

**ENTANGLED LITERARY
GENRES IN SYRIAC FROM
MALABAR IN THE
AFTERMATH OF THE
SYNOD OF DIAMPER
(1599)**

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Entangled Literary Genres in Syriac from Malabar in the Aftermath of the Synod of Diamper (1599)

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ABSTRACT During the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, the Syriac literary heritage of the Malabar Christians shifted from a standard East Syriac (“Nestorian”) canon of texts to a Catholic post-Tridentine literary output in Syriac, a fusion of Western (Latin) and Middle Eastern (Syriac) sources and elements. The present article analyzes the literary networks of the community of the Malabar Christians, as expressed in the production of Syriac texts undertaken by the Catholic missionaries and arguably their Indian Syriacist pupils. The period under investigation is around the time of the Synod of Diamper (1599), a turning point in the ecclesiastical history of Malabar. The synod marked the Portuguese’s attempt to impose Tridentine Catholicism on the Malabar Christians and ordered to correct their Syriac books according to Catholic Orthodoxy or burn them as heretical. My paper focuses on the relationship between (1) collections of sermons and (2) liturgical poetry, since these two are entangled literary genres. Occasionally Syriac sermons (translated from Latin or composed on the spot by Catholic missionaries) were replicated in liturgical poetry and show the chains of transmission of Syriac knowledge from Catholic teachers (especially Jesuits) to their Indian students. Such relationship between literary genres comes clearly to the fore in the case of prose compositions coming arguably from the Syriacising circles of Francisco Ros, the first European Bishop of the Malabar Christians (1601–1624), and newly discovered pieces of Syriac poetry which might have been written by his Indian disciple Alexander the Indian/Kadavil Chandy Kattanar (1588–1673). The groups of texts under discussion show the transfer of knowledge from both the Latin West and the Syriac-speaking Middle East that created a new theological literary culture for the Malabar Christians as an expression of the Jesuit missionary principle of *accommodatio*. Source analysis of such texts allows one to dive into various aspects of the ecclesiastical and confessional life of the Malabar Christians, and into the cross-cultural encounters between them and the Catholic missionaries.

KEYWORDS Religious and cultural transfers in Malabar, intellectual history, Syriac studies, Jesuit studies, early modern global Catholicism, liturgical poetry, collections of Syriac Catholic sermons

Introduction

The second half of the sixteenth century witnessed manifold transformations in the religious life of the Malabar Christians from South India. Up to that time, the functioning of the ecclesiastical structures of the local Christian community—known as ‘Saint Thomas Christians’ and claiming Syriac identity—depended highly on bishops consecrated and sent to the Malabar Coast by the Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East, from Iraq. As Heleen Murre-van den Berg emphasizes, since the end of the fifteenth century “after almost two centuries of near isolation, the Church of the East in Mesopotamia was reconnected to the wider world; its clergy started to travel and influences from outside began to impact upon its internal development” (Murre-van den Berg 2015, 23). In this context, the contacts between the Church of the East and the Indian Church from the Malabar Coast “were resumed in the late fifteenth century, testifying to the important fact that, in this period, the Church of the East was being reintegrated into a global network of political and ecclesiastical contacts” (ibid.). Since 1553, when the ‘Uniate’ counterpart of the Church of the East, the Chaldean Catholic Church, was created, both the East Syriac and the Chaldean Patriarchs sent metropolitan bishops to Malabar and contended for their own jurisdiction over the South Indian Christian community. According to the same scholar, in the context of renewed contacts and communication between the Indian Church and the East Syriac Christians from Iraq, the creation of the Chaldean Catholic Church in the Middle East “seems to have been stimulated as much by the ‘pull-factor’ of a Roman Catholic presence in India as by the ‘push-factor’ of the incumbent [East Syriac] patriarch’s misconduct” (Murre-van den Berg 2015, 47). In 1552, the abbot of the Rabban Hormizd Monastery (near Alqosh, in Iraq), John Sulaqa, revolted against the existing Patriarch, Simeon bar Mama, and went to Rome, where he made a Catholic profession of faith and was re-ordained and appointed Catholicos Patriarch by the pope in the spring of 1553 (on this matter, see Murre-van den Berg 2015, 44–54; Beltrami 1933).

In competition with the East-Syriac and Chaldean bishops coming from Iraq to India, the Portuguese, present in Malabar since the end of the fifteenth century, attempted to control the religious life of the Malabar Christians by cutting off their connection with the Syriac Iraqi prelates and by imposing on them Tridentine Catholicism. A process of ‘Latinization,’ carried through by the Catholic missionaries active in the area during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, had two main objectives. The first one was to achieve Catholic Orthodoxy in terms of doctrine, rites, and jurisdiction by uprooting the Syriac identity of the Malabar Christians and purging their Syriac books from what the Catholic missionaries considered “Nestorian” heresy (in this sense, the Syriac language was often regarded by the European missionaries as a vehicle for heresy). The second objective was to suppress many of the social and cultural customs and practices which the Malabar Christians adopted as a result of their interaction with and integration into the local society of Malabar. Examples include the observance of the rules on purity and untouchability, the practice of charms, magic, and divination, the participation in the festivals of their non-Christian neighbors, and the adoption of the dress, appearance and habits of the Nayers by the Malabar Christians (an overview of these customs are listed in the Ninth Action of Acts of the Synod of Diamper entitled “On the Reformation of Manners;” see Da Cunha Rivara 1862, 488-519).

These two tendencies are mirrored in the decrees of the Synod of Diamper (1599), a turning point in the history of the Malabar Christians, which also placed this Christian community under the direct authority of the Latin archbishop of Goa. Yet, the Syriac rites and language

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in the liturgy as well as many of the local social customs were part of the identity of Malabar Christians, and the missionary strategies used by the Catholic clergy among them needed to be refined. In order to make their missionary enterprise efficient, the missionaries (especially the Jesuits) felt the need to negotiate the borders between social and religious customs and practice, and to redefine them in the light of the local multicultural and multireligious society of Malabar (see Županov 1996). They also adjusted the Catholic dogma, theological discourse and European erudition to the East Syriac tradition of liturgy and theology. This East Syriac tradition formed a rich corpus of literature that reached the Malabar Coast through the repeated contacts of the Malabar Christians with the Middle East (see Perczel 2018, 2015). As shown by Ines Županov, it is through their interaction with the Malabar Christians that the Jesuits elaborated for the first time their missionary strategy of “separating the social from the religious” and of developing “a permissive and flexible attitude towards the diversity of the pre-Christian social customs” (Županov 2005, 287–88), a strategy conventionally known in secondary literature as the principle of *accommodatio* (see Županov 2005). The importance of the Jesuit mission and of the practice of *accommodatio* among Malabar Christians has been substantiated and analyzed by Antony Mecherry in his work *Testing Ground for Jesuit Accommodation in Early Modern India: Francisco Ros SJ in Malabar (16th–17th Centuries)* (see Mecherry 2019). Mecherry analyzes the practice of *accommodatio* promoted by Francisco Ros, the first European Archbishop of the Malabar Christians, among the South Indian Christians, and stresses that the Jesuit prelate was as important for the practice of *accommodatio* in the Early Modern Catholic missions in Asia as other prominent missionaries, such as Alessandro Valignano in Japan, Matteo Ricci in China, or Roberto de Nobili in Tamil Nadu (Mecherry 2019, 431). In Mecherry’s words:

