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 6, 17-18.

⁴³ Homœanism and Heteroousianism had a longstanding tradition in Syria. In 357, after the death of bishop Leontius, the radical Eusebian Eudoxius of Germanicia ascended to the see of Antioch. He called back from Egypt Aëtius (originally elected deacon by Leontius but then exiled), who brought with him his disciple Eunomius. Eudoxius, Aëtius and Eunomius were later exiled by decision of the Homoiousian council of Sirmium of 358, summoned by the Emperor Constantius II. The Homœan reaction was led by Mark of Arethusa, George of Alexandria, and Acacius of Caesarea, who convoked a council at Sirmium in

In sum, the fresco depicted by the sources confirms Walter Bauer's observation that in fourth-century Edessa multiple competing Christian communities existed⁴⁴.

2.5. THE CONTENTS OF THE INTERPOLATION: THE ANTI-NICENE VIEWS

In SR 3.2-11, an exigency of correction of the anti-Nicene peaks still found in the corresponding Latin section is evident. The author of SR produced his translation, as seen, at a time of tense factional struggles among the different Christian groups that populated Edessa. It is possible to imagine the group of which the Pseudoclementine corpus was representative as a residual minority on the stage of Edessene Christianity⁴⁵. In fact, judging by what happened in the rest of the Christian East, the main battle in Edessa must have been fought within the Eusebian field, between moderates (Homoiousians), radicals (Heteroousians), and the Homœan party, which represented a posture of political compromise.

Assuming that our translator belonged to the milieu sharing the theological views of the book that he was rendering into Syriac, we must suppose that he would have

359. In Antioch Aëtius enjoyed the favor of the Caesar Constantius Gallus, first cousin of Constantius II, and reportedly reduced to silence Basil of Ancyra and Eustathius of Sebaste during a dispute. On these events *cfr.* SIMONETTI 1975, 229ff., and WILLIAMS 2001, 158-167. Isabella Sandwell, in her *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity*, provides an interesting reconstruction of the overall religious situation in fourth-century Antioch, but her overview of the events of the Trinitarian controversy in the city (SANDWELL 2007, 45-46) is disappointing.

⁴⁴ BAUER 1996 [1934], 1-43.

⁴⁵ On the disappearance of Jewish Christianity in the fourth century *cfr.* Daniel Boyarin's *Dying for God*, where he writes (BOYARIN 1999, 6): "It was the birth of the hegemonic Catholic Church, however, that seems finally to have precipitated the consolidation of rabbinic Judaism as Jewish orthodoxy, with all its rivals, including the so-called Jewish Christianities, apparently largely vanquished". For a radical denial of any usefulness to the very category of Jewish Christianity *cfr.* now BOYARIN 2009.

tried to make his translation acceptable to the broadest possible audience. In order to do so, he would have eliminated from the interpolation the most outspoken theological and terminological peaks that would have been commonly perceived as “Arian” (or “Anomœan”⁴⁶), while also trying to avoid turning the text into an anti-“Arian” treatise. The common ground he would have sought would have prevented the proponents of the ὁμοιούσιος from rejecting his translation, but could have still been seen by the theologians most distant from the Nicene perspective as not directly contradicting their beliefs. Over the next pages I will produce some evidence, out of the greater amount available, to support this claim while analyzing our text⁴⁷.

2.6. ANALYSIS OF SELECT PASSAGES FROM THE TEXT

Several paragraphs into the interpolation (§§ 3.7.2-3), after having discussed various topics, from the nature of the *principalities* (*rēšānwātā*; *principia*) to God’s self-

⁴⁶ The term “Anomœan” is first attested in Athanasius, *De Synodis*, 31. For a contemporary opposition to its scholarly use, as well as to that of the label “neo-Arians” *cfr.* AYRES 2004, 145. For evidence of historical connections between Heteroousians and “Collucianists” *cfr.* Philostorgius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 3, 15 (*cit.* in SIMONETTI 1975, 229). For evidence of knowledge of Arius’ *Epistula ad Alexandrum Alexandrinum* on the part of Eunomius *cfr.* his *Apologia*, 21 (parallel mentioned in SIMONETTI 1975, 254, n. 3).

⁴⁷ The analysis here unfolded only stands to reason if the premise is valid that S and L were working on the same interpolated Greek *recensio* of the text. At any rate, in the absence of any evidence pointing to the contrary, I will happily content myself with abiding by Ockham’s razor, deciding that *recensiones non sunt multiplicandae praeter necessitatem*. One could theoretically hypothesize that the Syriac translator rendered the Greek faithfully, whereas the Latin translator interpolated the text with anti-Nicene statements. Rufinus’ refusal to translate these chapters, however, provides a sound counter-argument. In addition, the presence, in SR, of the passages attending to the exposition of the divine ἀγεννησία, *per se* harmless for the moderate Eusebian front, can be hardly explained without assuming their being aimed, in the Greek model, at the demonstration, in Eunomian terms, of the ontological chasm subsisting between the Father and the Son, which we still witness in LR. Schwartz expressed himself in favor of the hypothesis that LR 3.2-11 contains the original virtually throughout and that the Syriac translator thoroughly revised (SCHWARTZ 1935, 154).

knowledge, Peter detects in his audience an interest in hearing about the “being that has not come into existence”. Following an apophatic introduction about the danger of any discourse about God, the doctrinal demonstration begins:

S Y R I A C

3.7.4. He is, then, the being that has not come into existence (ܟܳܘܳܡ ܕܳܢ ܟܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܗ), and it is not by a simple name [only] that he is honored. For, he is also without beginning. That one without beginning and that being that has not come into existence (ܟܳܘܳܡ ܕܳܢ ܟܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܗ), who is God, is glorified by those who have come to existence [scil. the creatures] (ܟܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܗ) only within the limits of [His] fame [scil. of the notion they have of Him], while by Himself He is [fully] understood.

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3.7.4. That which is unbegotten (*ingenitum*) must not be honored with a sole name: He is, indeed, also without beginning. Now, this [reality] without beginning and unbegotten (*ingenitum*) is God, which [reality] by the sole notion of those who have been made (*facta*) is announced [only], while it is [fully] understood by Him.

In these lines the theological *leitmotif* of the text, the definition of God as *'ityā d-lā hwā* (“being that has not come into existence”) in SR and as *ingenitus* (“unbegotten”) in LR, is already clearly laid down. This definition interacts, in the Syriac text, with a terminological distinction, repeated throughout this long section, between two dichotomous ontological dimensions: the one of the “being that has not come into existence”, marked by the existential particle *'it* and the noun *'ityā*, and the one of the “being that has come into existence”, expressed by SR with the root *hwā*⁴⁸. The Syriac

⁴⁸ The inventive periphrasis that the translator elaborated, while evidently attributing a technical meaning of somewhat defective being to the verb ܟܳܘܳܡ (“to come to existence”), if considered in its isolation does not clarify whether the expression ܟܳܘܳܡ ܕܳܢ (“that has not come into existence”) is meant to specify ܟܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܗ (“being”) in a determined sense, so that ܟܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܗ would convey the meaning of a generic kind of being, or to express an opposition to it, so that ܟܳܘܳܠܳܘܳܟܳܘܳܬܳܗ would come to signify the ontological

translator may have found this ontological opposition already terminologically marked in GR, possibly in the form of the verbal couple εἶμι / γίγνομαι⁴⁹.

Many different expressions correspond, in LR, to the phrase 'ityā d-lā hwā (“being that has not come into existence”⁵⁰). The presence of the Greek term ἀγέννητος behind these Latin occurrences can be hypothesized, and it must be noticed that οὐσία ἀγέννητος was, according to Basil of Caesarea, the designation employed by Eunomius of Cyzicus to refer to God⁵¹. We may be witnessing here a creative effort, on the part of the author of SR, to seek out a suitable rendering for this Greek theological term—a task thus far not undertaken by any other Syriac author.

It can be supposed that our text is part of a broader intellectual endeavor, which would have taken place in the fourth century, to shape a more technically defined theological language in Syriac. It can be recalled that Aphrahat refers to God as 'ityā d-naphšeh (“essence of itself”, “being of Himself”, or “being [owing His existence to]

dimension of fullest being. The doubt is dissipated in the last paragraphs of the section. Here SR, in correspondence to the Latin *ingenitus* and *infectus*, arguably denouncing the presence of ἀγέννητος in the Greek original, features the bare ܠܘܠܐ, alternating with ܠܘܠܐ ܘܠܐܝܢܐ, seemingly with the same exact value. After having familiarized us, through the use of ܠܘܠܐ ܘܠܐܝܢܐ, with the meaning of ܠܘܠܐ, SR began to use the word in a more technical sense, to signify a “being that has not come into existence”.

⁴⁹ Any such proposal, however, seems bound to remain speculative.

⁵⁰ Sixteen times we find *ingenitus* (“unbegotten”); once we encounter the term *infectum* (translatable as “not come to existence”, if taken to derive from *fiō*); and once *innatus* (“unborn”). In all eighteen cases, LR uses only one word. The more articulated *quod erat ingenitum* (“that which was unbegotten”) and *quod infectum est* (“that which has not come to existence”) do occur, but never in correspondence to the expression ܠܘܠܐ ܘܠܐܝܢܐ.

⁵¹ Basil of Caesarea, *Adversus Eunomium*, PG 29, 517b. It must here be noticed that both Aëtius and Eunomius consistently made use of ἀγέννητος (as opposed to ἀγέννητος) for “unbegotten”.

Himself”⁵², and that Ephrem polemicized against the Bardaisanian use of the word ’ityā as expressing any of the four, and later five, cosmological elements. In Ephrem’s *Sermones de fide* the term is exclusively used to describe the “self-existing being” of the Father⁵³.

It is now worth quoting additional paragraphs from the interpolation:

S Y R I A C

3.8.1. Thus, that God who is without beginning begot (ܐܠܗܐ) His first-begotten Son (ܐܘܘܢܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ) before all creatures as it behooves God: unaltered, unchanged, undivided, not flowing and not lacking anything. [...]

L A T I N

3.8.1. The one, then, who did not begin to be, the aforementioned God, begot (*genuit*) the first-begotten (*primogenitus*) of all the creation as it behooved God: not altering Himself, not converting Himself, not dividing Himself, not flowing, not extending anything. [...]

3.8.3. God, then, begot (*genuit*) that which we⁵⁴ learned to call also ‘creation’ (*factura*). To call then this very [reality] ‘begetting’ (*genitura*) and ‘creation’ (*factura*) and [by] other such terms allows to consider a model of begetter (*genitor*) that which happens to be shapeless (*sine schemate*).

3.8.4. By those, in fact, who have a difference of shapes (*schemata*) it is necessary to distinguish a generation (*genitura*) and a creation (*factura*).

⁵² Aphrahat, *Demonstrations*, 23, 52: “In you [*scil.* Christ] we praise the essence of itself [*seu:* being of Himself] (ܡܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ), Him who has separated you from His [uncreated] essence (ܐܘܘܢܐ ܕܥܝܠܘܬܐ) and has sent you to us”.

⁵³ *Cfr.* Ephrem, *Sermones de fide*, 1, 115, *cit.* in LANGE 2005, 100.

⁵⁴ *Seu:* “God, then, begot (*genuit*), that [*scil.* the fact that He begot] which we... ”.

We read in §§ 3.8.3-4, only found in LR, the blunt identification of creation and begetting, which was already in Arius' *Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia*, and was generally justified based on the account of the creation of Wisdom in *Proverbs* 8:22. The content of § 3.8.1 patently originates from the idea, attributed to Arius, that any form of generation other than creation amounts to an impersonal procession—hence the reference to the flux⁵⁵. Nevertheless, this content is certainly still acceptable from a Homoiousian standpoint: even the partisans of Nicaea rejected the allegations, made by their opponents, that they forwarded a theological divisionism, and rather they spoke of a generation occurring without alteration. This is arguably the reason why the paragraph has been kept in the Syriac, whereas the paragraphs 3.8.3-4, presenting *theologoumena* and terminology perceived as overtly “Arian”, have been left out.

We witness the same *modus operandi* on the part of the author of SR a few lines later:

S Y R I A C

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⁵⁵ Arius had insisted (*Epistula ad Eusebium Nicomediensem*, 3) that the Son is not generated by emanation (προβολή) nor by efflux (ἀπόρροια) from the Father, but rather impassibly, and had attributed (*Epistula ad Alexandrum Alexandrinum*, 5) the concept of the προβολή to Valentinus and Mani. Already Origen (*De principiis* 1, 2, 6; 4, 4, 1) had rejected the Gnostic use of προβολή as describing a generation of the animal sort. This opposition represents an element of continuity between Arius and the later, Heteroousian theologians. According to Hilary of Poitiers (*Contra Constantium*, 13) Eudoxius, in an Antiochene sermon, would have denied the real generation of the Son, by describing divine generation in the following, hyperbolic terms: “Erat deus, quod est. Pater non erat, quia neque ei Filius: nam si filius, necesse est ut et femina sit, et colloquium, et sermocinatio, et coniunctio coniugalis verbi, et blandimentum, et postremum ad generandum naturalis machinula”. Eunomius’ insistence on the lack of flux in the generation of the Son is attested in Eunomius, *Apologia*, 17 and in Basil of Caesarea, *Adversus Eunomium*, 3, 2, 52.

3.8.5.b. That which is [*scil.* that which comes to existence through this begetting, namely the Son] is not more honorable than God and than this unbegotten [that God is] (*ingenitus/ingenitum*), because [God] is not like the begotten (*genitum*).

God did not suffer any division, and persevered within His being during the generation of the Son. These notions are, as just seen, reconcilable with a Homoiousian perspective (and even with a Homoousian one). Thus, the sentence expressing them has been spared by the pen of the Syriac translator. But § 3.8.5.b contained two dangerous affirmations. First, the assertion that the Son is *not more* honorable than God, which must have sounded perilously close to calling him *less* honorable than Him—that is, to an expression of outright subordinationism. Second, and more important, the statement that God is not like (*non es[se] velut*) the begotten, which is more radically anti-Nicene than anything ever written by Eunomius or Aëtius⁵⁶, and which nobody but a Heteroousian could have heard untroubled. For these reasons the paragraph does not show up in SR.

A few lines later we find one more instance of the Syriac translator’s way of proceeding:

S Y R I A C

3.8.7. For, if the bodies, which obey the necessity of thickness,

L A T I N

3.8.7. In fact, if the bodies that serve under the

⁵⁶ These two, in fact, contented themselves with defining the Son ἀνόμοιος to God *according to the substance*. The expression found in our text, which, with its omission of this complement of limitation, appears like an *unicum* in fourth-century Heteroousian literature, is certainly worth of some attention.

produce the existence of shadows, how much more will we concede to that power (ܫܠܐ), [namely to] the being that has not come into existence (ܟܥܡ ܕܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܝܢ), that that only-begotten (ܟܥܡܝܢܐ) which [is] from it be conjoined (ܕܡܝܚܐ) to it?

necessity of thickness make shadows exist, how much more would we concede that the only-begotten (*unigenitus / unigenitum*) is subsequent (*subsequentem*) to the unbegotten power (*ingenita virtus*), since [God's] will precedes (*voluntate praecedente*)?

The affirmation, contained in LR, that the Son is “subsequent” (*subsequen[s]*) to the Father does not necessarily express a chronological subordinationism à la Arius or Eunomius⁵⁷. Nonetheless, the terminology of subordination that was behind that word in the Greek model must have sounded to the translator too compromised by “Arianism” and Heteroousianism, and he decided to neutralize it by means of a skillful linguistic device. In SR we find, in fact, a verb as ambiguous as ܕܡܝܚܐ, meaning both “to accompany” and “to follow”, and accordingly allowing for as wide a range of readings as the perspectives competing in the Trinitarian controversy.

In the following clause, the mention of the role of God’s will in the begetting of the Son must have appeared problematic to the Syriac translator. Although the notion of the deliberate generation of the Son on the part of the Father was a common idea throughout the II and III centuries⁵⁸, since Arius’ letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia it was

⁵⁷ The expression is indeed perfectly reconcilable with a moderate Origenist subordinationism, such as that of Alexander of Alexandria.

⁵⁸ It is found, e.g., in Tatian, *Oratio ad Græcos*, 5, and in Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean*, 6, 3.

heavily characterized in an “Arian” (and, later, Heteroousian) sense⁵⁹. In addition, the mention of the *priority* of God’s will to the generation of the Son⁶⁰, found in our text, marks a chronological distinction between the Son and the Father, making the coeternality of the two impossible⁶¹. These two ideas—the involvement of God’s will in the generation of the Son and its priority to it—must have advised the author of SR to censor this sentence.

Another instance of such amend-and-suppress strategy is provided in the following paragraph:

S Y R I A C

3.8.9. Therefore, then, [the Son] is truthfully [and] rightly called [with the term] ‘begetting’ (ܩܠܐ): because, in his substance (ܩܘܒܘܠܐ), he is not Father (ܩܘܪܐ).

L A T I N

3.8.9. Therefore [the Son] is indeed appropriately called ‘begotten’ (*genitura*), ‘product’ (*factura*) and ‘creature’ (*creatura*), because, as for the substance (*substantia*), he is not an unbegotten [reality] (*ingenitum*).

Behind the Latin *genitura*, *factura* and *creatura* the Greek series γέννημα, πόημα and κτίσμα may be imagined. We can easily understand why our Syriac translator readily

⁵⁹ In his *Epistula ad Eusebium Nicomediensem*, 4, Arius insisted, for subordinationist purposes, on considering the Son begotten by God’s will and counsel (θελήματι καὶ βουλή). In Aëtius’ *Syntagmaton*, 5, we read that “that which was generated was not generated by splitting of essence, but rather He posited it by [His] authority (ἐξουσία)”. The expression “by authority” (ἐξουσία) is repeated two paragraphs further (*ibid.*, 7).

⁶⁰ This is, most likely, also the sense of the absolute ablative *voluntate praecedente* found in LR § 3.10.1, whose content has been suppressed, for the same reasons, in the parallel Syriac paragraph.

⁶¹ Already the Fathers at the Council of Nicaea had rejected the “Arian” position expressed by the formula ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, καὶ πρὶν γενεθῆναι οὐκ ἦν (“there was a time when he [*scil.* the Son] did not exist, and before he was created he did not exist”) by anathematizing its proponents.

omitted the second and the third terms, so compromised by Heteroousian theology⁶². But the strategy deployed here is more refined than one of mere suppression. After having faithfully rendered γέννημα (“begotten”) with ܠܕܐ, our translator plays with the latter’s extensive meaning of “child” and “son”. It is with this signified, rather than with that of “begotten”, that he artfully builds a correlation. Thus, he writes ܐܒܐ (“Father”) where LR has *ingenitum* (“unbegotten”), and where the Greek presented, in all likelihood, ἀγέννητος. The opposition of identities between the Son and the Father is *per se* innocuous for the advocates of the ὁμοιούσιος, who—like most Homoousians—considered the Sabellian *υἰοπατορία*, the identity of the Father and the Son, a heretical aberration⁶³. But Basil of Ancyra, the inspirer of Homoiousian theology, had condemned the Heteroousian use of the terms “begotten” and “unbegotten” because of its failure to express the relation of mutual interdependence expressed by the couple “Father” and “Son”⁶⁴. Thus, this contraposition, especially when explicitly connected to a difference in the substance (ܘܚܘܘܒܐ), would have sounded suspicious to the proponents of the similarity of the Father and the Son as to the substance⁶⁵. Once again, it should be noticed, the dull rendering of SR, inoffensive for the defenders of the ὁμοιούσιος, can be lightheartedly agreed upon by Eusebian radicals as well.

⁶² *Cfr.* Eunomius, *Apologia*, 17-18, where the Son is described as κτίσμα. In *Apologia*, 15 the Son is called γεννηθεὶς καὶ κτισθεὶς.

⁶³ The term *υἰοπάτωρ* appears, as a polemical target, in Arius, *Epistula ad Alexandrum Alexandrinum*, 7, as well as in Basil of Caesarea, *De ecclesiastica theologia*, 1, 1. It is unknown whether Sabellius ever actually utilized it. The identification of ὁμοούσιος and ταυτοούσιος is found in the Synodal letter of the Homoiousian council of Ancyra (358).

⁶⁴ Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion*, 73, 14.19.20.

⁶⁵ The argument that the Father, being unbegotten, cannot be similar according to the substance to the begotten Son is also found in the writings of Homœan authors. *Cfr.* SIMONETTI 1975, 267.

One last example of censorship, this time pursued through crude suppression, is offered by § 3.9.5:

S Y R I A C

3.9.5.a. Be it, then, known to you [pl.] that, as it behooved God, [He] begot (ܐܠܗ) His only-begotten (ܐܘܢܝܘܢܝܘܬܝܢܐ) and first-begotten (ܐܘܢܝܘܢܝܘܬܝܢܐ ܕܐܘܪܝܢܐ) before all creatures.

L A T I N

3.9.5.a. Be it understood, though, how it behooved God to beget (*generare*) an only-begotten (*unigenitus/unigenitum*) and first-begotten (*primogenitus / primogenitum*) of all the creation,
3.9.5.b. but not as if [He begot him] from something: this [*scil.* being begotten from something], in fact, is the serfdom of the animate and inanimate beings.

Here the doctrine of the *creatio ex nihilo* of the Son, already contained in Arius' letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia and contrasted by all theological fronts other than Homœans⁶⁶ and Heteroousians, is expurgated in SR.

2.7. CONCLUSION

In the previous pages I outlined a possible reading of SR as the product of a strategy of theological accommodation, and also of a quest for a common ground between Heteroousians and Homoiousians on the part of a translator belonging to a different group.

⁶⁶ It must be noticed how the Homœan party, at least in some of its champions, had found a way to exculpate itself from the charge of espousing the *creatio ex nihilo* while still fundamentally upholding it: according to Hilary of Poitiers (*Fragmenta Historica*, 10, 3) Valens of Mursa would have explained that Christ had not been begotten *ex nihilo*, but rather from God, in the sense in which he had come into existence by God's will.

However, the backwardness of the research on this interpolation⁶⁷ allows and requires that many different proposals be advanced and verified. The interpolation may even become the key for the formulation of hypotheses about the redaction, circulation, and transmission of the book that hosts it—even in its original, Greek form.

Scholarship on the Pseudoclementine literature in the last decades has shown a shift from a source-critical to a redaction-critical approach, which has brought the focus onto the rationale behind the operation performed by the final, fourth-century redactor through his use and appropriation of ancient sources of Jewish-Christian and other origins⁶⁸. A contextual understanding of this undertaking is needed. *Recognitions*, as Nicole Kelley puts it, “was constructed in the midst of an intensely competitive and diverse religious marketplace”⁶⁹.

It seems safe to assume that in the fourth century the name of “Christians” was not yet undisputed property of the community of the “Catholics”, or even of those groups involved in the Trinitarian discussions. Ephrem, in fact, still bemoans his group being referred to as “Palutians” (*paluṭāye*), after bishop Paluṭ, whose figure is shrouded in legend, and not as “Christians”⁷⁰. Unless one wishes to apply a retroactive reading on the reality of the time, all the groups claiming the name of “Christians”—possibly

⁶⁷ To my knowledge, no specific essay has ever been devoted to it.

⁶⁸ For a critique of the traditional conception of the *Pseudoclementines* as a mere repository of early Christian materials *cfr.* KELLEY 2005, 318ff., and KELLEY 2006, *part.* pp. 1-6; for an example of this new scholarly attitude towards the Pseudoclementine corpus *cfr.* REED 2003, 203ff. On the *Pseudoclementines* as an instance of “recollection, interpretation, re-contextualization, and selective preservation” (REED 2008, 173) of the “past”, and as an at least partly aware historiographic enterprise *cfr.* REED 2008, *part.* pp. 208-216.

⁶⁹ KELLEY 2005, 344.

⁷⁰ Ephrem, *Hymnes contra Haereses*, 22, 5.

including the majority of those heretical congregations scorned by Ephrem—must be considered characters in the picture that we call “Edessene Christianity”.

From this viewpoint, the ongoing warfare between Valentinians and Heteroousians may be understood as an instance of intra-ecclesial conflict. To be sure, this is not to say that the distance—measured in “steps away” from communion, or in perceived obstacles to it— between Ephrem and Heteroousians was the same as between the latter and Bardaisanites. It is to say, however, that the abovementioned strife between Valentinians and “Arians” was part of a broader interplay involving many subjects. This interplay, we must assume, will have affected—and will have been affected by— other interactions within that same “Christian” context. It is in such a perspective of interconnectedness, to go back to our text, that it makes sense to frame the questions respectively posed by the anti-Gnostic themes of the *Recognitions*; the Jewish-Christian origin of the novel; its conceivable Heteroousian use; and its Syriac translation, which is ostensibly amenable, for strategic reasons, to more moderate Trinitarian persuasions.

In this context, the Heteroousian faction—this is, of course, only one of the possibilities—might have seen in the novel a tool for self-legitimization through the claim of apostolic authority—on the model of what has been ascertained about the “Arian” character of the final redaction of the *Apostolic Constitutions*⁷¹. If this hypothesis

⁷¹ *Cfr.* KOPECK 1985. In her essay *Reading Practices and Christian Identities*, Elizabeth Clark, while testing the validity and assessing the limits of Stanley Fish’s notion of “interpretive communities” (*cfr.* FISH 1980, *passim*) on the terrain of early Christianity, shows how “Christian authors of the first few centuries CE attempted to create textual communities by appealing to earlier texts as ‘authoritative’ for their own later era”; here, she explains, “readers are determinative in establishing the text’s meaning and authority in a new setting” (CLARK 2004, 557). Although the focus of Clark’s examination passes from the

were correct, then the non-“Arian” character of SR, when read in the light of the fact that beliefs dubbed as “Arian” by their opponents were diffused among the Edessene elite, should raise more questions about the social circulation of the *Recognitions*: To what extent had bilingualism penetrated the lower layers of the Syriac society? What were the relations between language spoken, social status, and religious allegiance in the Edessene church?

These and similar questions are material for another study. What I hope to have shown is that a strategy must have guided the Syriac translator in his work, and that the pinpointing of this strategy can take us nearer to answering, with regard to the author of SR, the questions asked by Nicole Kelley about the redactor of its Greek model: “Where did he live? What social and religious concerns did he have [...]? How did he identify himself, and what forces might have challenged or competed with that self-identification?”⁷²

practice of quoting the Scriptures to that of citing early Fathers (sections iii and iv, 558-568), the cogency of her analysis can be extended to the appropriation of apostolic legacies as well.

⁷² KELLEY 2005, 342.

3. “OLDER AND PRIOR IN CONCEPTION TO CREATURES”.

MODELS OF SALVIFIC MEDIATION IN APHRAHAT’S *DEMONSTRATION* 17

3.1. THE SEVENTEENTH *DEMONSTRATION*

In his paper on the Christology of Aphrahat’s 17th *Demonstration* published in 1992¹, W. Petersen denounced scholars’ systematic attempts, pursued through different strategies, at the posthumous orthodoxization of the theological views of the Persian

¹ *Cfr.* PETERSEN 1992. To be sure, Petersen’s treatment of this *Demonstration* leaves a lot to be desired. For him, “[t]aken at face value”, the text’s “Christology is subordinationist” (*ibid.*, 244), a term which, he explains in a note, “seems more appropriate than ‘adoptionist’ because other passages (e.g., Dem. I.8) make it clear that Aphrahat regards the Christ as preexistent” (*ibid.*, 259, n. 23). In his view “[t]he discontinuity between, on the one hand, the subordinationist Christology apparently present in the 17th Dem. and, on the other hand, Aphrahat’s post-Nicene date and his reputation for orthodoxy, is the dilemma confounding later Christian scholars” (*ibid.*, 244). The scholar then surveys three different types of gambits performed in order to elude the question posed by the allegedly subordinationist Christology displayed by the *Demonstration*: a) acknowledgment of “Aphrahat’s Semitic world view” but subsequent incoherent assertion of “his theological orthodoxy” (*ibid.*, 245), with the corollary of the Persian Sage’s production, in the *Demonstration*, of an “*argumentum ad hominem*” against the Jews, not corresponding to his actual theological views. This ploy can be found, according to Petersen, in ANTONELLI 1756, iii-iv (*cit. ibid.*, 252, n. 15), ORTIZ DE URBINA 1933, 68 (*cit. ibid.*, 245), and, more mildly, in BRUNS 1990, 124 (*cit. ibid.*, 253, n. 31); b) denial of “the presence of Semitic elements in Aphrahat’s thought” (*ibid.*, 245) and affirmation of his orthodoxy—a strategy that he detects in HUDAL 1911, 487; c) completely ignoring the problem—a behavior that he attributes to PIERRE 1988, t. I, 33-202 (*cit. ibid.*, 253, n. 35). I would here like to remark that the “*ad hominem*-argument argument”, one recurrent in literary analysis of ancient texts, would deserve a more complete and theoretically better framed treatment than reserved to it by Petersen (let alone by Ortiz de Urbina). As a possible starting point for a discussion *cfr.* the words of KING 2008, 29-30: “[A]ppeal to authorship sometimes appears only as a modern strategy whose aim is to freeze a monological reading of a text as its one true meaning by extracting it from the flow of history. [...] Rather, a text’s inscribed goals and strategies (including its depiction of ‘heretical others’) are better considered as reliable historical evidence of a particular positionality within a dialogical complex of voices that shift over time and place. [...] [W]hat they [= authors] tell us (i.e., what the evidence is evidence of) cannot be assessed without understanding each work’s particular discursive goals and strategies, as well as its carefully constructed theology and social-historical positionality”.

Sage². Petersen identified the forerunner of this approach in Gennadius of Marseilles, who, in his *De viris inlustribus*, added to the Latin translation of the alleged original title of the text (*De Christo quod filius Dei sit*) the words “*et consubstantiali Patri*”³.