Given the dilemma faced by the missionaries, namely an underlying conflict between the faith that they wanted to import to India and the local culture that resisted such imports, Malabar turned out to be the primary testing ground of the Jesuit accommodation. [...] The Jesuit praxis of accommodation was a “a way-out” approach promoted by Francisco Ros and Roberto de Nobili in their attempt to respond to the local resistance of the people of Malabar. In this process, Ros appeared as a Chaldean in terms of his imitation and appropriation of the traditions of the Malabar Church and Nobili appeared as a high-caste sage in terms of his imitation and appropriation of the customs and symbols of the Brahmins of Madurai. While Ros [...] tried to perpetuate the Syriac language and the Indo-Oriental format of the Malabar Church, Nobili presented the Catholic religion before his potential converts as a universal faith that was compatible with their cultural symbolism. (2019, XXXI)

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As an expression of this complex missionary context, during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries, the Syriac literary heritage of the Malabar Christians shifted from a standard East Syriac (“Nestorian”) canon of texts to a Catholic post-Tridentine literary production in Syriac, a fusion of Western (Latin) and Middle Eastern (Syriac) sources and elements (see Perczel 2009). While, with one exception,¹ Syriac manuscript evidence from Malabar does not date earlier than the sixteenth century, in the sixteenth century, when substantial Syriac manuscript evidence from Malabar is available, Syriac emerges

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1 The exception is MS Vaticanus Syriacus 22 copied in Šēnglē, in 1301; see on it Van der Ploeg (1983, 187–89).

as the liturgical language of this Christian community, being endowed with prestige as the sacred language of the learned priestly elite (see Perczel 2018, 193–95). The Syriac literary output conducted in Malabar under the agency of the Catholic missionaries during the second half of the sixteenth and first decades of the seventeenth centuries is an important witness to the literary networks of the community of the Malabar Christians at that time. It encompasses various literary genres, such as sermons and homilies, liturgical poetry, theological treatises, commentaries, translations, and original creations (Perczel 2009, 295–317). Source analysis of such texts allows one to explore various aspects of the ecclesiastical and confessional identity of the Malabar Christians as well as the cross-cultural encounters between them and the Catholic missionaries.

Besides announcing the discovery and emphasizing the importance of several such Syriac Indian compositions from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Malabar, pioneering studies by István Perczel have shown how the cosmopolitanism of the Arabian Sea facilitated the circulation of Syriac texts from the Middle East to the Malabar Coast. In Malabar, through the agency of the Jesuit missionaries, the Syriac Middle Eastern culture met the theological erudition of the Latin West, leading to the creation of this new original Catholic culture in Syriac based on European, Middle Eastern and local sources from Malabar (Perczel 2015, 2009). Perczel also showed how this newly created literature in Syriac, stimulated mainly by the Jesuit missionaries and their Indian disciples, was intended as a means of *accommodatio* in the context of a controversy about the Chaldean rite analogous to controversies about other rites in Asia, and is thus of crucial importance for understanding early modern Catholicism and the history of Catholic missions in a global perspective (Perczel 2018, 2014).

Within the same theoretical framework, in the following paragraphs I would like to focus on a special case of textual *accommodatio*² that reveals this missionary strategy among the Malabar Christians as an enterprise shared by Catholic missionaries (most likely the Jesuits) and arguably their Indian Syriacist disciples. The central point of my analysis is the entanglement between two literary genres in Syriac from the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries—namely (1) prose sermons and (2) newly discovered liturgical poetry—since occasionally Syriac sermons (translated from Latin or composed on the spot by Catholic missionaries) were reused or replicated in liturgical poetry. As I will try to show, the study of these two groups of texts together is an important witness to the amalgamation of the East Syriac heritage of Malabar Christians and Indian Catholicism as promoted by Western Catholic missionaries. Such texts also illustrate the chains of transmission of knowledge from the Jesuit teachers to their Indian pupils.

Syriac Catholic *Paideia* and the Collections of Syriac Catholic Sermons from Malabar

Most of the Syriac texts that I will discuss henceforth belong to the Syriacist circles of Francisco

2 Whenever I am using the term ‘textual *accommodatio*’ in this paper, I refer to a degree of flexibility that favoured the adaptation and the hybridization between the European Catholic tradition and the Syriac literary culture of the Church of the East, as this tendency is reflected in the production of new Syro-Catholic theological texts from Malabar. I am not implying that at an early stage of the Catholic mission in Malabar the missionaries had a preconceived plan of *accommodatio*, nor am I trying to project way back into the sixteenth century a more elaborated system of *accommodatio* as it was later developed in the Madurai mission by Roberto de Nobili. I would like to thank Paolo Aranha for his advice on this methodological matter.

Ros, a polyglot Jesuit missionary to India who, in 1587, became Professor of Syriac language at the Jesuit Seminary of Vaipicotta in Chennamangalam. Ros was entrusted with the ‘correction’ of the Syriac books from Malabar following the synod of Diamper. Later on, he became the first European Bishop of the Malabar Christians (1601–1624) and was the patron and defender of Roberto de Nobili, the most controversial accommodationist missionary in the Indian rites controversy, from Tamil Nādu (on Francisco Ros, see Mecherry 2019; Ferolli 1939, 1:291–360; Thekkedath 1988, 2:75–79). Under the supervision of Ros, a considerable number of Syriac compositions (both translations/adaptations from Latin and original creations) were created in Malabar in the late sixteenth and the first decades of the seventeenth centuries (see Perczel 2018, 214–25). Before assessing the importance and value of several Syriac compositions coming from him and his Syriacist circles (which are the object of the present study), it is necessary to make some preliminary remarks on what the Syriac heritage of the Malabar Christians looked like before the Jesuits started to teach Syriac in their seminary at Vaipicotta in the 1580s. This provides a general context on the emergence of these Syro-Catholic texts from Malabar and allows one to link them to the previous Syriac textual tradition of the South Indian Christian community.

As far as one can rely on the preserved and clearly dated evidence, the Syriac manuscript material from Malabar up to the 1560s generally consists of standard East Syriac literature, mostly liturgical material. Indicative in this sense are, for instance, the Syriac manuscripts from Malabar (either locally copied or brought from the Middle East to South India) preserved in the Vatican Library and discussed by Van der Ploeg in his book (1983, 184–203). Most of them are standard East Syriac liturgical and biblical books belonging to the various Syriac prelates from Iraq, consecrated and sent by their Patriarchs to the Malabar Coast for the local Christian community (ibid.). Such works continued to be copied and eventually adapted by diligent local scribes fond of their Syriac Church and culture. It is possible that many of the East Syriac books condemned by the Synod of Diamper had belonged only to a very learned ecclesiastical elite directly related to the circle of Mar Abraham (?–1597), the last Chaldean Metropolitan of the Malabar Christians before the Synod of Diamper (Perczel 2013, for the list of condemned books, see Da Cunha Rivara 1862, 328–337). Yet, the continuous copying of several such condemned works by the Malayalee Syriacist scribes, throughout the centuries, is an indicator that at least some of these titles had been circulating and continued to circulate among the Malabar Christians before and after Diamper (Perczel 2013).

In competition and complementary to this, in the second half of the sixteenth century a new Syriac Catholic culture started to develop in Malabar comprising both translations/adaptations from Latin and original creations meant to contend with East Syriac sources of authority. The earliest dated Syro-Catholic compositions to be used in the Catholic mission among the Malabar Christians are from the year 1567.³ It is possible that these Catholic texts were produced in response to the fact that by the early 1560s Mar Joseph, the Chaldean Metropolitan of Malabar and the brother of the first Chaldean Patriarch, John Sulaqa, refused to ordain to priesthood Malayalee pupils trained by the Franciscans in their seminary at Cochin on account of their ignorance of the Syriac rites and language (Thekkedath 1988, 2:44). To the year 1567 one can link such works as a collection of *testimonia* from the Greek and Latin Church Fathers on the primacy of Saint Peter over the whole Church and an un-

3 I have not included here the text “on the administration of the Holy Orders” translated from Latin into Syriac by Mar Joseph, the Metropolitan of Malabar, comprised between fol. 1–10 of MS Vatican Syriac 66, as it is not clearly dated; on this matter, see Van der Ploeg (1983, 193–95). Apparently, the text is related to Mar Joseph’s detention in Bassein (v. 1983, 194).