In this *Demonstration* Aphrahat laments that the Jews, making use of biblical testimonies attesting the uniqueness of God, blaspheme against “the people that [comes] from the peoples”, accusing it of worshiping and divinizing a man [§1]. After having listed a long series of Christological designations which can be rightly applied to Jesus, Aphrahat moves on to demonstrate that Jesus is Son of God and God from God. In the Bible, he explains, Godhood and association with God are predicated of the righteous, of the men with whom God was well pleased (among whom Moses), and of the people of Israel [§3-4]. The designation of “son” has been applied to Salomon and, again, to Israel [§4]. God also has other names (such as *’Ahyah ’ašar ’ahyah*⁴, *’Elšaddai*, and *’Adonai Šba’ot*), which—the implication seems to be—He did not share with humanity

² Petersen’s thesis is that “Aphrahat’s argument is congruent with earlier subordinationist traditions” (*ibid.*, 246). “Aphrahat’s mind moved in the ambit of Semitic—specifically Judaic—Christianity”, and “his Christology was essentially Judaic Christian” (*ibid.*, 250). “Aphrahat’s Christology can be called a ‘unicum’ only when viewed from a perspective which presupposes Hellenistic, Nicene theology as normative, and which casts a blind eye on earlier sources” (*ibid.*, 250-251). “Aphrahat’s Christology”, Petersen notes with an incisive and well-taken stand on dynamics of orthodoxy and heresy, “is an ‘orthodox’—that is, ‘normative’—Judaic-Christian Christology” (*ibid.*, 250). Some words may be spent on Petersen’s misleading use of the word “subordinationism”, for him a synonym, when it comes to Christologies, of “Jewish-Christian”. In fact, speaking of subordination as a theological option (as opposed to: as simple “physiology”) is only possible within a pattern of Logos Christology, that is to say an understanding of the Son as transcending human creaturalness—even that of an elect man visited by the spirit. Looking for cognate Christological patterns for the Pseudo-Clementine doctrine of the True Prophet within the field of Alexandrian Logos Christology, and then rejecting this parallel only because of an extrinsic reason as the different theological vocabulary (“essentially functional, titular” the former; “quintessentially philosophical” the latter: *ibid.*, 250), reveals a misunderstanding of the gap between the moving premises of these two theological vectors.

³ RICHARDSON 1896, 61 (*cit.* in PETERSEN 1992, 242).

⁴ Ex. 3, 14.

[§5]. He did bestow upon humans, however, His names expressing kingship, fatherhood, sovereignty, and veneration [§5-6]⁵.

Aphrahat notes then a contradiction between two affirmations made by God: that creatures dwell in Him and that He dwells among them. In order to solve this riddle, the Syriac writer engages in a long and seemingly digressive exposition about Adam's generation on God's part. I will now quote from my translation of *Dem.* 17 found in "Appendix I", while further breaking down chapter 7 into paragraphs of varying length by means of letters.

[7] ^a And how shall it be understood by you that a prophet said: "Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place" and another said: "I shall dwell among them and I shall walk among them"? First He has become for us a dwelling place, and then He has dwelt and walked among us. And for the wise both [things] are true and plain. For, David says: "Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place for all generations, before mounts were conceived, the earth brought forth, and the universe was constituted". And you know, my dear, that all the creatures above and below have been created first, and, at the end of them all, the human being. ^b For, when God considered to create the world with all its adornments, first He conceived and depicted Adam within His mind, and, after Adam had been conceived in His thought, then He conceived the creatures, as He said: "Before mounts were conceived and the earth brought forth [its] generation". For, the human being is older and prior in conception to creatures, and in generation creatures are older and prior to Adam. ^c Adam was conceived and dwelt in God's thought. ^d And, while [Adam] was withheld in His intellect during the conception, He created with the word of His mouth all the creatures. ^e And when He finished and adorned the world, as nothing was missing in it, then He generated Adam from His thought. ^f And He molded the human being with His hands. And Adam saw the world [fully] constituted. ^g And He gave him authority over everything He had made, in the way in which a man having a son for whom he wants to make a wedding would get for him a woman, would build for him a house, would prepare and adorn everything necessary for his son, and then would make the wedding and give his son authority over his house. And after the conception of Adam He generated him

⁵ For a general overview of the catechetical theme of the divine names in early Christian literature *cfr.* DOBSCHÜTZ 1911, 242-246 (where also Aphrahat is dealt with); and BURN 1905, xxxix *seq.* (both *cit.* in ORBE 1958, 96, n. 93).

and gave him authority over His whole Creation.^h On this regard the prophet said: “Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place for all generations, before mountains were conceived, the earth brought forth, and the universe was constituted. And you are the Lord from eternity until eternity”. Lest anyone believe that there is another god before or after, He said: “From eternity to eternity”, like Isaiah said: “I am the first and I am the last”⁶.ⁱ And after God had generated Adam from within His thought He molded him and insufflated from His spirit into him, and He gave [him] knowledge of distinction, in order for him to distinguish good from evil and to know that God had made him.^j And, through the fact that he knew his maker, God was depicted and conceived within the thought of the human being, and he became a temple for God, his maker, as it is written: “You are the Lord’s temple”. And He said: “I shall dwell among them and I shall walk among them”. However, as for the human beings who do not know their maker, He is not depicted within them, does not dwell in them, and is not conceived in their thought, but rather they are considered like a beast before Him, and like the remainder of creatures.

[8] Now, by these things the stubborn will be persuaded of the fact that it is not strange that we call the Messiah “Son of God”, because, lo, He has conceived all human beings and has begotten them from His thought. And they will be admonished that also the name of the divinity is upon him, because He has imposed it also upon His righteous, in God’s name.

3.2. THE WITHHOLDING OF ADAM

This lengthy and central section of the text, given its content, amplitude, and seeming repetitiousness, appears at first blush rather gratuitous in the economy of the *Demonstration*, and irrelevant to its purpose of proving Christ’s divine sonship. In these lines, in fact, Christ is never mentioned. Their protagonist is Adam, the tale of whose begetting is reported in an unusual fashion, namely by splitting it in two distinct phases. I will try to account for these oddities by pursuing the hypothesis that this section, far from being only a fanciful retelling of the story of the Creation, is a passage

⁶ Is 44, 6; Is 48, 12.

loaded with Christological content, and that, therefore, Adam's presence is to be interpreted as a marker of Adamitic Christology.

In order to try to grant clarity to this section, I will introduce a source to which Petersen links our *Demonstration*⁷: Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*⁸. For Petersen, the existence of a shared background between Aphrahat's *Demonstration* and this apologetic work is testified by several commonalities. Among them: a) the common explicit affirmation that a divine name can be predicated of other beings (human in Aphrahat, heavenly in Justin) without this making them God; b) the anti-Jewish confrontational setting, twinned with a harsh rhetoric; c) the explicit rejection of the idea of the existence of a second God; d) the recourse to listings of Christological titles.

Scholars such as J.C.Th. Otto⁹ have identified in Justin's writings, notwithstanding the absence of the relative technical terminology, the presence of the theological model of the *prolatio* of the Logos. This doctrine entails a dialectic between *logos endiathetos* ("immanent" Logos [hereafter: *LE*]) and *logos prophorikos* ("uttered" Logos

⁷ PETERSEN 1992, 247.

⁸ Petersen tries to bind Aphrahat and Justin Martyr together based on an allegedly shared Jewish-Christian background. In his opinion Justin's ties to Jewish Christianity are proven by a) his use of quotations from Jewish Christian gospels; b) his chiasm; c) his listings of Christological titles, indebted to Jewish Christian *testimonia*. As for Aphrahat, Petersen mentions as markers of his Jewish Christianity: a) his familiarity with rabbinic traditions; b) his drawing his OT quotations from the Peshitta (as opposed to the Septuagint); c) his recurring to the *Diatessaron* when quoting the NT; d) his chiasm; e) his quartodecimanism; f) his belief that Christ will come back on Pesach; g) his works' parallels with the *Didache*; h) his never calling Jesus *tlitâyâ* ("third", with reference to the Trinity), unlike Ephrem will do shortly later. Much may be said about these arguments. I will content myself with noticing that Petersen's ascribing Aphrahat's use of the Peshitta to his supposed Jewish-Christian tendencies presupposes a questionable understanding of the dynamics of circulation and fruition of translations of biblical texts as immediate indicators of (ethnic? religious? theological?) affiliation. For a comparison of the OT and NT quotations of *Dem.* 17 and the same passes in the Peshitta *cfr. infra*, "Appendix II".

⁹ *Cfr. infra*. For references to more scholars agreeing with Otto *cfr.* ORBE 1958, 570 and n. 27 *ad loc.*

[hereafter: *LP*]). For Justin too, like for other early Christian theologians, the Logos would have been in a first time impersonally immanent in God, and only at a later moment it would have been generated (*gennaô*) or emanated (*proballô*) for cosmogonic purposes.

The hypothesis that Aphrahat is applying in *Dem.* 17, 7 this scheme to Adam's birth can account, in my opinion, for the unusual fashion in which the latter is narrated:

^b For, when God considered to create the world with all its adornments, first He conceived and depicted Adam within His mind, and, after Adam had been conceived in His thought, then He conceived the creatures, as He said: "Before mounts were conceived and the earth brought forth [its] generation". For, the human being is older and prior in conception to creatures, and in generation creatures are older and prior to Adam. ^c Adam was conceived and dwelt in God's thought. ^d And, while [Adam] was withheld in His intellect during the conception, He created with the word of His mouth all the creatures. ^e And when He finished and adorned the world, as nothing was missing in it, then He generated Adam from His thought¹⁰. (*Dem.* 17, 7.b-e)

The similarities are striking¹¹. According to *Dem.* 17, 7 God would have: first, conceived Adam in His mind [b] and withheld him in there [c]; second, created the

¹⁰ In the text follows: "And He molded the human being with His hands". The duplication of the creation of Adam (first conceived in God's thought, then fashioned by God with His hands) shows a Philonian parallel. In *Legum allegoriae* 1, 31-32, in fact, Philo presents us with two Adams: 1) the heavenly man created *ad imaginem Dei*. He is the spiritual Adam, the Logos, archetype of humanity, God's *dynamis*, being superior to angels; 2) the Adam fashioned from earth, the historic man (*cfr.* also *De opificio mundi* 134). On the creation of Adam in Philo *cfr.* BOCCACCINI 1982. In Pseudoclementine *Homilies* (2, 52; 3, 20) Adam is considered molded by the hands of God (interestingly, in 3, 20 this is said in connection to his possession of the Spirits). *Cfr.* also BRUNS 1991, 107: "[For Aphrahat] Adams privilegierte Stellung liegt aber nicht nur in seiner Präexistenz begründet, sondern geht auch auf Gottes besonderes Schöpfungshandeln zurück, Im Unterschied zu den anderen Geschöpfen, die sämtlich durch Gottes Wort hervorgebracht wurden, ist Adam direct aus Gottes Schöpferhänden hervorgegangen und in seinem Bild erschaffen". For the theme of God's hands in early Christianity *cfr.* BINGHAM 2005; for the prominence of the theme in Irenaeus *cfr.* DE ANDIA 1982.

¹¹ The presence of this pattern has also been noted in passing by BRUNS 1990, 106, n. 104, who, however, did not make much of it: "Sprachlich fehlt bei den Syrern die Distinktion von LE und LP. Sachlich ist sie

world [d]; third, generated Adam out of His thought [e]. In *Dem.* 23, 22 Aphrahat mentions again, in passing, God’s begetting of Adam. Notwithstanding the incidental character of this mention, inserted in a lengthy chronology, he once again makes sure to express a duality in this generation, by writing: “God created and begot Adam”¹². Although the terminology differs from that found in *Dem* 17, 7 (where the terms used were “to conceive” and “to beget”¹³), it is possible to see in this hendiadys an echo of the same conception expressed by that passage.

3.3. MODELS OF PROLATIO

Let us now go back to Justin Martyr. Scholars have pointed to the following passage in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* as containing the doctrine of the *LE / LP*:

But this offspring, truly brought forth by/from the Father (ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς προβληθέν), before all creatures, was the one who was with the Father (συνῆν τῷ πατρὶ), and him the Father addresses (τούτῳ [...] προσομιλεῖ) [in Gen 1:26]¹⁴.

A. Orbe, however, has convincingly argued that the doctrine of the *prolatio* of the Logos is absent in Justin, and is only logically presupposed by this passage. The γέννημα who was with the Father is the *sermo prolatus* (the *LP*), not the *sermo immanens* (the *LE*), a

klar vorhanden” (*cf.* also BECK 1980, 41-46, *cit. ibid.*). Bruns also writes about *Dem.* 17, 7 (*ibid.*, 106): “Aphrahat greift mit seiner scharfen Unterscheidung zwischen gedachter ‘Konzeption’ [*beṭnutâ*] und nach außen tretender, schöpfungsmässiger Realisation [*ilidutâ*] (Zeugung) ein psychologisierendes Verstehensmodell auf, das bereits von Tatians Logoslehre her bekannt ist”.

¹² ܩܘܕܝܫܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ.

¹³ Respectively, the roots ܩܘܕ and ܕܠ.

¹⁴ *Dialogus cum Tryphone Iudaeo* 62, 4 (translation mine).

figure of which there is no trace in Justin’s writings¹⁵. Nevertheless, as Orbe noted, the very existence of a *LP* implicitly testifies to the fact that this *logos* must have at some point dwelt within the Father, according to a tradition that was to find further development in later authors¹⁶.

The scheme that Aphrahat applies to the begetting of Adam is, in a sense, opposed to the theological pattern displayed by Justin. If in the apologist we find no *LE*, and the *LP* is granted a cosmogonic role, for Aphrahat this personal entity, to whom he does

¹⁵ For Justin, Orbe writes, “antes de *Gen* 1, 26 existía el Verbo como ministro de Dios. Identificado prácticamente con la Sabiduría de *Prov.* 8, 22 ss. había sido emitido (προβληθέν), como fruto, del seno paterno (ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς [...] γέννημα), antes de todas las obras (πρὸ πάντων τῶν ποιημάτων)”. Una vez emitido, se hallaba con (συνῆν) el Padre, dispuesto a asistirle en la creación del mundo y del hombre. [...] Ya en sus días J. C. Th. Otto [ΟΠΤΟ 1847, 211, n. 10 (*cit. ad loc.*)] había creído ver en el contraste entre συνεῖναι (resp. συνῆν) y προβάλλεσθαι (resp. προβληθέν), la clásica oposición entre el Logos ἐνδιάθετος y el προφορικός. [...] A Dios le asistía *ab aeterno* su propio Verbo inmanente, antes de ninguna obra creada. Y una vez emitido, el Padre se dirigía a Él como a Verbo prolaticio, engendrado de su seno, al decirle: *Faciamus...* Semejante interpretación resulta, a mi juicio, violenta, y sobre todo infundada. El contexto requiere simplemente la asistencia del Verbo en la creación por contraste con la de los ángeles. Tal Verbo es el fruto emitido por el Padre antes de todas las obras; como tal podría asistir y asistía al Padre al hacer el mundo o formar al hombre. A este mismo Verbo se dirige en *Gen* 1, 26 y 3, 22. Justino dice bien claro que quien *estaba con* (συνῆν) el Padre, era el fruto ya emitido (τὸ προβληθέν γέννημα). Luego el *Logos prolaticio*. Nada autoriza a ver en [...] συνῆν [...] al λόγος ἐνδιάθετος. Una cosa es *estar con* (συν-εῖναι) y otra *estar en* (ἐν-εῖναι). [...] En contraste con los ángeles, cooperadores a la obra creadora de Dios, el Santo presenta al Verbo, como fruto emitido antes de todas las obras, y por tal — una vez emitido — ministro y auxiliar del Padre para la creación de todas ellas; con quien conversa, como con la Sabiduría personal bíblica. [...] En definitiva, no hay oposición alguna entre la *coexistencia* (συνῆν) del Hijo con el Padre y su *prolación* (προβληθέν). Los dos términos se refieren al mismo Verbo prolaticio, engendrado por el Padre antes de todas las obras. [...] L]a prolación (resp. generación) resulta anterior a la misma coexistencia. En ninguno de los testimonios menciona el Santo dos estadios, sino simplemente el Verbo prolaticio, engendrado del Padre” (ORBE 1958, 569-574). SIMONETTI 1993, 75, n. 19, relying on Orbe, expressed himself similarly. For him the conception of the twofold stage of the relationship between God and Logos, although less prominent than in the subsequent apologists, is still envisioned by Justin.

¹⁶ ORBE 1958, 574: “Pero — nótese bien — precisamente la coexistencia del Verbo así proferido por el Padre, repetida en contextos sapienciales, testimonia de manera *clara* aunque *implícita* que antes de salir emanado del seno paterno, hubo de existir dentro de él, como Verbo inmanente o como *Sophia*. S. Justino sigue en ello una tradición corriente, manifiesta sobra todo después de él, pero que se descubre sin dificultad entre los gnósticos y aun en S. Ignacio Antioqueno”.

attribute a “latency period”, would have not partaken in the Creation of the world, since it would have been issued forth after this latter had already been accomplished by God.

Neither does Aphrahat’s articulation of the *prolatio* completely overlap with the relationship between *LE* and *LP* as configured, long before him, by writers such as Athenagoras of Athens or Theophilus of Antioch. These authors, in fact, identified the *LE* with the divine *nous*. In their account of the generation of the Logos, thus, the *sermo immanens* would have been the father of the *sermo prolatus*, understood simply as the exterior manifestation of God’s mind¹⁷. Aphrahat, instead, holds firm the distinction between, on the one hand, God’s intellect (*tar’itâ*) [7.d] or thought (*maḥšabtâ*) [7.c]; and, on the other, the being conceived within it.

Other models of *prolatio* have been elaborated throughout the first centuries of Christian theological reflection—e.g. by Tatian¹⁸, Tertullian¹⁹, Pseudo-Hippolytus²⁰, Irenaeus of Lyons²¹, Origen²², and Basil of Caesarea²³. My intention, however, is not to

¹⁷ Cfr. ORBE 1958, 151-152. Theophilus also innovated on the traditional model by imagining the emission of Sophia together and on an equal level with the Logos.

¹⁸ It was Tatian who, in his *Oratio ad Graecos*, clarified the pattern *sermo immanens* / *sermo prolatus* by stating that the Logos was *ab aeterno* in the Father. He also utilized, along with the terminology of “procession” and “issuing forth”, marked by the verbs *proelthon* and *propêda*, that of “generation”, expressed by the participle *gennetheis* (*Oratio ad graecos* 5, 1-2). On Tatian’s theological teaching cfr. STEUER 1892, *part.* 54-58 (“Das Verhältnis des Logos zum Vater”), and, in the 20th century, GRANT 1954 and ELZE 1960. For an “apophatic” take on the historical consistency of the figure of Tatian cfr. KOLTUN-FROMM 2008. On the *probolê* in Tatian cfr. ORBE 1958, 584 *seq.*

¹⁹ On Tertullian’s dealing with the theme of *probolê* cfr. ORBE 1958, 519-531, *part.* the pages on Montanism (524-531).

²⁰ *Refutatio omnium haeresium* 10, 33, 2. On the *prolatio* of the Logos in these authors cfr. SIMONETTI 1933, 200-201.

²¹ *Adversus Haereses* 2, 12, 5, where the terms are quoted in Greek.

²² *Contra Celsum* 6, 65.

provide an overview of all the existing variations on this theological theme, but rather to assess the significance of its idiosyncratic adoption on the part of Aphrahat.

3.4. AN ECLECTIC CONSTRUCT

The most important ancient philosophical texts for the reconstruction of the historico-philosophical parabola of the opposition *LE* / *LP* are Philo's *De animalibus*; the third book of Porphyry's *De abstinentia*; and a section of the first book of Sextus Empiricus' *Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes*²⁴. The similarities between these texts have led M. Chiesa to imagine a common source behind them (shared also by Plutarch in his *De sollertia animalium* and Aelianus in his *De natura animalium*), placed in Carneades' Academy²⁵. Chiesa's long and detailed study concludes that, "loin d'être typiquement stoïcienne, cette distinction est relativement neutre du point de vue doctrinal"²⁶. The scholar describes *LE* and *LP* as "des notions qui relèvent de la «koinè» conceptuelle de l'époque, de la «lingua franca» ou du sabir philosophique des érudits de l'époque hellénistique et romaine. [...] Enfin, ces deux notions peuvent être décrites et interprétées de manière syncrétique ou éclectique"²⁷.

²³ *Homiliae* 16, 3.

²⁴ *Cfr.* CHIESA 1991, 308

²⁵ *Cfr. ibid.*, 309.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 311. On the two *logoi* *cfr.* also the important studies of MÜHL 1962 (for whom the doctrine can be traced back to Zeno) and POHLENZ 1965 (who proposes that the couple of concepts originated from the disputes between Academics and Stoics in the II century B.C.), and, in more recent years, MATELLI 1992 and LABARRIÈRE 1997. *Cfr.* also the section on the two *logoi* in HÜLSER 1987, 582-591 (*cit.* in KAMESAR 2004, 163, n. 1) and the study of CASEY 1923 about the presence of this pattern in Clement of Alexandria.

²⁷ "C'est ainsi que chez Porphyre (DA III, 3, 2) et, encore plus clairement chez Ptolémée, la relation du langage proféré au langage interne est considérée à la fois comme une relation «symbolique», à l'instar

This couple of concepts, thus, was common knowledge in the late ancient Hellenistic world. The eclectic nature of its philosophical usage was matched by the variety of the theological results that its adoption on the part of Christian thinkers produced. As we have seen, authors such as Justin Martyr or Theophilus of Antioch availed themselves of this model in disparate fashions, probably influenced, in turn, by philosophical sources and traditions handling the opposition between the two *logoi* in different ways.

Of particular interest for us is the fact that the couple is found in Nemesius of Emesa, author of a treatise *On the Nature of Man*²⁸. This occurrence suggests that the

d'Aristote, et comme une relation d'image à modèle, suivant un aspect de la tradition platonicienne" (*ibid.*, 312).

²⁸ Nemesius (*De natura hominis* 14) identifies the *LE* with the product of the *dialogismos*, according to a notion found also in Irenaeus (*cfr.* ORBE 1958, 370). Nemesius writes: "This, then, is one way of dividing the power of the soul, viz. according to the division of certain bodily parts. With regard to the rational element of the soul, there is another division, which is made in a different way, viz. into the so-called immanent and expressed reason (ὁ [...] καλούμενος ἐνδιάθετος λόγος καὶ ὁ προφορικός). Immanent reason is a motion of the soul which occurs in the speech function without any speaking aloud, which is why we often go through a whole reasoning process by ourselves in silence and converse in dreams. [...] Expressed reason has its activity in speech and in conversation. There are many organs of speech [...]. [...] A) All the muscle that move these parts [mentioned in the *omissis*] are organs of sound production, and of speech the mouth: for in this speech is moulded, given shape and as it were, a form [...]" (Αὕτη μὲν οὖν μία διαίρεσις τῆς ψυχικῆς δυνάμεως, ἢ συνδιαιρεῖται μέρη τινὰ τοῦ σώματος, ἑτέρα δὲ διαίρεσις καθ' ἕτερον τρόπον τοῦ λογικοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὃ τε καλούμενος ἐνδιάθετος λόγος καὶ ὁ προφορικός. ἔστι δὲ ἐνδιάθετος μὲν λόγος τὸ κίνημα τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ ἐν τῷ διαλογιστικῷ γινόμενον ἄνευ τινὸς ἐκφωνήσεως, ὅθεν πολλάκις καὶ σιωπῶντες λόγον ὅλον παρ' ἑαυτοῖς διεξερχόμεθα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄνειροις διαλεγόμεθα. [...] ὁ δὲ προφορικός λόγος ἐν τῇ φωνῇ καὶ ἐν ταῖς διαλέκτοις τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἔχει. ὄργανα δὲ τῆς φωνῆς πολλά · [...]. [...] πάντες οἱ κινούντες ταῦτα τὰ μόρια μύες τῆς ἐκφωνήσεώς εἰσιν ὄργανα, τῆς δὲ διαλέκτου τὸ στόμα · ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ διαπλάττεται καὶ σχηματίζεται καὶ οἰονεῖ μορφοῦται ἢ διάλεκτος). Translation from SHARPLES, R.W. et VAN DER EIJK, PH. 2008. Greek text according to MORANI 1987, 123-124. The *dialogismos* is the fifth stage in the sequence of actions necessary to the production of an object *extra mentem* described by Irenaeus of Lyons: 1) *ennoia*; 2) *enthymêsis* or *katalêpsis*; 3) *sensatio* or *phronêsis*; 4) *consilium* or *boulêsis*; 5) *cogitationis examinatio* or *dialogismos*; 6) *verbum immanens*; 7) *verbum emissibile* (*cfr.* ORBE 1958, 370-371). On the dialogic aspect of thought *cfr.* CHIESA 1991, 302: "Logos et *dianoia*, c'est «le meme et pas le même»: il faut en convenir et ne s'en point fâcher. [...] L'identité consiste en ceci que le

notion had not ceased to circulate in that Western region of Syria in the second half of the fourth century. It is therefore plausible that the Persian Sage, although located further East, may have learnt about this idea from either Christian or non-Christian sources, found it attractive, and decided to employ it. As R. Murray wrote with reference to a different Hellenistic construct found in Aphrahat's writings, "the fact remains that the theme for these variations was a common Hellenistic *topos*, both Greco-Roman and Jewish. Aphrahat treats it in an individual way, but the theme came to him with the genre of his discourse"²⁹. The hypothesis cannot be ruled out, in fact, that the so-called "apologists" (among whom Theophilus and Tatian, both with connections to the East) have been influential on the section on Adam. In favor of this possibility would stand the circumstance that Aphrahat's *Demonstration* shares with their works the apologetic genre, as well as, in the case of Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, the religious identity of the ostensive addressees.

3.5. STRADDLING TWO WORLDS

Such a reconstruction is not without consequences for the overall construal of the theological and literary profile of Aphrahat, who, as discussed in the Chapter 1, has

langage et la pensée sont des « dialogues » [...]; par conséquent, *logos* et *dianoia* sont les mêmes en tant que « discours ». Mais ce discours se réalise de deux manières différentes, qui correspondent au fait que le dialogue dans l'âme est silencieux tandis que le dialogue qui coule à travers la bouche est sonore". On the book *De natura hominis* cfr. SHARPLES, R.W. et VAN DER EIJK, PH. 2008, 1-32; and ZONTA 1991 ("Introduction"), part. 225-229 ("II. The Syriac Version").

²⁹ MURRAY 1983, 83. Murray was referring here to the theme of the cosmic *homonoia*, a theme considered by some scholars of Stoic origin, but found also in Jewish texts such as the *Testament of Naphtali*, the *Assumption of Moses*, and *Psalms of Solomon*. Cfr. *ibid.*, 82-83.

often been read as far removed from Hellenistic culture, and presenting the characters of “un asceta di non comune erudizione scritturistica ma per nulla iniziato nelle speculazioni teologiche dei Padri greci”³⁰. As R. Murray wrote, “Aphrahat and other early Syriac writers are often said to represent a purely Semitic Christianity, reflecting little or no Hellenistic influence. Today a certain *retractatio* is called for. [...] [T]here is a danger of a kind of romanticism which neglects the degree to which the entire area where Syriac literature came to flower had for centuries been penetrated by Hellenistic cultural influence, in ways not resisted by linguistic barriers”³¹.

My hope is that, at the end of this survey, we will be able to locate Aphrahat further away from the image of the “reiner Semit”³² that has been sometimes portrayed in scholarship, and closer to the “«koinè» conceptuelle de l’époque”. The working hypothesis³³ pursued here is, in sum, that in *Dem.* 17, 7 we witness the encounter between a Hellenistic topos (the *sermo immanens* / *sermo prolatus* dialectic, whether or not filtered through the Christological speculations of the apologists) and a likewise well-established model (so-called Adamitic Christology) that are commonly assumed to belong to conflicting cultural worlds. This is not to suggest that we should see Aphrahat as a “hero of the two worlds”, a trailblazer unprecedentedly attempting to bridge the

³⁰ ORTIZ DE URBINA 1947, 87.

³¹ MURRAY 1983, 79. Murray was one of the very earliest scholars to speak out against this restitution of the figure of the Persian Sage.

³² ORTIZ DE URBINA 1933, 5.

³³ The state of the evidence, and above all of discussion of it, does not allow for calling it more than this. In fact, neither Adamitic Christology nor the *LE* / *LP* relationship are areas on which scholars’ inquiry into Aphrahat’s theological views have tended to linger. As a result, often the presence of neither in the *Demonstrations* is acknowledged. My hope is that connecting these two elements to one another will help unearthing the presence of both in the Aphrahatian corpus.

breach between two otherwise monolithic entities called Syriac(-speaking) and Greek(-speaking) Christianities. My proposal is, rather, to read him as a figure engaging in unexceptional dynamics of cultural interaction, in which the boundaries between belonging and borrowing become blurred; and as an occasion for carrying on the work, begun by some scholars, of questioning the reifying picture of Semitic/Syriac and Hellenistic/Greek Christianities as airtight compartments, completely sealed off from each other.

3.6. ADAMITIC CHRISTOLOGIES

The argument for the presence of a vein of Adamitic Christology in Aphrahat's thought finds substantial support in the solid link drawn by Petersen between the Persian Sage and the Pseudoclementine corpus. The scholar pinpointed a parallel for the contents of this *Demonstration* in *Recognitions* 11.41.3-42.1. This parallel in his opinion is proven by: a) the closeness of the date of composition of the two texts; b) their common geographical provenance; c) the shared point at issue, namely the rightness of applying the designation of "God" to Jesus; d) the constant reference to the OT; e) the proclamation of the honorific value of the appellation of "God"; f) the affirmation of a distinction between the supreme God and those who, like Moses and Jesus, only bear His name.

Now, the literary hero of the Pseudoclementine *Homilies*, the True Prophet, is, as known, Adam³⁴. Upon him God bestowed the spirit of knowledge, appointing him as the guide of humanity. Adam, at once protoplast and last of the soteriologic figures by whose means God periodically visits the history of Israel, is humankind's archon and redeemer:

When God had made the world, as Lord of the universe, He appointed chiefs over the several creatures [...]. He set, therefore, an angel as chief over the angels, a spirit over the spirits [...] a man over men, who is Christ Jesus³⁵.

His "honour is to bear rule and lordship over all things, in air, earth, and waters"³⁶. The world has been created for him (not *through* him), and his sovereignty over it is the mark of his Christhood:

For, on account of this one also God made the world, and by Him the world is filled; whence also He is everywhere near to them who seek Him, though He be sought in the remotest ends of the earth³⁷.

Thus, to the evidence for the parallel piled up by Petersen I may add the insistence, common to *Pseudoclementines* and Aphrahat, on God's appointing Adam in power over

³⁴ On Adamitic Christology from Paul to Irenaeus *cfr.* GAGLIARDI 2002, 106-478 (where no section is devoted to the *Pseudoclementines*!). For Adamitic Christology in the *Pseudoclementines* *cfr.* DRIJVERS 1990; TEEPLE 1993 (with F.St. Jone's introduction to the book); and VAHEDI 2007. Elements of interest for the study of Adamitic Christology can be found *passim* in ANDERSON 2001 (otherwise more of a fascinating reading on ancient and less ancient Jewish and Christian imagery on Adam and Eve). Discussing the relationship between Adam and Christ in Aphrahat, BRUNS 1990, 106-107 draws parallels with the *Kerygmata Petrou* and the *Cave of Treasures*.