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titled sermon on the Elevation of the Cross which belongs to a larger corpus of sermons for various feast-days and commemorations of saints.⁴ I have referred elsewhere to this collection as “the Malabar Sermonary” (Mustață 2020). The core of the collection of sermons (including the sermon on the Elevation of the Cross) seems to be based on a Latin/Western model, and there is need for further philological work in order to identify its source(s). The Indian Syriacist scribes either copied the sermons in independent collections with a life of their own, or inserted some of the sermons in miscellanies.

After the Synod of Diamper, other sermons were added to the collection and the Malayali scribes continued to copy and adapt these texts until the nineteenth century.⁵ Many of the later additions to the collection are examples of Syriac textual *accommodatio* and must have been composed within the Syriacist circles of Francisco Ros. Such is, for instance, a sermon on Saint Thomas the Apostle, an original composition based on both Latin and Spanish sources from Europe and Syriac Middle Eastern sources (see Mustață 2019) that I will further refer to and which must have been composed sometime in the first decades of the seventeenth century, after 1601. The augmented collection of sermons comprising initial adaptations from European source(s) (done around the year 1567) and enriched further with original creations addressing the audience of the Malabar Christians might have been used for teaching purposes, perhaps for the instruction of future priests in the seminary. This is suggested by the fact that after 1653 (when the Malabar Christians revolted against the Portuguese and the Jesuit Archbishops) the West Syriac branch of Syriac Christians from Malabar reedited and reused this sermonary and even composed sermons according to the prescriptions of the European medieval *artes praedicandi* (manuals for writing model sermons) in order to polemicize with their Syro-Catholic rivals. This practice of writing sermons in Syriac while observing the rules of European medieval *artes praedicandi* was already embedded in the compositions belonging to the Malabar Sermonary (see Mustață 2020).

Together with a variety of other literary and theological texts, the sermonary seems to have constituted the basis of Syriac institution in Malabar at the turn of seventeenth century. Most of this literary output arguably reflects the activity of Francisco Ros and can be understood as an expression of textual *accommodatio* (Perzel 2018, 214–25). Among other items, this corpus of Syriac literature comprises original theological treatises on various topics, compilations on canon-law, Syriac-Garshuni Malayalam explanations on the books of the Bible, translations from Latin of biblical or Patristic works (such as a translation of the Revelation of John on the basis of the Vulgate and a translation of Pseudo-Dionysius’ “Mystical Theology” from the Latin version by Ambrogio Traversari), and commentaries on various biblical works by Western authors such as Denis the Carthusian (see Perzel 2009, 2008); all these works need further study. While there is need for substantial research in order to establish the precise date and authorship of these texts, they still provide the general picture of a Syriac *paideia* in Malabar against which the texts referred to further on can be better understood.

Almost a century later, a similar Catholic literary movement in Syriac took place in the Middle East after the establishment of the Capuchin mission in Aleppo in 1667. In this context of Catholic consolidation, many Catholic literary and theological works were compiled, composed, and translated into Syriac through the literary activity of learned men such as

4 The texts are comprised between fol. 33r–37v and 113r–118r of the manuscript. On this, see I. Perzel’s description of the manuscript in Mustață (2019, 97–103); the MS is also mentioned in Thelley (2004, 268).

5 Two such examples are MSS Mannanam Syriac 46 (described by I. Perzel in Mustață 2019, 97–103) and Thrissur Syriac 17 (on this MS, see Mustață 2019, 103–12; Van der Ploeg 1983, 145, Mar Aprem 2011, 16).

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Joseph II Šliba, the Patriarch of the Chaldeans (1696–1714) (see Murre-van den Berg 2015, 60–68). The Syriac Catholic material from the Middle East was usually compiled or translated from Latin into Syriac through the intermediary of already existing Arabic translations (2015, 245–52). Compared to this, the distinctive textual peculiarity of the Syriac Catholic texts from Malabar seems to be precisely the fact that they lack such an Arabic intermediary; thus, from a global perspective, they enrich our understanding of the variety of Catholic missions among different groups of Syriac Christians in different parts of the world, in the early modern times.

The Canticles of Glorification for the Night Service and the Malabar Catholic Revision of the *Ḥudrā*

In order to unravel the entanglement between Syro-Catholic sermons from the Malabar Sermonary and pieces of Syriac liturgical poetry from Malabar on the basis of compared manuscript analysis, I will mainly show how a newly discovered group of hymns belonging to the genre of “canticle of glorification” (ܬܫܒܘܚܬܐ) [Syr. *tešboḥtā*⁶] was composed in Malabar and how they circulated both in anthologies and liturgical manuscripts. I will also explain the relationship of these new compositions to the already existing Syriac liturgical poetry belonging to the literary heritage of the Church of the East. I will define the place of this type of poetry within the ritual: the stanzas of these new hymns from Malabar were inserted as *propers* in the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* under the title “anthems” (ܠܫܝܪܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] according to a pattern which already existed in the Middle East but has been little documented so far in secondary literature; the *Ḥudrā* and the *Gazzā* are two complementary collections and can be seen together as a *breviary*, a collection of hymns and services, for the main festivals of the liturgical year. Another question that I will try to answer is: What is the relationship of these produced locally hymns to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Syriac Catholic collections of sermons from Malabar and to the Latin hymnography of the Roman Breviary approved by the Council of Trent? I will also discuss as a working hypothesis the evidence for ascribing these poetical compositions to the authorship of the Indian Syriacist poet Alexander of the Port/Kadavil Chandy Kattanar (1588–1673), author of religious and humanistic erudite poetry and a disciple of Francisco Ros. I will bring forward three textual examples in order to reconstruct the history of these texts from ritual books back to the workshop of their skillful author(s) and show the sources and chains of Syriac knowledge in Malabar after the Synod of Diamper (1599).

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In a pioneering study from 2014, István Perczel reported about the discovery of seven *memrē* by Alexander of the Port (Kadavil Chandy Kattanar) comprised in a South Indian manuscript: MS Mannanam Syriac 63 (Perczel 2014). The name of the poet does not appear in the manuscript, but the manuscript comprises, among other things, a *memrā* on the Eucharist, which the Indian poet sent to Pope Alexander VII in 1657. The poem on the Eucharist is also preserved under Kadavil Chandy’s name in another manuscript (MS Mannanam Syriac 99: fol. 149r–160v) (Perczel 2014, 32–34). Perczel established that out of the eight poems of similar structure and style comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 63, seven are by Kadavil Chandy while the eighth poem is written by a medieval East Syriac poet from the thirteenth century, Gabriel Qamša of Mosul (2014, 42–43); the poem by Gabriel of Mosul served as

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6 Whenever I transliterated Syriac words in this paper, I did not mark the initial and final *ālap*, the spirantisation of the consonants and the doubling of the consonants within the words (except for words which are well known in this form, such as *Gazzā*).

the model for the poetry of Kadavil Chandy (2014, 36–40). While analyzing the content of a *memrā* on the Syriac language by Kadavil Chandi, Perczel showed its reliance on an untitled Catholic treatise against heresies in Syriac, which is comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 123v–135r (2014, 42–43). This miscellaneous manuscript is the oldest copy of the Malabar Sermonary. In order to show the intertextuality between liturgical hymns from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā* and *Gazzā* and sermons from the Malabar Sermonary, I follow Perczel’s analysis.