³⁵ *Rec.* 1, 45 ("Deus cum fecisset mundum, tamquam universitatis dominus singulis quibusque creaturis principer statuit [...] statuit ergo angelis angelus principem et spiritibus spiritum [...] hominibus hominem, qui est Christus Jesus").

³⁶ *Hom.* 3, 20.

³⁷ *Rec.* 8, 62 ("Propter hunc enim deus etiam mundum fecit et ab ipso mundus repletur, unde et quaerentibus se adest ubique, etiamsi in ultimis terrae finibus quaeratur").

everything He had made, and the spousal characterization of the liaison between Adam and the world. In Aphrahat we read in fact:

And He gave him authority over everything He had made, in the way in which a man having a son for whom he wants to make a wedding would get for him a woman, would build for him a house, would prepare and adorn everything necessary for his son, and then would make the wedding and give his son authority over his house. And after the conception of Adam He generated him and gave him authority over His whole Creation. (*Dem.* 17, 7.g)

Analogously, in the Pseudoclementine corpus we find passages such as the following³⁸:

On account of His Son God created the world³⁹ [...]. [...] His Son [is] set apart in a certain place of the world, which is without sin; in which there are already some, who are there being prepared, as I said, as a bride adorned for the coming of the bridegroom⁴⁰.

Although bridal Christology in the *Pseudoclementines* is always projected eschatologically⁴¹, whereas in *Dem.* 17, 7 we see it employed protologically, it should be borne in mind that at the very core of Adamitic Christology is the identification of earliest and latter times. More than the ultimateness of the visitation, predicable of

³⁸ Elements of spousal Christology appear more frequently in the *Homilies* (*Epistola Clementis* 4.7; *Hom.* 3, 27-28.72; *Hom.* 8, 22; *Hom.* 12, 33; *Hom.* 13, 16) than in the *Recognitions* (*Rec.* 4, 35; *Rec.* 9, 3). The obligated reference for spousal imagery in the NT is, of course, Mt 22 (and, less relevantly, Mt 25 || Lk 20).

³⁹ I modified here Schaff's translation, which read: "God by His Son created the world" (*per*, as known, can express both means and cause).

⁴⁰ *Rec.* 9, 3 (the entire passage reads: "Deus per filium suum creavit mundum [...]. verum usque ad nuptiarum tempus, quod est praesentia speculi venturi, statuit virtutem quondam, quae ex his qui in hoc mundo nascuntur, eligat et custodiat meliores ac servet filio suo sequestratos in loco quodam mundi qui extra peccatum est, in quo iam sunt aliquanti, qui ibi velut sponsa, ut dixi, decora ad sponsi praesentia praeeparantur").

⁴¹ Sometimes, like in the case of *Rec.* 9, 3, in the *Pseudoclementines* the creation of the world appears in the same context in which a reference to Christ as eschatological bridegroom is made, yet no connection is made explicit.

Christ's mission but obviously not of Adam's, there counts the shared intercessory⁴² function, in both cases demanding the same "bridal" response on the part of the world. As a proof to this stands the fact that Aphrahat himself, in *Dem.* 6, develops motives of spousal Christology in the context of urging the *bnay qyāmā* ("members of the pact") not to be found unprepared by the imminent *eschaton*⁴³:

"Let us watch the time of the glorious Bridegroom [*ḥatnā*], so that we may enter with him his bridal chamber [*gnoneh*]. [...] "Let us cast and send away from us any filthiness, so that we may wear the garments of the wedding [*naḥtē d-meštutā*]"⁴⁴.

3.7. WHAT HAPPENS TO ADAM

I hope to have convincingly shown that Aphrahat shared one of the multifarious traditions that—to a lesser or greater degree and in different forms—tended to reverse, or at least neutralize, the direction of the traditional typological vector uniting Adam and Christ⁴⁵. This reversal or neutralization, with its import of potential identification of the two heads of the line, brought about a trend of relativization of the differences between an entire array of Jewish and Christian figures of mediation. This process must have been facilitated by the existence of a fluid cultural *koinê*, presenting a pervasive

⁴² I use the term "intercession" (and similar words) throughout this paper not with the meaning of "entreaty", but rather in its etymological sense of "going between"—i.e., as a synonym of "mediation" (and similar words).

⁴³ On bridal imagery in Aphrahat *cfr.* now BURLESON 2010, 38 *seq.*; 54 *seq.*; 74 *seq.*

⁴⁴ *Dem.* 6, 1; *cit.* in BURLESON 2010, 40-41 (translation mine).

⁴⁵ For the Adam-Christ parallel in Pauline Christology the foundational texts are Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:21-22; 1 Cor 15:45-49. In the NT *cfr.* also Mk 1:13. On the origin of Paul's doctrine of the two Adams *cfr.* HULTGREN 2003, who makes a case for Palestinian rabbinical influences against the commonly maintained Philonian origin.

recurrence of competing philosophical models and schemes of thought across intellectual schools and religious groups.

Among these patterns of thought there must have been an acutely functional outlook on the interactions between the spheres of divinity and humanity. Its bearers were less interested in quibbling over ontological issues concerning the personal subsistence of God's envoy, and more inclined to gradually erode the differences between beings absolving the very same function of proceeding from God towards the world.

In this context, even the designation of Christ must be understood as less hypostatically enclosed than generally assumed when speaking of fourth-century Christologies. As P. Bruns wrote, in Aphrahat "[b]emerkenswert ist die funktionale Sicht Christi: Christus erscheint [...] als das Medium, durch das die Gerechten Zugang zu Gott erhalten. Der Messiasbegriff wirkt sehr jüdisch: Christus, der Gesalbte, ist hier nicht bloßer Eigenname, sondern bezeichnet seine Funktion"⁴⁶.

In sum, under the apparently flat textual surface of *Dem.* 17, which scholars have often attempted to either square with Nicene orthodoxy or label as "Jewish-Christian", Aphrahat⁴⁷ is conducting a complex speculation on the convergence of various modalities of conceptualization (and relative personification) of soteriologic mediation. However, in this *Demonstration* we also witness, as already mentioned, the labor towards

⁴⁶ BRUNS 1991, 101.

⁴⁷ In this paper I refer to Aphrahat's authorial intentionality out of simplicity. I am, however, aware that he may have had behind and around himself an ongoing tradition of theological elaboration and literary production, his relationship to which is destined to remain for most part obscure.

a synthetic integration of this plexus of traditions with a model found on the other side of the functional/ontological⁴⁸ ridge: the *LE* / *LP* dialectic.

3.8. TRANSLATING GOD

Philo of Alexandria provides extensive testimony, in his writings, to the use of the *sermo immanens* / *sermo prolatus* scheme. As A. Kamesar noticed, even though Philo finds the couple of *logoi* represented by a diversity of biblical images, “it is the two brothers, Moses and Aaron, that most often symbolize them”⁴⁹ in his works. Since for Philo God did not speak to Moses, but rather within him⁵⁰, the service of Aaron (*LP*) was required to convey to the people the contents of the revelation that God had non-verbally disclosed to Moses (*LE*)⁵¹.

⁴⁸ This opposition is admittedly an artificial one, which demands, in turn, to be deconstructed. I will leave the job for somebody else. However, I will say, to my defense, that I consider its heuristic employment (temporarily) legitimate only on an ideal level—the level on which each individual can freely subscribe to an idea regardless of her or his ethnic, religious, or linguistic heritage. If theoretical models can be schematically opposed for sake of convenience, portions of humanity certainly cannot.

⁴⁹ KAMESAR 2004, 164.

⁵⁰ *Cfr.* AMIR 1983 (*cit.* in KAMESAR 2004, 164, n. 3)

⁵¹ *Cfr.* *De migratione Abrahami* 76–81 and *Quod deterius potiori insidiari soleat* 38–40 (both *cit.* in KAMESAR 2004, 164). Kamesar persuasively shows throughout his paper that such an allegorical interpretation “may have been ultimately inspired by a similar interpretation of another set of brothers, Otus and Ephialtes, preserved in the D-scholium on *Iliad* 5.385” (*ibid.*, 180). In addition to these occurrences of the doctrine of the two *logoi* applied to Moses and Aaron, one may quote the instances in which Philo refers to Moses’s being considered worthy of being called “God” in Ex 7, 1: *cfr.* *Vita Mosis* 1, 158; *De Somniis* 1, 189; *De Mutatione nominum* 128–129; *Quaestiones et solutions in Exodus* 2, 29 and 2, 40; *De posteritate Caini* 27–28; *De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* 8–10. For Philo, God “appointed [Moses] to be god, and decreed that the whole bodily realm and its leader, the mind, should be his subjects and slaves” (*De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* 9, 1).

Significantly, the couple Moses / Aaron appears in the outset of the probative section of *Dem.* 17 as the only example produced by Aphrahat of the bestowal of the name of the godhood upon a human being. The passage reads:

[3] For, the honorable name of the godhood has been imposed also upon the righteous human beings, and they have been worth of being called by it. And the human beings with whom God pleased He called “My children” and “My friends”. Moses, His friend and His beloved, when He chose him and made him head, teacher, and priest for his people, He called “God”. For, he said to him: “I gave you to Pharaoh [as] a god”⁵². And He gave him His priest [as] a prophet⁵³. “And Aaron”, [he said], “your brother, shall speak for you with Pharaoh⁵⁴. And you shall be for him a god, and he shall be for you an interpreter”⁵⁵. Not only for Pharaoh, who was an iniquitous one, did He make Moses a god, but also for Aaron, the holy priest, did He make Moses a god.

While such a parallel is of course no evidence that Aphrahat had access to Philo’s works, its existence, if—as I am inclined to believe—not the fruit of mere coincidence, would betoken a lesser degree of extraneousness of Aphrahat to the philosophical, exegetical, and theological traditions of the Hellenistic world than has often been depicted in scholarship⁵⁶.

In the passage just quoted Aphrahat is introducing the topic of the relationship between *LE* and *LP* by staging their most eminent personification, the couple of brothers Moses and Aaron. By doing so in the context of proving the legitimacy of the

⁵² Ex. 7, 1

⁵³ *Cfr.* Ex. 7, 1

⁵⁴ Ex 7, 2.

⁵⁵ Ex 7, 1.

⁵⁶ It is also interesting to notice that Aphrahat seems to attest the “Jewish-Christian” tradition of an Aaronic Messiah: John the Baptist would have been a descendant of Aaron, and would have spiritually transmitted the priesthood to Jesus at the moment of the latter’s baptism. *Cfr.* KOFKY and RUZER 2007, 366.

use of the name of the godhood for beings other than God, Aphrahat creates a connection between *prolatio* of the Logos and theological-onomastic speculations which is most valuable for our understanding of the Christological stake of this *Demonstration*.

In his treatment of the philosophy of the divine name underpinning the Valentinian *Gospel of Truth*, A. Orbe wrote: “La idea de hipostasiar el Nombre divino tiene sin duda resonancias hebreas. Pero en el *Evangelium Veritatis* se halla orquestrada dentro de una concepción enteramente griega: la del doble estadio del Logos (ἐνδιάθετος y προφορικός). Basta en efecto traducir el ὄνομα por λόγος y denominar ἐνδιάθετος al Nombre Invisible o Inefable, interior al Padre; προφορικός al Nombre hecho visible en el Hijo”⁵⁷.

The name is that which, by being spoken, reveals what is hidden, functioning as a mediator or an interpreter of God’s inner thought. By virtue of its function, Orbe explains, it is called by the Stoics *diangelos*, *kêryx*, but also, what is most interesting for us, *hermêneys*, *interpretes mentis*, *interpretes animi*. “Ἐνδιάθετος und προφορικός sind offenbar als Komplementärbegriffe konzipiert. Προφορικός ist eindeutig, ὁ λόγος ὃς προφέρεται, *der Dolmetsch* des inneren Logos, aus dem er wie aus einer Quelle fließt”⁵⁸.

It can be surmised that the awareness of a tradition that characterized the *LP* as an interpreter⁵⁹ stands behind the choice to utilize the Philonian allegorical reading of Moses and Aaron as the two *logoi*, where the latter is called “interpreter” (*targemānā*).

⁵⁷ ORBE 1958, 89.

⁵⁸ POHLENZ 1939, 193 (*cit.* in ORBE 1958, 90, n. 82). Italics mine.

⁵⁹ Of course we need not imagine Aphrahat’s dependence on the *Gospel of Truth* to justify his use of this concept, which may have had wide circulation.

This piece of exegesis, in fact, was able to express the connection, probably easily gathered or already presupposed by fourth-century readers, between the *LE / LP* Christology found in *Dem.* 17, 7 and the onomastic argument developed throughout the *Demonstration*. A confirmation of the centrality of this motif in Aphrahat's discussion comes from the circumstance that

The part of the *Exodus* quotation in which Aaron is called an “interpreter” is not found in the Peshitta, in the Masoretic text, or in the Septuagint⁶⁰. It is found, instead, in the *Targum Onkelos*⁶¹. It is plausible that Aphrahat may have found his *lectio*, attributing to Aaron the role of the translator, in Onkelos, and may have considered it the right interpretation of the verse. This could be a proof to the fact that the Syriac writer attributed to it some specific significance.

3.9. WITH A GOD LIKE THAT, WHO NEEDS A LOGOS?

This sort of meditation on the existence of a hidden, unspoken name *versus* an uttered one, which allows knowledge of the former, is found in other authors. Thus writes Justin Martyr:

To the Father of all, who is unbegotten, there is no name given. For, by whatever name He be called, He has as elder the one who has given the name. But the [words] “Father”, “God”, “Creator”, “Lord”, and “Master” are not names

⁶⁰ The quotation as found in Aphrahat reads as follows: ܐܘܢ ܕܢܘܨܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ (“And you shall be for him a god, and he shall be for you an interpreter”). The Peshitta reads: ܘܠܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ (“And he will let go the children of Israel from his land”), after: ܘܠܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ (“And Aaron your brother shall speak to Pharaoh”).

⁶¹ There we read: ܐܘܢ ܕܢܘܨܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ (“I put you as a great one [rav] for Pharaoh, and Aaron, your brother, shall be your interpreter”).

[ὀνόματα], but rather appellatives [προσρήσεις] [derived] from [His] good deeds and functions⁶². [...] Also the designation [προσαγόρευμα] “God” is not a name [ὄνομα], but rather the opinion, rooted within the nature of human beings, of an unspeakable thing.

Interestingly, the apologist seems to conceive of *onoma* as God’s ineffable essence, shrouded in silence and darkness, and to consider terms such as *theos* (!) mere appellatives (*prosrêseis*), produced by the humans’ fallacious intellect. This posture, far from representing an apophatic contradiction of the onomastic constructions seen thus far, appears to be a token of a deep-rooted conviction of the possibility, and necessity, of God’s revelation, and of that revelation coinciding with His name. If God’s own essence *est structuré comme un langage*, if a name is His most intimate secret, God can but act linguistically—by communicating, revealing himself, sending forth a mediator. In a sense, the more the *onoma* is absorbed back into the remote sphere of the godhead, thus enlarging the distance between God and humanity, the more urgent becomes the logical necessity for a mediator—and one, as if were, with a strong personality, such as Justin’s subsistent Logos⁶³.

Conversely, a God, like Aphrahat’s, who bestows upon the human beings His own names (indicating kingship, godhood, fatherhood, sovereignty, veneration [Dem. 17, 5-6]); who reveals to Moses His most arcane idionyms (’*Ahyah* ’*ašar* ’*ahyah*, ’*Elšaddai*, and ’*Adonai Šba’ot* [Dem. 17, 5]); and in whose existence the believers can have part as long as

⁶² *Apologia Secunda*, 6: Ὅνομα δὲ τῶ πάντων πατρὶ θετόν, ἀγεννήτω ὄντι, οὐκ ἔστιν· ᾧ γὰρ ἂν καὶ ὄνοματι προσαγορεύηται, πρεσβύτερον ἔχει τὸν θέμενον τὸ ὄνομα. τὸ δὲ πατήρ καὶ θεὸς καὶ κτίστης καὶ κύριος καὶ δεσπότης οὐκ ὀνόματά ἐστιν, ἀλλ’ ἐκ τῶν εὐποιῶν καὶ τῶν ἔργων προσρήσεις. [...] καὶ τὸ θεὸς οὐκ ὄνομά ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ πράγματος δυσεξηγήτου ἔμφυτος τῇ φύσει τῶν ἀνθρώπων δόξα (text according to Migné; transl. mine).

⁶³ On Justin’s Logos Christology *cf.* SIMONETTI 1993, 73-82.

they abide by certain conducts—such a God will emit a mediator whose substantiality is hardly anything more than a bare idea of divine inessentiality, the result of God’s being available to human knowledge. Hence can we explain the accrual, upon this God’s quasi-unsubstantial envoy, of many of the categories of salvific mediation that the coeval religious thought had been elaborating.

I will now produce some examples of this dynamic of potentially endless proliferation of identifications. As A. Lehto has remarked, Aphrahat held the belief that “an unwritten law of righteousness predated Sinai, continued to be operative under the written law, and was now clarified in Christ’s teaching and call”⁶⁴. The Persian Sage shared with the *Liber graduum* the persuasion that “that uprightness which Moses and the prophets gave is the same which was established for Adam after he had transgressed against the first commandment”⁶⁵.

It is now expedient to recall Moses’ central role in the theological narrative of the *Pseudoclementines*. For Ch. Gieschen, the main core of the True-Prophet Christology of this corpus is what he dubs the “Prophet-like-Moses” tradition of *Deuteronomy* 18, 15, that has Moses declare: “The God your Lord will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet”⁶⁶. Since the True Prophet’s

⁶⁴ LEHTO 2006, 180, n. 77.

⁶⁵ *Liber Graduum*, transl. KITCHEN 2004, *cit. ibid.* On the *Book of Steps* in relation to Aphrahat *cfr.* KOWALSKI 1989; JUHL 1996; BETTILOLO 1998; BETTILOLO 2001; TANNOUS [unknown date].

⁶⁶ *Cfr.* GIESCHEN 1998, 201. In general, Gieschen’s book, *part.* 152-183, is a stunning source of documentation about the connection between onomastic and angelomorphic traditions (for which the reference point remains DANIELOU 1958, 147-163). *Cfr.* also the section on the *Pseudoclementines* (201-213) in Gieschen’s work.

teaching concerns the Law, his person and his message are seen as congruent with those of the prophet Moses.

These examples, showing a thick net of Scriptures-grounded connections between angelomorphic, Christ-like, and onomastic categories of salvific intercession, confirm the point that was being made earlier. *Dem.* 17, dominated by the leitmotif of God's bestowing His names and titles upon humans, revolves around the theme of the name as a theological category, understood as a two-faced Janus⁶⁷—open to revelation but also ready to be identified, as in the *Gospel of Truth* and in Justin Martyr, with the arcane and innermost thought of God.

The name of the Godhead, which in the *Gospel of Truth* we have seen equated to the *LE*, is of course connatural to Her existence. For this reason it is—at least insofar as it is thought of by the Godhead—"physiologically" coeternal to Her and pre-existent to the Creation—without, however, enjoying any real, personal subsistence. This is indeed identical to that preexistence of Adam that Peter Bruns called "eine gedachte, keine reale"⁶⁸.

3.10. THE NON-CREATIVE LOGOS

In the writings of fourth-century Logos theologians the use of the scheme *sermo immanens* / *sermo prolatus* was indissolubly bound to the theologoumenon of Christ's

⁶⁷ This may provide the logical key, if one were to be sought, to the solution of the contradiction represented by Moses' double role: type of God when in couple with Aaron; type of Adam and of the True Prophet in the Pseudoclementine tradition that we have seen. Of course, this is not to say that we should expect full congruence from a web of connections spanning several centuries, lands, and communities.

⁶⁸ BRUNS 1991, 134.

cosmogonic function and, subsequently, of the chronological priority of his begetting to the Creation of the world. Not quite so in Aphrahat. In his case, as seen, the acknowledgment of the priority of Adam's *conception* to the creation of the world allows the Syriac author to subscribe to the Pseudoclementine doctrine of the eternal destination of the world to the preexistent *verus propheta* without having to adhere to the faith given of the creativity of the Son.

However, although I consider it impossible, based on these considerations, to attribute to Aphrahat's Christ a creative role, I disagree with Kofsky and Ruzer's conviction⁶⁹ that the Persian Sage explicitly rejects the idea of Christ's participation in the creation in *Dem.* 17, 8. In fact, where Kofsky and Ruzer translate:

Now if they worship and honour with the name of worship evil men, those who in their iniquity even deny the name of God, but they do not worship them as their maker, as though they worshipped them alone, and so do not sin, how much the more is it appropriate for us to worship and honour Jesus who turned our stubborn minds from all our worship of vain error and taught us to worship, serve, and work for one God, our father and our maker⁷⁰

I would suggest instead to read:

For, if they worship and honor the iniquitous ones for the sake of worship, and those who in their iniquity deny even the name of God—honoring them not as their maker, [but] for their own sake only—there are no sins (involved). As for

⁶⁹ *Cfr.* KOFISKY et RUZER 2007, 356.

⁷⁰ Kofsky and Ruzer's construal of the sentence, allowed by the convenient yet ungranted addition of two conjunctions and an adverb ("but" [in "but they do not worship them"]; and "and so" [in "and so do not sin"]), could not be savaged even by making ܐܘܢ ܕܝܢܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ the main clause. This, in fact, would force us to adopt—if we wanted to refrain from making emendations—either of two nonsensical solutions: 1) considering ܐܘܢ ܕܝܢܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ a self-standing close; 2) reading: "Now if they worship and honour with the name of worship the evil men, those who in their iniquity even deny the name of God, they do not worship them as their maker, as though only they were sinless" (a sentence of which I cannot make any sense).

3.11. CONCLUSION: WHAT IS APHRAHAT DOING?

In my opinion, rather, Aphrahat, though aware of the speculations of the partizans of Logos Christology, propounds a competing paradigm, more concerned with recognizing God's unique word of revelation in the historical variety of its *facies* than with pinning down in ontological terms the nature of the relationship between the Father and this word. Aphrahat advocated for his model at a time in which we find many of his coreligionists embarked on a controversy drawing upon categories and theological assumptions far removed from those that he cherished. In order to make himself intelligible to these interlocutors he will have pursued an effort of cultural re-elaboration, by making a synthetic use of elements coming to him from different directions, including (with the adoption of the scheme of the *prolatio*) that from which Logos Christology itself had come.

In this process Aphrahat's theological reasoning reveals a striking permeability to elements stemming from the religious worlds surrounding him, and a certain ability to make them interact felicitously. Readers rarely get the impression of an undigested product. At most, rather, they get that of a work not interested in the dogmatic systematization of theological doctrine. Given this open, unsystematic character of Aphrahat's theology, recognized by P. Bruns⁷³, it is admissible to imagine that sometimes an element may have made its way into the Sage's writings in the quasi-

criticism, attested among pagan writers of the third and fourth centuries, against the Christian belief in the divine messiah as the creator of the world" (*ibid.*, 367).

⁷³ Cfr. BRUNS 1991, 213 *seq.*

unintended form of a quote, an association of ideas, or the reminiscence of an exegetical given assimilated long ago.

Nailing down the motivations and circumstances of the undertaking outlined in this study is not among my aims. I will limit myself to the obvious consideration that several approaches to the question can be imagined. More or less emphasis can be placed, for example, on the pressure exerted on the Syriac theologian by contemporary doctrinal and political developments. What is the relationship between, on the one hand, Aphrahat's creative effort of decoding and recoding for his Logos-minded interlocutors his own community's Christological perspectives; and, on the other, the growing influence, within the Christian arena, of the parties combating in the post-Nicene hermeneutical wars? What did Aphrahat know of the wholehearted espousal of Christianity on the part of Roman emperors, and of their determining role in summoning councils and bolstering this or that Trinitarian party? And in what fashions, at a time of persecutions such as that in which *Dem.* 17 was penned, would the shaping of Aphrahat's religious conscience and theological personality have been affected by Constantine's aegis reportedly having been set upon the Christian denizens of the Sassanid empire?⁷⁴

⁷⁴ On Aphrahat and the situation of the Christians of Persia *cfr.* BARNES 1985 (*part. the—dated—discussion of Constantine's letter to Shapur II on 131 seq.*); LANE 1999; MORRISON 2004. More in general, on the historical-religious conditions of the Persian Church in the fourth century *cfr.* BLUM 1980; BROCK 1982; and, now, MOSIG-WALBUG 2007. The historical circumstances of the persecutions have sometimes become important to the evaluation of the significance of the content of the *Demonstrations*. *Cfr.*, e.g., BECKER 2002, where the coupling of anti-Jewish rhetoric and exhortation to the care of the poor in *Dem.* 20 is understood in the context of Shapur II's religious persecutions, which spared the Jews.

APPENDIX A: TRANSLATION OF APHRAHAT'S DEMONSTRATION 17

Demonstration about the Messiah—that he is the son of God.

[1] Response against the Jews, who blaspheme the people that [comes] from the peoples—for thus do they say: “You venerate and worship a begotten man and a crucified human being, and you call ‘God’ a man. And, whilst God does not have a son, you say about this crucified Jesus: ‘He is the son of God’”. And they adduce an argument: that God said: “I am God and there is none else beside me”¹. And He said again: “Do not venerate another god”². “Therefore”, [they say], “you stand against God, and you call ‘God’ a human being”.

[2] As for these things, my dear, within the limits of my faculty and of my insufficiency I will persuade you about them that, even if we concede to them that he is a human being, and we have honored him and have called him³ ‘God’ and ‘Lord’, not strangely have we called him [so], and we have not imposed upon him a strange name, one that they did not use. Rather, it is true for us that our Lord Jesus is God, the Son of God, the King, the Son of the King, Light from light, the Creator, the Counselor, the Teacher, the Way, the Savior, the Shepherd, the Gatherer, the Gate, the Pearl, and the

¹ Dt 32, 39.

² Ex 34, 14.

³ Aphrahat may here be playing on the similarity between the words *yaqqarnāy[hy]*, “we have honored him”, and *qraynāy[hy]*, “we have called him”.

Lamp. And he has been called by many names. We will now neglect all of them, and we will persuade [you], with regard to him, that the one who has come from God is the son of God and God.

[3] For, the honorable name of the godhood has been imposed also upon the righteous human beings, and they have been worthy of being called by it. And the human beings with whom God pleased He called “My children” and “My friends”. Moses, His friend and His beloved, when He chose him and made him head, teacher, and priest for his people, He called “God”. For, he said to him: “I gave you to Pharaoh [as] a god”⁴. And He gave him His priest [as] a prophet⁵. “And Aaron”, [he said], “your brother, shall speak for you with Pharaoh⁶. And you shall be for him a god, and he shall be for you an interpreter”⁷. Not only for Pharaoh, who was an evil one, did He make Moses a god, but also for Aaron, the holy priest, did He make Moses a god.

[4] Listen, again, about the fact that we have called him “Son of God”. And they say: “Whilst God does not have a son, you make this crucified Jesus a firstborn son for God”. He called Israel [itself] “My son, My firstborn”, when He sent [a message] to Pharaoh through Moses, and He said to him: “Israel is My Son, My firstborn. I have said to you: ‘Let My Son go, and he shall worship me. And if you do not want to let him go, lo, I shall

⁴ Ex. 7, 1

⁵ Cfr. Ex. 7, 1

⁶ Ex 7, 2.

⁷ Ex 7, 1.

kill your son, your firstborn”⁸. And also through the prophet did He testify to this, and He reproached them and said to the people: “I have called My people out of Egypt. As I have called them, thus have they left, venerated Baal, and apposed incenses to the statues”⁹. And Isaiah said about them: “I have brought up and reared children, and they have rebelled against me”¹⁰. And it is written again: “You are children of the Lord your God”¹¹. And about Solomon He said: “He shall be as a son for Me, and I shall be as a Father for him”¹². We too have called “Son of God” this Messiah, through whom we have come to know God, as He called Israel “My son, My firstborn”, and as He said about Solomon: “He shall be as a son for Me”. And we called him “God”, as He called Moses by His [own] name. And also David has said about them [= the children of Israel]: “I have said: ‘You are all gods and children of the most High’”¹³. And, as they did not correct themselves, He therefore said about them: “You shall die like human beings, and you shall fall like one of the princes”¹⁴.

[5] For, the name of the divinity has been given as a great honor in the world, and God has imposed it upon whomever with whom He has been pleased. However, God’s names are numerous and honorable, as He presented His names to Moses and said to him: “I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of

⁸ Ex 4, 22-23.

⁹ Hos 11, 1-2.

¹⁰ Is 1, 2.

¹¹ Dt 14, 1.

¹² 2Sam 7, 14; 1Chr 22, 10.

¹³ Ps 82 (81), 6

¹⁴ Ps 82 (81), 7.

Jacob¹⁵. This”, [He said], “is My name eternally, and this is My memorial from generation to generation”¹⁶. And He called His [own] name *’Ahyah ’ašar ’ahyah*¹⁷, *’Ilšadai*, and *’Adonai Šba’ot*¹⁸. God has been called by these names. And although the name of the godhood is great and excellent, He did not refrain from giving it also to His righteous. And although He is a great King, he generously imposed the great and honorable name of kingship upon the human beings, who are His molding.

[6] For, God called Nebuchadnezzar, the iniquitous king, “King of kings” through the mouth of His prophet. For, Jeremiah said: “As for every people and kingdom that shall not bend its neck to the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, king of kings, My servant, I shall rage at that people with famine, sword, and pestilence”¹⁹. And although He is a great King, He did not refrain from giving the name of kingship to the human beings. And, although He is a great God, He did not refrain from giving the name of godhood to the children of flesh. And, although fatherhood is all His²⁰, He called the human beings also “Fathers”. For, He said to the congregation: “In place of your fathers shall be your children²¹”. And, although sovereignty is His, He gave to the human beings power over one another. And, although veneration is His, He conceded honor in the world²², so that

¹⁵ Ex 3, 6.

¹⁶ Ex 3, 15.

¹⁷ Ex 3, 14.

¹⁸ Jer 32, 18

¹⁹ Jer 27, 8.

²⁰ *Cfr.* Eph 3, 15.

²¹ Ps 45 (44), 16.

²² I imagined a break after the word *segdtā* instead of after *l(’)iqārā*, and read *yahbeh* instead of *yahbāh*.

through it they might honor one another. For, even if a human being should honor the sinners, the iniquitous ones, and the deniers of His grace, he is not reproached by God. And about veneration He ordered to His people: “You shall not venerate the sun, nor the moon, nor all the hosts of the heaven; nor shall you desire to venerate all the creatures which are on earth”²³. And consider the grace and the mercy of the benevolent one, our maker, who did not refrain from giving to the human beings the name of the godhood, the name of veneration, the name of kingship and the name of sovereignty. Since He is Father of the creatures that are on the face of earth, He honored, exalted and praised the human beings more than all His creatures, because He molded them with His holy hands, insufflated from His spirit into them, and became a dwelling place for them from of old. And He resides among them and walks among them. For, He said through the prophet: “I shall dwell among them and I shall walk among them”²⁴. And, again, also Jeremiah the prophet said: “You are the Lord’s temple, if you amend your ways and your actions”²⁵. And David had said before: “Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place for all generations, before mounts were conceived, the earth brought forth, and the universe was constituted. And you are God from eternity until eternity”.