I will begin with the case study of an eighteenth/early nineteenth century manuscript preserved in the library of the Metropolitan Palace of the Church of the East in Thrissur. MS Thrissur Syriac 62 is an interesting anthology (a pocket-book) and contains Syriac and Garshuni Malayalam material.⁷ The manuscript, which does not contain any colophon or date, can be dated to the eighteenth/early nineteenth century on paleographical grounds.⁸ It is written in a special type of Indian East Syriac script that does not seem fully developed as a local Indian variant of the East Syriac script when compared to other Syriac Indian manuscripts from the nineteenth century [on this type of script, see Briquel-Chatonnet and Desreumaux (2010)]. For the sake of the present discussion, I have conventionally divided its contents into five main sections/parts:

- 1) fol. **1r–11r**: A fragment from the Eucharistic celebration (according to the revised rite of Francisco Ros) and other liturgical fragments;
- 2) fol. **11v–33r**: A short catechetical work in Garshuni Malayalam, in the form of questions and answers;
- 3) fol. **33v–99v**: Poetical works by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar/Alexander the Indian, a Syriacist Indian poet, disciple of the Jesuits, and other pieces of poetry which resemble in style the compositions of the same poet;
- 4) fol. **99v–110r**: A couple of anthem-like canticles which seem to be part of the ritual for various feast days.
- 5) fol. **110v–120v**: The Litany of the Saints, the Marian Litany (translated from Latin) and other hymns and liturgical fragments.

The third part of the manuscript (fol. 33v–99v) that is important for the present discussion consists of poems belonging to Kadavil Chandy Kattanar (1588–1673), an Indian priest and Syriacist poet (a disciple of Francisco Ros), and other religious pieces of poetry similar in style which have been taken out of their liturgical context in an anthological manner. An important figure in the general revolt of the Malabar Christians against their Jesuit bishops and the Portuguese from 1653 (see Thekkedath 1988, 2:91–109; Pallath 2006), Kadavil Chandy Kattanar became one of the four advisors of the newly consecrated Archdeacon Thomas Pakalomattam (Thekkedath 1988, 2:92), who later joined the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and became Mor Toma I, the metropolitan of the so-called “New Faction/New Allegiance” (in Malayalam, Puthankūru) among the Malabar Christians (1988, 2:100–102). Further on, in 1663, a part of the Malabar Christians who had previously revolted against the Portuguese and the Jesuit Archbishops returned to the fold of the Catholic Church. This happened as an outcome of the fact that Parambil Chandy, the cousin of Archdeacon Thomas, was consecrated as the

7 See Mar Aprem 2011, 28; the manuscript contains 236 pages (size: 15.3x9.8 cm; written surface: 12.5x6 cm); as I worked with a digital copy of the manuscript, I took the size of the manuscript from Mar Aprem’s description.

8 As I worked with digital copy, I have not seen the paper watermark of the manuscript.

morning (ܘܨܦܪܐ) [Syr. *ṣapṛā*] in the Chaldean tradition from Iraq, the difference between the manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* and those of the *Gazzā* is that “*Gazzā* contains only compositions belonging to the night vigil; such pieces are not to be found in the *Ḥudrā*; the two books are therefore complementary to each other” (Mateos 1956, 11). The same scholar asserts that

Ḥudrā is the book which contains the oldest services for all days of the ecclesiastical year. Later compositions have been reunited in another volume, namely the *Gazzā*. The content of the *Gazzā* is exclusively dedicated to the night vigil. Actually, this vigil is the last one to have been organized among the liturgical hours. Being an anthology, *Gazzā* shows notable variations with respect to contents from one volume to another. Basically, in each monastery, the poet monks could add new pieces of poetry according to their own will. (1956, 12)

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Be this as it may, the liturgical manuscripts containing the Malabar Catholic revision of these two collections usually form a single corpus combining both parts in a single codex, and the manuscripts do not display a clear division between *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*. Occasionally, the scribes would group the temporal section (services for Sundays) in a volume and the sanctoral section (commemorations of saints and feast days with fixed date) in another one, but even this is inconsistent, since feast days such as the Ascension of Christ and the Pentecost (which belong to the temporal section of the liturgical year) usually end up in the sanctoral part. Therefore, whenever I refer to the “Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*” in what follows, it is only a convention in order designate manuscripts combining both the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*; I prefer to use the term *Ḥudrā* over *Gazzā*, as I have not encountered the term *Gazzā* in any manuscript containing this Catholic revision of the ritual from Malabar. Also, for comparison I have used three other manuscripts for the analogous East Syriac ritual from the Middle East, namely MS Thrissur Syriac 27 (on this manuscript, see Othottil 2011, 71–84) and MSS Vatican Syriac 86 and 87. MSS Thrissur Syriac 27 and Vatican Syriac 86 bear the title *Ḥudrā*, while MS Vatican Syriac 87 begins directly with the services without a generic title (on the two *Ḥudrā* MSS from the Vatican Library, see Assemani and Assemani 1758, 476–82; Van der Ploeg 1983, 196–97).

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In order to determine the liturgical place of the canticles of glorification,²¹ I looked into the services of various feast days and commemorations of saints from several South Indian

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revised edition of it, which he tried to simplify and uniformize on the basis of the existing manuscripts; he is also said to have added some other prayers translated from the Roman Breviary. This edition, usually known as ‘Chavara’s Breviary’, was sent to the head of the Congregation *De propaganda fide* in Rome for approval since 1862, but apparently the authorities in Rome did not answer this petition during the lifetime of Chavara. However, Chavara published an edition of his breviary in India (without approval from the authorities in Rome) in Koonammavu (nowadays a Northern suburb of Cochin), perhaps in three volumes, according to A. Vallavanthara (out of which only the first volume is still known to have survived in the library of the Mannanam library, but it is not even clear whether the other two volumes have ever been published). The content of this printed volume has been discussed by Fr. Vallavanthara (see Vallavanthara, *Liturgical Contributions of Blessed Chavara*, available online: <http://christianmusicologicalsocietyofindia.com/chavara-vallavanthara>, last accessed December 16, 2019). Another “breviary”/ version of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* “greatly different from the one [Chavara] organized” and is said to “have been introduced in the Malabar Church on the 4th February 1876” (ibid.). I have consulted a handwritten copy of Chavara’s Breviary for the present study, MS Mannanam Syriac 33.

21 In scholarly literature, the existence of the series of (ܘܨܦܪܐ) [Syr. *ḥpākātā*] for the night service has been already mentioned in two articles by Sr. Jincy Othottil. When referring to the differences between the services for the commemoration of the Virgin Mary in two East Syriac MSS of the *Ḥudrā* from the Library of the Metropolitan Palace of the Church of the East in Thrissur, i.e., MSS Thrissur Syriac 27 and 29, Sr. Othottil mentions that from the MS Thrissur Syriac 29 “in the night prayer are missing the long (ܘܨܦܪܐ) hymns and

liturgical manuscripts (ranging from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries) and from a few sixteenth-century manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* from the Middle East. I noticed that the beginning of the service of the night (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *lēlyā*] was a (liturgical) place of relative freedom in the ritual, where unsystematically various pieces of liturgical poetry could be inserted as *propers* (= distinctive elements for every feast day); most of the hymns inserted in this place of the ritual are abridged versions of the *mēm̄rē* (metrical homilies) composed in dodecasyllabic meter (4 + 4 + 4) by Narsai of Nisibis (fifth to sixth centuries), but the name of the poet is always omitted from the manuscripts. In the East Syriac tradition, Narsai is considered to be the most important East Syriac poet from Late Antiquity after Ephrem the Syrian and a champion of Nestorian theology. As the founder of the School of Nisibis and due to his dependence on the theology of the ‘Three Greek Doctors’—Diodore of Tarsus (d. 390), Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428) and Nestorius (d. 450)—Narsai “ultimately became the most foundational theologian articulating a dyophysite Christology in Syriac” (Butts 2020, 4) (on the most recent scholarly contribution to Narsai, see Butts 2020).