[7] And how shall it be understood by you that a prophet said: “Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place” and another said: “I shall dwell among them and I shall

²³ Dt 4, 7.

²⁴ Lev 27, 12; 2 Cor 6, 16.

²⁵ Jer 7, 4-5.

walk among them”? First He has become for us a dwelling place, and then He has dwelt and walked among us. And for the wise both [things] are true and plain. For, David says: “Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place for all generations, before mountains were conceived, the earth brought forth, and the universe was constituted”. And you know, my dear, that all the creatures above and below have been created first, and, at the end of them all, the human being. For, when God considered to create the world with all its adornments, first He conceived and depicted Adam within His mind, and, after Adam had been conceived in His thought, then He conceived the creatures, as He said: “Before mountains were conceived and the earth brought forth [its] generation”. For, the human being is older and prior in conception to creatures, and in generation creatures are older and prior to Adam. Adam was conceived and dwelt in God’s thought. And, while [Adam] was withheld in His intellect at the conception, He created with the word of His mouth all the creatures. And when He finished and adorned the world, as nothing was missing in it, then He generated Adam from His thought. And He molded the human being with His hands. And Adam saw the world [fully] constituted. And He gave him authority over everything He had made, in the way in which a man having a son for whom he wants to make a wedding would get for him a woman, would build for him a house, would prepare and adorn everything necessary for his son, and then would make the wedding and give his son authority over his house. And after the conception of Adam He generated him and gave him authority over His whole Creation. On this regard the prophet said: “Lord, you have become for us a dwelling place for all generations, before mountains were conceived, the earth brought forth, and

the universe was constituted. And you are the Lord from eternity until eternity”. Lest anyone believe that there is another god before or after, He said: “From eternity to eternity”, as Isaiah said: “I am the first and I am the last”²⁶. And after God generated Adam from within His thought He molded him and He insufflated from His spirit into him, and He gave [him] knowledge of distinction, in order for him to distinguish good from evil and to know that God had made him. And, through the fact that he knew his maker, God was depicted and conceived within the thought of the human being, and he became a temple for God, his maker, as it is written: “You are the Lord’s temple”. And He said: “I shall dwell among them and I shall walk among them”. However, as for the human beings who do not know their maker, He is not depicted within them, does not dwell in them, and is not conceived in their thought, but rather they are considered as a beast before Him, and as the remainder of creatures.

[8] Now, by these things the stubborn will be persuaded of the fact that it is not strange that we call the Messiah “Son of God”, because, lo, He has conceived all human beings and has begotten them from His thought. And they will be admonished that also the name of the divinity is upon him, because He has imposed the name of God also upon His righteous. And, as for the fact that we venerate Jesus, through whom we have come to know God, let them be ashamed, because they bend, venerate, and honor also before the iniquitous powerful who [come] from impure peoples, and [for them] there is no reproach whatsoever. For, this honor of veneration God has given to the children of

²⁶ Is 44, 6; Is 48, 12.

Adam in order for them to honor one another, and especially [to honor] those who are more superior and worthy. For, if they worship and honor the iniquitous ones for the sake of worship, and those who in their iniquity deny even the name of God—honoring them not as their maker, [but] for their own sake only—there are no sins (involved).

As for us, how necessary is it for us to venerate and honor Jesus, who has turned our stubborn minds away from all the veneration of vain error, and has taught us to venerate and worship and serve the only God, our father and our maker! And they will acknowledge that the kings of the world call themselves “Gods” by the name of the great God, and are unbelievers and compel to unbelieving, and people pray and venerate before them, and worship and honor them like statues and idols, without the Law ever reproaching them, and there is no sin [in such a conduct], as also Daniel venerated Nebuchadnezzar, an unbeliever and one who compelled to unbelieving, and was not reproached; and Joseph venerated Pharaoh, and it is not written that that has been for him a sin. But, as for us, it is clear to us that Jesus is God, Son of God, and through Him we have come to know his Father, and have steered away from all [fallacious] veneration. Therefore we do not have [how] to reward him who has borne these things for our sake. But through veneration we shall tribute to him honor, in exchange for his anguish, which was for our sake.

[9] Now, it is expedient for us to demonstrate that this Jesus is preannounced previously in the prophets, and has been called “Son of God”. David said: “You are My

son, and today I have begotten you”²⁷. And he said again: “In the splendors of the holiness from the womb from of old I have begotten you as a child”²⁸. And Isaiah said: “A child has been born for us, and a son has been given to us. And his sovereignty was upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called: Wonder, Counselor, Mighty God of the ages, and Prince of peace. The vastness of his sovereignty and his peace do not have an end”²⁹. Therefore pray tell, wise teacher of Israel: who is the one who is born, and whose name is called: Child, Son, Marvel, Counselor, Mighty God of the worlds, and Prince of peace, [and] the vastness of whose sovereignty and whose peace [Isaiah] said to have no end? For, if we have called³⁰ the Messiah “Son of God” [it is because] David taught us [to do so]. And we have learnt from Isaiah to call him “God”. “Sovereignty has been laid upon his shoulder” for he carried his cross and came out of Jerusalem. And, again, Isaiah said that a child is born: “Lo, a virgin shall conceive and give birth. And his name shall be called: ‘*Ammanu’el*, namely ‘our God is with us’”³¹.

[10] And should you say that the Messiah has not yet come, for your contentiousness I will concede to you even that. For, when he will come, it is written, “Peoples shall wait for him”³². Now, I have heard from the peoples that Christ will come. And before he had come I already believed in him, and through him I venerate

²⁷ Ps 2, 7.

²⁸ Ps 101 (109), 3.

²⁹ Is 9, 6-7.

³⁰ I read here *qrayn* instead of *qārēn*.

³¹ Is 7, 14; Mt 1, 23.

³² Gen 49, 10.

the God of Israel. When he comes will he perhaps blame me because I believed in him before he came? But, foul!, the prophets do not allow you to say that the Messiah has not yet come. Daniel confutes you and says: “After sixty two weeks the Messiah shall come and shall be killed. And in his coming the city of holiness shall be destroyed, and its end shall be with a flood. And until the fulfillment of the thing that have been decided it shall remain in desolation”³³. For, you hope and wait that, at the coming of the Messiah, Israel will be gathered in it from all the lands, and Jerusalem will be built and populated. But Daniel testifies that when the Messiah will come and will be killed Jerusalem will be destroyed, and it will remain in desolation until the fulfillment of the things that have been decided for eternity. And about the passion of the Messiah David said: “They pierced my hands and my feet, and all my bones cried out. And they looked and gazed upon me, and they split my clothes among them, and on my garment they cast the lots³⁴”. And Isaiah said: “Lo, My servant shall be known, revealed, and exalted, so that many shall be astonished on his account. As for that one, his appearance shall be more devastated than [that] of a human being, and his aspect more than [that] of human beings”³⁵. And he said: “He shall purify many peoples, and the kings shall be astonished on his account”³⁶. And he said in that [same] passage: “He shall come forth like a child, and like a root from arid land”³⁷. And he said at the end of the passage: “ He shall be killed on account of our sins, shall be humiliated on account of our iniquity.

³³ Dan 9, 23-27.

³⁴ Sal 22 (21), 17-19.

³⁵ Is 52, 13-14.

³⁶ Is 52, 15.

³⁷ Is 52, 2.

The instruction of our fulfillment is entrusted to him, and we shall be healed in his wounds”³⁸. In what wounds were the human beings healed? David was not killed, for he died in a good oldness, and was buried [in] Bethlehem³⁹. And should they say [that the wounds are spoken] of Saul—Saul died in fact on the mounts of Gilboa in the battle of the Philistines⁴⁰—, and should they say that they pierced his hands and his feet when they hanged his body on the wall of Betshean⁴¹, [we will confute them,] for [that expression] is not fulfilled in Saul: when Saul’s limbs were pierced his bones did not feel his suffering, because he was dead. And after Saul died they hanged his and his sons’ body to the wall of Betshean. And when David said: “They pierced my hands and my feet, and all my bones cried out”, he said, after [that] passages: “God, remain on my side, and deliver my soul from the sword”⁴². For, Christ was delivered from the sword and came out of the *She’ol* and lived [again] and rose after three days, and God remained to his aid. But Saul, [instead], invoked the Lord and He did not answer him. And he consulted the prophets and no response was given to him⁴³, and he hid and consulted the necromancers, and he learnt. And he was defeated before the Philistines, and he killed himself with his sword when he saw that the battle had defeated him. And David said in that passage: “I shall announce Your name to my brethren, and I shall

³⁸ Is 53, 5.

³⁹ 1 Kgs 2, 10.

⁴⁰ 1 Sam 31, 4

⁴¹ *Cfr.* 1 Sam 31, 10.

⁴² Sal 22 (21), 17-18.

⁴³ 1 Sam 28, 6 *seq.*

praise You amidst the congregation⁴⁴”. How could these things be fulfilled in Saul? And David said again: “You did not allow Your holy one to see destruction⁴⁵”. But, rather, all these things have been fulfilled in Christ, when he came to them and they did not receive him⁴⁶, they judged him impiously with a testimony of falsehood, he was hung on the wood by their hands, “they pierced his hands and his feet” with the nails that they secured in him, and “all his bones cried out”. And on that very day a great portent happened, namely that light was obscured at midday, as Zachariah had prophesied, saying: “The day shall be known to the Lord. Neither day nor night, and at the time of evening there shall be light”⁴⁷. Now, what is the day which was distinguished with a portent, which [was] neither day nor night, and [on which] at eve there was light? But it is the day [on] which they crucified him! For, lo, there came darkness at midday, and at eve there came light. And he said again: “[On] that day there shall be cold and freeze”⁴⁸, as you know that on that day on [which] they crucified him it was cold, and they made for themselves a fire to warm themselves up, when Simon came and stayed by them. And he said again: “A spear shall rise upon the shepherd and upon my sheep, my beloved, and it shall hit the shepherd, and the sheep of his flock shall be scattered. And I shall turn My hand against the pastors⁴⁹”. And David said again about his passion:

⁴⁴ Sal 22 (21), 23.

⁴⁵ Sal 16 (15), 10.

⁴⁶ Jn 1, 11.

⁴⁷ Zac 14, 7.

⁴⁸ Zac 14, 6

⁴⁹ Zac 13, 7.

“They put into my food gall, and for my thirst they gave me to drink vinegar”⁵⁰. He said again in the same passage: “And they persecuted the one whom you make live again, and they added onto the pain of the killed⁵¹”. For, they added onto him many things that were not even written about him—those curses and abuses that not even the Scripture can disclose, because their acts of temerity were odious. But the Lord wanted to humiliate him and cause him pain⁵². And he was killed on account of our iniquities, and he humbled himself on account of our sins⁵³, and he was made in himself sin⁵⁴.

[11] We venerate that mercy, and we kneel in front of the greatness of his Father, who has turned our veneration towards him. We call him “God”, like Moses, “Firstborn” and “Son” like Israel, “Jesus” like Joshua son of Nun, “Priest” like Aaron, “King” like David, “Great prophet” like all the prophets, “Shepherd” like the shepherds who tended to Israel and led it. And he called us “Children”, as he said: “Extraneous children shall listen to me”⁵⁵, and he made us brothers to him, as he said: “I shall proclaim your name to my brethren”⁵⁶. And we were made friends to him, as he said to his disciples: “I called you ‘Friends’”⁵⁷, as his Father called Abraham “My friend”⁵⁸. And

⁵⁰ Ps 69 (68), 22.

⁵¹ Ps. 69 (68) , 27.

⁵² Is 53, 10.

⁵³ Is 53, 5.

⁵⁴ 2Cor, 5.

⁵⁵ Ps 18 (17), 45.

⁵⁶ Ps 22 (21), 23.

⁵⁷ Jn 15, 15.

⁵⁸ Is 61, 8.

he said to us: “I am the Good Shepherd⁵⁹, the Gate⁶⁰, the Way⁶¹, the Vine⁶², the Sower⁶³, the Bridegroom⁶⁴, the Pearl⁶⁵, the Lamp⁶⁶, the Light⁶⁷, the King⁶⁸, God⁶⁹, the Enlivener⁷⁰, and the Savior⁷¹”. And he has been called by many [other] names.

[12] I wrote you this short argumentation, my dear, so that you may refute the Jews about the fact that they say that God does not have a Son, and about the fact that we call him “God”, because he is God and King and Firstborn of all creatures. The demonstration about the Messiah, the Son of God, has finished.

⁵⁹ Jn 10, 11.

⁶⁰ Jn 10, 7.

⁶¹ Jn 14, 6.

⁶² Jn 15, 1.

⁶³ Mt 13, 37.

⁶⁴ Mt 9, 15.

⁶⁵ Mt 13, 46.

⁶⁶ Jn 5, 35.

⁶⁷ Jn 1, 9.

⁶⁸ Mt 2, 2; 21, 5; 27, 11.

⁶⁹ Jn 1, 1.

⁷⁰ Jn 5, 21.

⁷¹ Lk 2, 11.

APPENDIX B: BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS IN APHRAHAT'S *DEMONSTRATION 17*

INTRODUCTION TO THE LIST

The question of the version(s) of the OT and the NT read by Aphrahat is a recurrent one in scholarship. The reconstruction of the text used by the Persian Sage in his scriptural quotations is relevant both to Peshitta studies and to the attempts at pinpointing Aphrahat's cultural and intellectual background based on the particular version of the Bible he used¹. The issue of the origin of the quotations is particularly important for a *Demonstration* like the seventeenth, for which the question has been raised of the connection between the nature of the quotations and the Jewish identity of the ostensive addressees of the text. In this "Appendix" I have simply proceeded to lay out a comparison between each biblical quotation recognized by Parisot in his edition of *Demonstration 17* (PARISOT 1907)² and its correspondent in the Peshitta, by underlining all the words which are at variance. In cases of parallels between multiple *loci* in the Scriptures, two different kinds of underlining have been adopted. The aim is to provide a tool for further research on this *Demonstration*. It must be noticed that I only referred to the basic text of the Leiden edition of the Peshitta, without mentioning the variants contained in the critical apparatus. All the quotations appearing in the text

¹ For research on Aphrahat and the Peshitta *cfr.* VÖÖBUS 1950; KALLARAKKAL 1973; BAARDA 1975; OWENS 1983; TAYLOR 1994; LUND 2007; KOSTER 2008; OWENS 2008.

² The list contains—with few exceptions—exclusively the quotations identified and notated by Parisot (who skipped, for example, the whole catalogue of Christological appellatives in § 2, several of which are then repeated in §11).

have been compared with the respectively available Targumim and with the Masoretic Text. Reference to these has been made only in the cases in which it could have accounted for a *lectio* different from the Peshitta. In most of the cases when the Targumic text would have accounted for less than half of the variants found in a verse I chose to make no reference to it, out of the assumption that, had the author been influenced by the Targum in that passage, he would have made use of more *lectiones* carried by that verse³. The quotations are listed according to the books of the Bible from which they are drawn (in the order given by the Jerusalem Bible). References to the text of the *Demonstration* are given in the form [paragraph (column, line)].