These abridged poems of Narsai have been inserted in manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* under the title “anthems” (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*],²² however, this type of poetry is missing from the printed editions of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* (i.e., Bedjan 1886–1887; Darmo 1960–1962). It is also missing from the Chaldean revision of the *Gazzā* done in the Middle East at the end of the seventeenth century by the Chaldean Patriarch Joseph II of Amid.²³ While in some East Syriac manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* this type of poetry is missing,²⁴ it is to be found in three manuscripts of the *Ḥudrā* from the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Middle East. It is present in MS Thriissur Syriac 27, a *Ḥudrā* manuscript copied in Alkaye in Urmi (Iran) in 1598 A.D. (the manuscript is described in Othottil 2011, 71–84) and in MSS Vatican Syriac 86 and

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four (ܠܝܠܝܐ) *madraše* with (ܠܝܠܝܐ) and its (ܠܝܠܝܐ)” (Othottil 2015, 438). In another article, the same author has provided an edition and the English translation of the series of (ܠܝܠܝܐ) “anthems” for the commemoration of the Saints Peter and Paul, which she ascribes to Narsai (Othottil 2014, 296, 298–99, 319–24).

22 This type of poetry inserted in the service of the night under the title “anthems” (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] before the session (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *mawtbā*] should not be confused with another series of “anthems” (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] belonging to the vigil (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *šahrā*]. In his work, Mateos describes the “anthems” (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] for the vigil as follows: “Hepakta, h'paktā (ܠܝܠܝܐ) retour, peut-être alternance: 1. – Distiques, empruntés aux memre de Narsay, qu'on intercale aux qale d-šahra festifs entre le psaume avec refrain (šubbaha ou qanona) et la tešbohta qui le suit. Leur nombre varie selon les mss. 2. – Distiques de même origine qu'on intercale entre les trois psaumes qui forment les qale d-šahra, à la fête des apôtres Pierre et Paul, au Dimanche de Nusardel et à d'autres jours de la même période. Les distiques des apôtres sont les mêmes, à peu près, pour tous ces jours” (Mateos 1956, 483). However, it is noticeable that in the East Syriac tradition, the practice of introducing couplets excerpted from Narsai's poetry into the ritual received the generic title of “anthems” (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*]; this phenomenon is mentioned by Sr. Othottil (Othottil 2014, 296). The same practice is also mentioned by Macomber, who, in his study on the manuscripts of Narsai's *mēm̄rē*, mentions the fact that manuscripts containing collections of (ܠܝܠܝܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*] excerpted from the poetry of Narsai circulated in the Middle East. Macomber mentions the existence of five such manuscripts ranging from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries (Macomber 1973, 278).

23 On this revision, see Murre-van den Berg (2015, 149–52, 341); I have also consulted, for comparison, two manuscripts of the Chaldean revision of the *Gazzā*: MSS Thriissur Syriac 13 and 14 (on these manuscripts, see Mar Aprem 2011, 14–15).

24 For instance, MS Thriissur Syriac 29, a manuscript of the *Ḥudrā* copied in Alqosh in 1681 A.D. (see Othottil 2015, 438).

87.²⁵ The two *Ḥudrā* manuscripts from the Vatican Library are particularly important for the Indian context as they might have belonged to Mar Joseph Sulaqa (see Van der Ploeg 1983, 196–97). As mentioned above, Mar Joseph was the brother of the first Chaldean Patriarch in the Middle East, Yohannan Sulaqa. In the 1550s and 1560s Mar Joseph was active in Malabar, where he was sent as Metropolitan Bishop of India by his Patriarch, ‘Abdišo’ of Gazarta (on Mar Joseph, see Beltrami 1933, 35–59; Thekkedath 1988, 2:40–47).

Alongside with the poetry of Narsai, in the same liturgical context, new “canticles of glorification” were composed and introduced as *propers* in the services belonging to the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*, under the same title “anthems” (ܐܢܬܘܡܐ) [Syr. *hpākātā*]. Like the poetry of Narsai, such poems usually precede the session (ܡܘܬܒܐ) [Syr. *mawtbā*] of the service of the night and are meant to be read or chanted²⁶ as insertions at Psalm 82: 1 (“God stood in the assembly of angels”) in the beginning of the twelfth (ܠܘܠܐܐ) *hulālā*²⁷, during the reading of the Psalter within the night service (for their place in the ritual, see, for instance, Bedjan 1886–1887, 1-3:3:278). All newly added poems use the dodecasyllabic metre of Narsai, but like late medieval Syriac poetry they also use rhyme (on the peculiarities of late medieval Syriac poetry, see Brock 2018, also Pritula 2015, 72–116, with an emphasis on the Wardā collection; on the continuity and changes between medieval and early modern Syriac poetry in the Middle East, see Murre-van den Berg 2015, 156–83). The rhyme pattern suggests that some of the newly created poems are divided into couplets, while others might be divided into quatrains; the division of some of the canticles into quatrains is suggested by the fact that in the ritual, a canticle is occasionally divided into shorter “anthems” resembling stanzas of four verses each. The scribes introduced each such stanza/anthem with the word (ܐܢܘܢܐ) [(‘)hrētā] “another-one.” The rhyme pattern is either *aaaa* or *aabb*, but there are also instances when isolated verses do not present any rhyme. However, some of the newly composed canticles do not appear divided into quatrains even in liturgical context; this is, for instance, the case for the canticle for the feast day of the Transfiguration of Christ discussed below. Also, unlike their Middle Eastern peers, the Indian scribes do not always mark verses or hemistichs in Syriac poetry with two oblique dots (·) and little crosses (✦). Since the use of punctuation in manuscripts seems to rather reflect the choice of the scribe, punctuation does not always help to understand the structure of these canticles.

Upon a systematic search through Syriac liturgical manuscripts from several South Indian libraries, to which I have added the evidence of an Indian manuscript preserved in Paris, I have collected twenty one canticles of glorifications for the service of the night from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*. Around half of the canticles are abridged versions of Narsai’s poetry showing continuity with the East Syriac liturgical tradition from the Middle East. Other canticles present in both the Iraqi and South Indian manuscripts might be pieces of poetry composed by medieval East Syriac poets, and the identification of their author(s) requires further study. A third group of canticles are newly created Syro-Catholic poems composed in the meter used by Narsai in India. Occasionally, such newly created pieces of Syro-Catholic poetry were meant to replace the existing pieces belonging to Narsai. The majority of the manuscripts testifying to this tradition are nineteenth-century copies (which is not exceptional

25 These two manuscripts do not contain a colophon, but Assemani dates MS Vatican Syriac 86 to the sixteenth century and MS Vatican Syriac 87 to the fifteenth (see Assemani and Assemani 1758, 476–82; Van der Ploeg 1983, 196–97).

26 I did not find any indication in the manuscripts concerning any tune (*qālā*) to which this type of poetry should be sung/chanted.

27 A *hulālā* is a division of the East Syriac Psalter in liturgical context.

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3. The Circumcision of Christ (ܟܘܪܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܟܘܪܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
4. The Epiphany of Christ (ܕܢܝܫܐܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܕܢܝܫܐܢܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
5. The Ascension of Christ (ܕܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܕܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
6. The Pentecost (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
7. Corpus Christi (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
8. Commemoration of the Virgin Mary (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
9. One of the Apostles (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
10. One of the Evangelists (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
11. One of the Martyrs (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
12. The Bishops Confessors [of the faith] (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
13. Commemoration of the Virgin Holy-Women (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
14. Commemoration of the Holy Women (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
15. The Birth of St. John the Baptist: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
16. Commemoration of St. Peter and Paul (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
17. St. Thomas the Apostle (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
18. The Transfiguration of Christ (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
19. Elevation of the Holy Cross (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
20. The Feast of St. Michael (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).
21. Commemoration of the departed (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ): inc.: (ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ).

The list does not strictly follow the liturgical calendar, because the canticles for the Marian festivals, one of the Apostles, one of the Evangelists, one of the Martyrs, the Bishops Confessors [of the faith], the Virgin Holy Women, and Holy Women (not Virgins) rather belong to the category of *commune sanctorum*, that is to say, they are used whenever a commemoration of a saint from such a category is celebrated. [44]

From the items listed above, the following canticles are abridged versions of Narsai's *mēm̄rē*: the canticle for the Nativity of Christ (see Macomber 1973, no. 4; Eshai Shimon 1970, 1-2:1:77–98), the one for the commemoration of St. Steven (see Mingana 1905, 1-2:1:90–100), the one for the Epiphany (see Macomber 1973, no. 6; Eshai Shimon 1970, 1-2:1:134–157), the one for the Ascension of Christ (see Macomber 1973, no. 45; Eshai Shimon 1970, 1-2:1:546–563), the one for Pentecost (see Mingana 1905, 1-2:2:72–84), the one for the commemoration of the departed (see Macomber 1973, no. 18; Eshai Shimon 1970, 1-2:1:743–766), and the one for the commemoration of the Evangelists,²⁹ they are attested by both manuscripts from the Middle East and the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā*. The canticles for the feast of the Birth of St. John the Baptist and for the commemoration of St. Peter and Paul also [45]

29 This canticle has been identified as being based on Narsai's *mēm̄rā* on Saints Peter and Paul (see Eshai Shimon 1970, 1-2:1:191–220) by Sr. Othottil (Othottil 2014, 337n59 and 60).

belong to the hymnography of the Church of the East, but I could not identify their author. Sr. Othottil, who edited and translated the service of the commemoration of the Saints Peter and Paul, attributes it to Narsai (Othottil 2014, 296).³⁰ However, if Narsai is truly the author of a *sogitā* “On Nero and the Workers and Peter” (see Mingana 1905, 1-2:2:391–396), then the author of the canticle of glorification for the night service for the commemoration of St. Peter and Paul must be a different one. This is suggested, for instance, by the fact that the canticle of glorification spells Nero’s name as (ܢܪܘܫ) [Nē’roš], while the *sogitā* provides the spelling (ܢܪܘܢ) [Nē’ron]. There is need for further study in order to establish with accuracy which of the remaining hymns from the list are original creations from Malabar; such a study should also take into account the hybrid structure of the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* at the crossroads between the liturgical tradition of the Church of the East and the Roman Catholic tradition of the Roman Breviary. Some feast days mentioned in the list, such as *Corpus Christi*, are of distinct Roman Catholic origin, without any parallel in the East Syrian tradition. The Catholic liturgical revision from Malabar also predates and is distinct from the Chaldean revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*, which was done in the Middle East by the Chaldean Catholicos Patriarch Joseph II of Amid (see Murre-van den Berg 2015, 148–52, 341) at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century; this Chaldean revision was the main source for Paul Bedjan’s *Breviarium Chaldaicum*.

While the preservation of the canticles based on Narsai’s *mēm̄rē* in the beginning of the service of the night witnesses to the continuity between the Malabar liturgical tradition and that of the Church of the East, sometimes it seems that the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* contains newly created hymns meant to replace East Syriac compositions. One such example seems to be the canticle for the Marian feasts fashioned according to the pattern of *Ave Maria* (no. 8 in the list above). This canticle is preserved in both liturgical manuscripts and in MS Thrissur Syriac 62: fol. 89v–91v (the anthology containing poetry by Kadavil Chandy Kattanaṛ, which I described above). The canticle seems to have been composed in order to replace a canticle for the commemoration of the Holy Virgin, which in the Church of the East was celebrated on the Friday preceding the feast of the Epiphany of Christ. The East Syriac canticle begins with the words: (ܐܡܐ ܗܝ ܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܕܡ ܕܐܕܡܐ ܕܬܪܝܢܐ) [*emā-(h)i maryam d-ādām da-trēn u-law d-(?)itutā*] “Mary is the Mother of the Second Adam and not of the Essence”; I was not able to identify the author of this canticle, but the canticle might be an excerpt from another *mēm̄rā* by Narsai. Although generally the printed version of the *Ḥudrā* published by Mar Thoma Darmo does not contain the canticles of glorification for the service of the night, in this peculiar case the edition preserves the first four verses of this canticle in the service (Darmo 1960–1962, 1:1:603). This phenomenon deserves further study and I will not focus on it here. Yet, a comparable tendency is to be noted in the evolution of ritual books throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Middle East. As Heleen Murre-van den Berg notices: “The relatively minor changes in the liturgy [in the Middle East] were much less important than the many new additions that were made, in both traditional and Catholic circles, by way of the hymns. It is in this field that the most important innovations took place, developing new or re-using older genres and in a continuous stream of new poetry that kept the liturgy of the time up to date” (Murre-van den Berg 2015, 182).

In order to highlight the religious entanglements of the Syriac Christians from Malabar and their Syriac culture as a synthesis of various Eastern and Western Christian elements, in the following paragraphs I will present three textual examples which illustrate the textual

30 These two hymns are present in MS Vatican Syriac 86, between fol. 31r–v and 35r–v.

[the fruits], many of them regained their strength and fought with the Canaanites and slaughtered them.⁵² Likewise, our Lord Jesus has chosen three apostles out of twelve and has revealed them the glory of His kingdom, so that they would recount it to the inhabitants of the earth and in this way [the latter] would get courage to spiritually strive against the dark powers which are in the world, and thus to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the promised land that has been vowed to us from before.⁵³

After the quoted passage the author establishes a typological relation between the fruits of Canaan and the pleasantness of the Kingdom of heaven, a relation which is described as (ܐܫܬܘܩܘܬܐ ܘܥܝܢܐ ܕܫܒܗܐ) [Syr. *ṭelānitā u-ṭupsā d-šubhā*] “a shadow and a *týpos* of glory”, and this is the prelude for the long description of the blessings (ܐܘܒܝܢܐ) [Syr. *ṭubē*] of the Heavenly Kingdom mentioned above. According to the author of the sermon, the fruits of Canaan brought by the spies were meant to determine the Israelites fight for the promised land, and they are a *týpos* for the experience of glory by the Apostles on Mount Tabor during the moment of Transfiguration. I would emphasize the fact the poet rather alludes to the context of the sermon from which he took the initial imagery, and what he writes down afterwards is a sort of personal reflection on the basis of the Psalms and biblical readings connected to the feast day. The reference to Christ as (ܐܘܒܝܢܐ) [Syr. *ṭubkun*] “your blessing” in the first verse of the canticle again alludes to the blessings (ܐܘܒܝܢܐ) [Syr. *ṭubē*] of the Heavenly Kingdom on which the sermon is centered.