³ E.g. in **39** *cfr.* Targ. Jon.: עלוהי ישתקון מלכין. While the use of the future may have derived to Aphrahat from this verse, the closeness to the Peshitta and the distance from the Targum on the order of the words in the second colon of the verse, along with the choice of the verb which is put in the future in the *Demonstration*, makes the chances for this dependence very low. For this reason the verse is not reported.

LIST OF QUOTATIONS

GENESIS

1. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (805, 8) ≈ Pesh. Gen. XLIX, 10

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (805, 8)	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ
Pesh. Gen. XLIX, 10	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

EXODUS

2. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 7) ≈ Pesh. Ex. III, 6

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 7)	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת
Pesh. Ex. III, 6	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת

3. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 11) ≈ Pesh. Ex. III, 14

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 11)	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת
Pesh. Ex. III, 14	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת

(Cfr. Targ. Onk.:

אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר אֱלֹהִים)

4. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 10) = Pesh. Ex. III, 15

5. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 7) ≈ Pesh. Ex. IV, 22-23

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 7)	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת
Pesh. Ex. IV, 22-23	וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת הַיָּם וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת וְאֶת כָּל הַיְּבֵשׁוֹת

6. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 12) = Pesh. Es. VI, 3⁴

7. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 3 (788, 19) = Pesh. Ex. VII, 1

8. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 3 (788, 20) ≈ Pesh. Ex. VII, 1-2

⁴ The editor failed to identify the quotation of אֱלֹהִים.

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 3 (788, 20)	אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי עַל לִי עַל יְהוָה: אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא נְסַרְתִּים לִי וְיִשְׁרָאֵל
Pesh. Ex. VII, 1-2	אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי עַל נְסַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא [...] אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא

(Cfr. Targ. Onk.:

מניתך רב לפרעה ואהרן אחוך יהי מתורגמןך)

9. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 1 (785, 10) = Pesh. Ex. XXXIV, 14

LEVITICUS

10. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 26) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 10) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (800, 10) = Pesh. 2 Cor. VI, 16 ≈ Pesh. Lev. XXVI, 11-12

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 26) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 10) = Aphr. Dem. VII (800, 10) = Pesh. 2 Cor. VI, 16	אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי עַל נְסַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא
Pesh. Lev. XXVI, 11- 12	אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי עַל נְסַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא [...] אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא

DEUTERONOMY

11. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 13) ≈ Pesh. Deut. IV, 19 [?]

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 13)	וְלֹא אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי עַל נְסַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא: אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא נְסַרְתִּים לִי וְיִשְׁרָאֵל לְמַלְאָכָא
Pesh. Deut. IV, 17, 19	וְלֹא אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי עַל נְסַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא: אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא נְסַרְתִּים לִי וְיִשְׁרָאֵל לְמַלְאָכָא: אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא: אֲמַרְתִּים אֲנִי לְמַלְאָכָא

(Cfr. Targ. Onk.:

ודלמא תזקוף עינך לשמיא ותחזי ית שמשא וית סיהרא וית כוכביא כל חילי שמיא ותטעי ותסגוד להון ותפליחינין)

12. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 17) = Pesh. Deut. XIV, 1

13. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 1 (785, 9) ≈ Pesh. Deut. XXXII, 39

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 1 (785, 9)	וְאֵינִי אֲנִי אֱלֹהִים וְאֵינִי לְבִי עַל That I am God and there is no other [god] besides me
Pesh. Deut. XXXII, 39	וְאֵינִי אֲנִי: אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי לְבִי עַל That I am I and there is no god besides me

1 SAMUEL

14. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 1) ≈ Pesh. 1 Sam. XXVIII, 6

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 11)	וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שָׁמְעָה
Pesh. 1 Sam. XXVIII, 6	וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שָׁמְעָה

15. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 23) ≈ Pesh. 1 Sam. XXXI, 10

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 23)	מִבְּרַחֲמֵי יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה
Pesh. 1 Sam. XXXI, 10	וְעַל יְהוָה מִבְּרַחֲמֵי יְהוָה

(Cfr. Targ. Jon.:

וית גופיה צלבו [!] בשורא דבית שן)

16. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 2) ≈ Pesh. 1 Sam. XXXI, 12⁵

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 2)	וְעַל יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה
Pesh. 1 Sam. XXXI, 12	וְעַל יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה

2 SAMUEL

17. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 18) ≈ Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 23) ≈ Pesh. 2 Sam. VII, 14 = Pesh. Heb. I, 5 ≈ Pesh. 1 Chr. XXII, 10

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 18)	וְעַל יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה
Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 23)	וְעַל יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה
Pesh. 2 Sam. VII, 14 = Pesh. Heb. I, 5	וְעַל יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה
Pesh. 1 Chr. XXII, 10	וְעַל יְהוָה וְעַל יְהוָה

CHRONICLES

18. See 17

⁵ The editor failed to identify this quotation.

PSALMS

19. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 9 (804, 10) = Pesh. Ps. II, 7 [?]

20. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 20) ≈ Pesh. Ps. XVI, 10

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 20)	לֹא יִתְּכֹחַ לְעַמִּי לְחַסְדֵּי עַבְדֶּךָ
Pesh. Ps. XVI, 10	לֹא יִתְּכֹחַ לְעַמִּי נִסְתָּר עַבְדֶּךָ

21. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 15) ≈ Pesh. Ps. XVIII, 45

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 15)	כִּתְּרָה נִחְיָרָה וְעַבְדֶּךָ
Pesh. Ps. XVIII, 45	כִּתְּרָה נִחְיָרָה בְּחַלְמָה

(Cfr. Targ. Ps.:

לשמע אודן ישתמעון לי בני עממיא נוכראי יכדבון קדמי)

22. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 1) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 4) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 25) [with alteration of the suffix pronoun] = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 26) [with alteration of the suffix pronoun] = Pesh. Ps. XXII, 17-19

23. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 17) = Aphr. Dem. XXII, XI (813, 17) ≈ Pesh. Ps. XXII, 22

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 17) = Aphr. Dem. XXII, XI (813, 17)	אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתָּ לְעֵינֵי סַבְלָם וְנִגְדָה אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתָּ
Pesh. Ps. XXII, 22	אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתָּ לְעֵינֵי סַבְלָה בְּמַעֲלָה אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתָּ

24. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 4) = Pesh. Ps. XLV, 17

25. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 19) ≈ Pesh. Ps. LXIX, 21

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 19)	יִתְּכֹחַ בְּמַחְבֵּלָה, כִּזְוִיא סְלִי טַגַּע עַל אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתָּ
Pesh. Ps. LXIX, 21	יִתְּכֹחַ בְּמַחְבֵּלָה, כִּזְוִיא סְלִי טַגַּע עַל אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתָּ

(Cfr. Targ. Ps.:

ויהבו בסעודתי מרירת רישי חורמני ולצחותי אשקיין יתי חלא)

26. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 22) = Pesh. Ps. LXIX, 26

27. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (800, 15) ≈ Pesh. Ps. LXXIII, 22 [?]

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (800, 15)	אָנף כּוּנָא עֲזַבְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן.
Pesh. Ps. LXXIII, 21	כּוּנָא סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן

(Cfr. Targ. Ps.:

הַיָּד בְּעִירֵי אֵיתְחַשְׁבִּית גִּבְד)

28. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 25) ≈ Pesh. Ps. LXXXII, 6

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 25)	אַחַר אֲמַרְתּוּ וְאַלְמַסְתּוּ אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ, וְגִזְמַתְכוֹן חֲלַבְתּוּ
Pesh. Ps. LXXXII, 6	אַחַר אֲמַרְתּוּ וְאַלְמַסְתּוּ אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ: סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן, וְגִזְמַתְכוֹן חֲלַבְתּוּ

(Cfr. Targ. Ps.:

אֲנִי אֲמַרְתִּית הַיָּד כְּמַלְאכֵיָא [!] אֲתוֹן חֲשִׁיבִין וְהַיָּד אֲנַגְלִי [!] מְרוּמָא כּוּלְכוֹן)

29. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (792, 1) = Pesh. Ps. LXXXII, 7 [with variant כּוּנָא instead of אֲשַׁר]

30. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (796, 3) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 9) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 15) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (797, 26) ≈ Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 25) ≈ Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (797, 19) ≈ Pesh. Ps. XC, 1-2

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (796, 3) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 9) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 15) = Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (797, 26)	זִכְרָא כִּתְּבַתְּ כּוּנָא סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן לְ לִזְזוּיָא בְּנֵא טַכְלֵפְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲשַׁר אֲרִיזָא סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ: סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן חֲלַבְתּוּן לְגַבְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן
Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (796, 25)	בְּנֵא טַכְלֵפְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲשַׁר לְגַבְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן ⁶
Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (797, 19)	זִכְרָא כִּתְּבַתְּ כּוּנָא סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן לְ לִזְזוּיָא בְּנֵא טַכְלֵפְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲשַׁר אֲרִיזָא סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ: סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן חֲלַבְתּוּן לְגַבְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן
Pesh. Ps. XC, 1-2	זִכְרָא כִּתְּבַתְּ כּוּנָא סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן לְ לִזְזוּיָא בְּנֵא טַכְלֵפְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲשַׁר אֲרִיזָא: סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ: סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן חֲלַבְתּוּן לְגַבְתּוּן אֲתֵלְמַסְתּוּ סְגֻמָּתְכוֹן

31. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 9 (804, 11) = Pesh. Ps. CX, 3

ISAIAH

⁶ אֲרִיזָא may be an addition of the author, not conceived as part of the quotation; in that case, the *lectio* would be congruent with all the others.

32. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 15) = Pesh. Is. I, 1-2

33. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 9 (805, 3) ≈ Pesh. Is. VII, 14 ≈ Pesh. Mt. I, 23

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 9 (805, 3)	
Pesh. Is. VII, 14	
Pesh. Mt. I, 23	

34. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 9 (804, 13) ≈ Aphr. Dem. XII, IX (804, 26) ≈ Pesh. Is. IX, 6-7

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 9 (804, 13)	
Aphr. Dem. XII, IX (804, 26)	
Pesh. Is. IX, 6-7	

35. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 20) = Pesh. Is. XLI, 8

36. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 7 (800, 1) = Pesh. Is. XLIV, 6 = Pesh. Is. XLVIII, 12

37. See 36

38. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 5) ≈ Pesh. Is. LII, 13-14

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 5)	
Pesh. Is. LII, 13-14	

39. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 9) ≈ Pesh. Is. LII, 15

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 9)	
Pesh. Is. LII, 15	

40. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 11) = Pesh. Is. LIII, 2

41. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 14) = Pesh. Is. LIII, 5 ≈ Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (813, 3)

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (808, 14) = Pesh. Is.	
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LIII, 5	
Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (813, 3)	אם ארומלך חרל חמל: ארומחבב חרל שלמת

42. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (813, 2) = Pesh. Is. LIII, 10

JEREMIAH

43. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (796, 1) = Pesh. Jer. VII, 5

44. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (792, 21) ≈ Pesh. Jer. XXVII, 8

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (792, 21)	כל חכר מלחמה וכל נל י מיו מימי ויבחרתי ו חלי חלקי חבד: כפני סכוכר סכוכהר אפסו: כל חכר אם
Pesh. Jer. XXVII, 8	חכר מלחמה וכל יקלסו ליבחרתי ו חלקי וכל: חלי נל י מיו מימי ויבחרתי: סוכר סכוכהר אפסו: כל חכר אם

45. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 12) ≈ Pesh. Jer. XXXII, 18

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 5 (792, 12)	אנסו י כחש
Pesh. Jer. XXXII, 18	חכר שלוש

(Cfr. Targ. Jon.:

י"י צבאות)

DANIEL

46. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (805, 16) ≈ Pesh. Dan. IX, 26-27

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (805, 16)	כך חזו עתה עמי חזיון נראה חסר סומלל: סכוכהר מיוהר נסוהר חושל: ארומלחבב חרל: סוכר ליבחרתי ויבחרתי חושל כל חכר
Pesh. Dan. IX, 26-27	סכוכהר עתה עמי חזיון יבחרתי חסר סומלל: סוכהר חושל: חושל חכר נראה: מימי חרל: סוכר ליבחרתי ויבחרתי ויבחרתי חושל

HOSEA

47. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 12) ≈ Pesh. Hos. XI, 1-2

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 4 (789, 12)	כך חזיון מיוהר חז. ארומלחבב חרל סוכר ארומלחבב חרל חושל חושל חושל
Pesh. Hos. XI, 1-2	כך חזיון מיוהר חז. ארומלחבב חרל סוכר ארומלחבב חרל חושל: חושל חושל חושל

ZECHARIA

48. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 15) ≈ Pesh. Mt XXVI, 31 ≈ Pesh. Mk XIV, 27 ≈ Pesh. Zech. XIII, 7

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 15)	אִתְּכֶם אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי
Pesh. Zech. XIII, 7	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי
Pesh. Mt XXVI, 31	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי
Pesh. Mk XIV, 27	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי

49. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 11) ≈ Pesh. Zech. XIV, 6

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 11)	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי
Pesh. Zech. XIV, 6	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי

50. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 3) ≈ Pesh. Zech. XIV, 7

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (812, 3)	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי
Pesh. Zech. XIV, 7	אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי הָיִיתִי

(Cfr. MT:

והיה יום-אחד הוא יודע ליהוה לא-יום ולא-לילה)

MATTHEW

51. See 33

52. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 23) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Mt. II, 2 = Pesh. Mt. XXI, 5 [with a suffix pronoun] = Pesh. Mt. XXVII, 11 [?]

53. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 22) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Mt. IX, 15

54. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 22) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Mt. XIII, 37

55. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 22) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Mt. XIII, 46

56. See 52

57. See 48

58. See 52

MARK

59. See 48

LUKE

60. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 24) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Lk. II, 11

JOHN

61. 1. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 23) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Jn. I, 1

62. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 23) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Jn. I, 9 = Pesh. Jn. VIII, 12 [twice (once with a suffix pronoun)]

63. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (809, 22) = Pesh. Jn I, 11

64. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 23) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Jn. V, 35


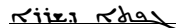
65. See 62

66. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Jn. X, 7 [with a suffix pronoun]

67. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Jn. X, 11

68. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] = Pesh. Jn. XIV, 6

69. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 22) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] ≈ Pesh. Jn. XV, 1

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 22)	
Pesh. Jn. XV, 1	

70. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (813, 19) = Pesh. Jn. XV, 15

71. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 24) [in the context of the listing of Christological appellatives in Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 21-24)] ≈ Pesh. Jn. V, 21

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 11 (813, 24)	ܡܫܚܐ
Pesh. Jn. V, 21	ܡܫܚܐ

ROMANS

72. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 8 (801, 4) ≈ Pesh. Rom. XII, 10

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 8 (801, 4)	ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ
Pesh. Rom. XII, 10	ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ

1 CORINTHIANS

73. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 3 (800, 9) = Pesh. 1 Cor. III, 16

2 CORINTHIANS

74. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (813, 5) ≈ Pesh. 2 Cor. V, 21

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 10 (813, 5)	ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ
Pesh. 2 Cor. V, 21	ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ

75. See 10

EPHESIANS

76. Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 1) ≈ Pesh. Eph. III, 15

Aphr. Dem. XVII, 6 (793, 1)	ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ
Pesh. Eph. III, 15	ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ ܡܫܚܐ

HEBREWS

77. See 17

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