Yet, the first stanza of the poem is an adaptation of the first part of a hymn from the vespers of the feast day of the Transfiguration of Christ in the Roman Breviary. The text of the Latin hymn runs as follows:

Quicumque Christum quaeritis/ Oculos in altum tollite:/ Illic licebit visere/ Signum perennis gloriae./ Illustre quiddam cernimus,/ Quod nesciat finem pati/ Sublime, celsum, interminum/ Antiquius coelo, et chao./ Hic Ille Rex est Gentium/ Populique Rex Iudaici/ Promissus Abrahae patri,/ Eiusque in aevum semini. / Hunc et prophetis testibus,/ Iisdemque signatoribus,/ Testator et Pater iubet,/ Audire nos et credere./ Iesu, tibi sit gloria,/ Qui te revelas parvulis,/ Cum Patre et almo Spiritu,/ In sempiterna saecula. Amen. (Breviarium Romanum 1854, 511)

[“All of you who are seeking Christ/ Lift up your eyes in the height!/ There you will be able to see/ The sign of the enduring glory./ We can discern something bright,/ Which knows no end,/ Sublime, elevated, limitless,/ Older than the heaven and the chaos./ He is the King of the nations/ And the King of the Jewish people, / [He] Who was promised to father Abraham,/ and to his seed for eternity./ Through His prophets as witnesses/ and attestants,/ The Witness-Bearer and Father commands us/ To listen to Him and believe [in Him]./ Glory be to You, Jesus,/ Who reveal Yourself to the infants,/ [Glory to You] together with the Father and the Nurturing Spirit,/ To the everlasting ages! Amen.”]

It is noticeable that verses from the Latin hymn have been adapted and inserted especially

52 See Numbers 13–14 altered and conflated with Joshua 2, as in the second stanza of the canticle of glorification.

53 See the narrative about the Transfiguration of Christ in Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9: 2–8, Luke 9: 28–36 and its interpretation in the third stanza of the canticle.

5. The hand of the one who took the sacraments unworthily got dried; [82]
 Thomas healed it in the waters of mercy and rendered his heart to contrition.
 He fell before the blessed-one and his word [i.e., of Thomas] vivified him.
 [And] with abundant love he offered gifts to the one who brought him the tidings [of
 the Gospel].
6. Powerfully, the Apostle, the mighty one, pulled down the likeness [i.e., idol] of the Sun [83]
 and casted out from it the accursed Satan and sent him to roam around.
 They threw the holy man in the furnace, but suffered no injury,
 they pierced him with a spear, killed his flesh and delivered him to the blessings.
7. In order to save the servants, Thomas assumed the likeness of a servant; [84]
 in the likeness of his Lord he sold himself and freed the servants,
 a faithful servant who bestowed a way⁷⁶ to his fellows,
 and his Lord waited for him, he entered His gladness, and gave life to the dead.

The main source of the canticle of glorification for the feast day of Saint Thomas the Apostle edited and translated above is the corresponding sermon from the Malabar Sermonary. Preserved into two Syriac manuscripts from Malabar, the text of the sermon was written for an Indian audience sometimes after 1601 (for the edition and study of this text, see Mustață 2019). The sermon presents an interesting fusion of scriptural, Patristic, and early modern literary sources in Latin, Spanish, and Syriac, pointing to the literary networks of the Malabar Christians with both the Syriac literary heritage of the Middle East and the Latin culture from Europe. The text focuses on the quasi-messianic role of Saint Thomas (called “the Saviour of the Indians”, ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܗܝܘܘܬܐ [Syr. *pāroqā d-hendwāyē*]). Moreover, Saint Thomas is depicted as a missionary—the itinerary of his preaching combines the metropolitan sees of the Church of the East with the itinerary of the Portuguese expansion in Asia (see the introduction to this text in Mustață 2019, 11–46). In the older manuscript, the list of peoples among whom Saint Thomas is said to have proclaimed the Gospel runs as follows: “For Mar Thoma preached to and taught the Persians, and among the people of Herat, and of Merw, and of Rayy, and of Parthia, to the Bactrians, to the Babylonians, to the Soqotri, to the Indians, to the Chinese, to the Ethiopians, and also to the Magi, who were worshipers of our Lord. He baptized and confirmed them” (Mustață 2019, 78). In the later manuscript the list of peoples and places has been augmented:

For Mar Thoma did not only preach to Israel, but in person or through his disciples, [86]
 [he also preached] to the Persians and among the people of Herat, and of Merw,
 and of Rayy, and of Parthia, and of Media, to the Bactrians and to the Hyrcanians,
 to the Babylonians and the people of Smarkand, to the Socotrans, to the Indians, to
 the Chinese, and to the inhabitants of Mahācīna, to the Ethiopians, and also to the
 Magi who were worshipers of our Lord in His infancy. He baptized and confirmed
 them. And through his disciple, whose name is Thaddaeus (ܬܕܝܐ) [*Tadai*], he also
 converted to our Lord, Abgar, the king of Edessa, and the subjects of his kingdom,
 after Thaddaeus had healed the king of his illness through the sign of the Cross.
 (2019, 78)

76 The Syriac (ܩܘܕܝܫܐ) [*pursā*] from the Greek πόρος, “way”—eventually a linguistic calque on the basis of the Malayalam *mārgam* (മാർഗ്ഗം), “way,” “path,” but also with the sense of “religion”—suits this context better than the manuscript-reading (ܩܘܕܝܫܐ) [*prāsā*] “cover,” “veil,” as there is no account in the *Acts of Thomas* or anywhere else about St. Thomas bestowing a veil to the Indians.

The connection between the collections of sermons and this type of poetry is important because it helps trace the composition of undated sermons (usually preserved in nineteenth-century manuscript copies) to the decades immediately following the synod of Diamper. For instance, the sermon for the commemoration of Saint Thomas must have been written after 1601, as it made use of Pedro Ribadeneira's *Flos Sanctorum*, which was first published by that time (ibid, 24–31). Since the sermon is the main source for the analogous canticle of glorification and since the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* was done in the first decades of the seventeenth century (being prescribed by the Synod of Diamper), it is very likely that the sermon was composed during the times of Francisco Ros. The correspondence between sermons and the canticles is also an expression of the attempt to create a unitary ideology, encompassing both the cult and the preaching. The intertextuality between the sermons and the liturgical poetry illustrates the fact that a new stream of Syro-Catholic literature was added to the East Syriac literary tradition from Malabar and it was read and used as source of inspiration for the Catholic revision of the liturgy. [95]

Moreover, the author(s) of the canticles of glorification relies/rely on the information provided by the corpus of Catholic sermons in the same way as some pieces of poetry by Kadavil Chandy Kattanar rely on Syriac Catholic compositions arguably composed by European Catholic missionaries (on the sources of Kadavil Chandy, see Perczel 2014, 40–43). In his study on the poetry of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, Perczel emphasizes the fact that in Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā On the Syriac Language*, the poet made use of an untitled treatise on the refutation of heresies preserved in MS Mannanam Syriac 46: fol. 123v–135r (ibid.); the same codex contains sermons belonging to the Malabar Sermonary. [96]

The Canticles of Glorification and the Poetry of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar

As shown so far in this paper, the composition of the canticles of glorifications for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* is quite complicated; the author(s) used both the Roman Breviary and Syriac Catholic sermons belonging to the Malabar Sermonary as sources for newly created hymns. Yet, MS Thrissur Syriac 62, with which I began this inquiry, contains a part consisting of religious poetry taken out from its liturgical context in an anthological manner and mixed with poems written by the Indian priest and Syriacist poet Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, a disciple of Francisco Ros. In the following paragraphs I will discuss on which grounds one can ascribe to Kadavil Chandy the authorship of the newly composed canticles of glorification. First, I will compare the canticle for the feast day of *Corpus Christi* (which is a distinctly Roman Catholic feast day) with other works on the Eucharist from the same literary context: a sermon on *Qurbana* from the Malabar Sermonary and Kadavil Chandy's *mēmṛā* on the Eucharist. It is important to note that this canticle of glorification does not have any parallel/model in the hymnography for the same feast day in the Roman Breviary. [97]

Another reason why I have chosen to discuss this canticle is that the service for the feast day of *Corpus Christi* from the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* seems to be older and is different from the service for the same feast day as it appears in the Chaldean recension of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā*. The Chaldean recension was done in the Middle East later (in the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century), by the Chaldean Patriarchs Joseph I and Joseph II (see Murre-van den Berg 2015, 149–50). For comparison, I have used the service for the feast day of *Corpus Christi* from the Chaldean recension, as it is contained [98]

وَدَبَّ مِلْحَاكًا مِمَّ نُحُوكًا⁹³ يُعْجِبُ نِعْمَ نِعْمًا:
 بُكَاةٌ يُكَاةٌ نِيَسَا مِلْحَاكَاةً نُفَيْسَا لَانْتَا:
 لَحْتِيَا مَنِيَسَا حَقِيَسَا مَعْدَدُ مَعْدِيَسَا نَقْلِيَا

5. ⁹⁴سِيذَاةً تَصِيَتَا مَعِيَسَا مَعْدَاةً مَعْدِيَا مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً تَتَلَبُّ: [104]

وَدَجْدُ يَفَا مِلْحَاكَاةً دَسَاكَاةً تَتَلَبُّ يَدَلَبُّ⁹⁵
 مَعْدَاةً دِيَجَلَمَاةً مَعْدَاةً جَاكَاةً يَتَلَبُّ مَعْدَاةً مَعْدَاةً:
 مَعْدَاةً مَعْدَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً⁹⁶ مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً⁹⁷ مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً

6. ⁹⁸سِيذَاةً جَلِيَسَا مِلْحَاكَاةً يَدَلَبُّ تَقَمِيَا⁹⁹ دَبُّ يَكَاةً: [105]

مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً دِيَكَاةً مَعْدَاةً مَعْدَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً:
 مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً:
 مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً¹⁰⁰ مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً

7. ¹⁰¹سِيذَاةً دِيَصَدَاةً لَدِيَصِيَا¹⁰² قِيَسَاةً نِيَكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً: [106]

مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً:
 مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً:
 مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً مِلْحَاكَاةً

1. Come, mortals, and gather the manna, the bread of wonder! [107]

What is this, what kind of food? Oh, the greatness,
 Oh, the beauty and the pleasantness of Divinity,
 The great depth, the deep abyss of all [things] made.

2. Everyone who wants to be joined to God, let him take [108]

The divinizing and the outstandingly life-giving Sacraments that are full of riches.
 The wisdom of God invites all of us to the supper.
 Come, my beloved ones, with innocent heart and get replete from it!¹⁰³

3. Taste [from it] and see that the Word is pleasant and sweeter than all¹⁰⁴; [109]

Why are you erring in a pathless desert more troublesome than all?
 Why are you digging broken cisterns in which there is no water,
 And have abandoned the spring of life from which the chosen [ones] are drinking?¹⁰⁵

4. Oh, sweetness is coming out now from the mighty one, [110]

91 In rubrics: سِيذَاةً.
 92 Mg.
 93 Em. نُحُوكًا; M نُحُوكًا.
 94 In rubrics: سِيذَاةً.
 95 M^{ac} يَدَلَبُّ تَتَلَبُّ; M^{Pc} تَتَلَبُّ يَدَلَبُّ.
 96 Coni. مِلْحَاكَاةً; M مِلْحَاكَاةً.
 97 Em. مِلْحَاكَاةً; M مِلْحَاكَاةً.
 98 In rubrics: سِيذَاةً.
 99 Em. مِلْحَاكَاةً; M مِلْحَاكَاةً.
 100 Em. مِلْحَاكَاةً; M^{ac} مِلْحَاكَاةً; M^{Pc} مِلْحَاكَاةً.
 101 In rubrics: سِيذَاةً.
 102 Em. لَدِيَصِيَا; M لَدِيَصِيَا.
 103 See Proverbs 9: 1–6.
 104 See Psalms 34: 9.
 105 See Jeremiah 2: 13.

And nourishment rose from the Eater as a burning fire,¹⁰⁶
 The God of gods offered Himself as nourishment to mankind,
 To raise the poor, strengthen the sick, and lift up the fallen ones.

- 5. The Lord fed twelve tribes with the stupendous manna, [111]
 And led them through the frightening desert for forty years.¹⁰⁷
 Those who ate it and drank [water] from the rock died in their sins¹⁰⁸,
 Although they received endlessly exquisite *spolia*, a *týpos* of the blessings [to come].
- 6. Through the bread from the gridiron Elijah was travelling for forty days, [112]
 And he mounted on Horeb, the mountain of God, and saw visions.
 Likewise the *Artos*, Jesus our Lord, Who vivifies the minds
 And appeases the sufferings, gets the spiritual hunger replete.
- 7. The [people] of old observed the sacrifice of the lamb in the evening of the Passover [113]
 And ate its meat mixed with bitter herbs and with azymes.¹⁰⁹
 Behold, today, the Lamb of God Who removes our iniquity¹¹⁰
 Is sanctifying us all through the sacrifice of His body and blood!

While the canticle of glorification for the feast day of the Transfiguration of Christ and the one for the commemoration of Saint Thomas the Apostle have been composed by making use of analogous sermons from the Malabar Sermonary, such a clear intertextual connection does not appear between the canticle of glorification for the feast day of *Corpus Christi* (edited and translated above) and analogous sermons on the Eucharist from the Malabar Sermonary. However, one of the Eucharistic sermons comprised in MS Mannanam Syriac 46¹¹¹ fol. 196ra–199ra and entitled “Sermon on the [Eucharistic] offering” (همه دن جسدنا) [Syr. *suwādā d-qurbānā*] contains the following digression on the manna as Eucharistic *týpos*: [114]

سج 112 ای نوتی دجده سبنا 113 دلا فیهی 114 لسمنا ا لاس لب لب میه جده ا. هکله
 سله ا متکتلی 115. ه س دن کت یقیه ل 116 ذوب سدوت 117 جحه تیا 118 بدنیج تلم قما
 دمننا. دجس ا ذهب لاس لحت بهذک خلوسه. ته قما. دصمدنا میه جده ا. لحننا کت
 دلسنا ه تممننا مدده ا س لاسه. ه جده ا 119 ه منیک ه منجه. سح د س لاس صمدنا
 دللمنا سنا. ملا حقه 120 ه دده ا 121 هسه ا کلا دیکه لسمنا ا لاسه. < کلا د
 دیود سده. دلحننا تممننا ا مللنا کد جهیموه فیلتی ه قه تیا ملحه لکنا 122. میه سنا

[115]

106 See Judges 14: 14.
 107 See Exodus 16.
 108 See 1 Corinthians 10: 3–5.
 109 See Exodus 12: 3–8.
 110 See John 1: 29.
 111 I have abbreviated it in the critical notes as M.
 112 Em. سج; M سح.
 113 Sic!
 114 Em. مخص; M خص.
 115 Em. متکتلی; M متکتلی.
 116 Em. یقیه ل; M یقیه ل.
 117 Em. ذوب سدوت; M ذوب سدوت.
 118 Em. جحه تیا; M جحه تیا.
 119 Em. ه منیک; M ه منیک.
 120 Em. حقه; M حقه.
 121 Em. ه دده ا; M ه دده ا.
 122 Em. فیلتی ه قه تیا ملحه لکنا; M فیلتی ه قه تیا ملحه لکنا.

All these which are [prescribed] in the old Law
Are a *týpos* of the wonderful offering of our Lord.

In addition to the reference to the manna, Kadavil Chandy's *mēm̄rā* on the Eucharist mentions the paschal lamb, which also appears in the seventh stanza of the canticle of glorification. Again, the use of unusual, small lexical details, such as the reference to the Eucharistic bread as (ܐܪܛܘܫ) [Syr. *artos*] from the Greek ἄρτος—present in the Greek version of the New Testament, but not that often attested in Syriac texts¹⁴², though repeatedly used in Kadavil Chandy's hymn on the Eucharist—might suggest a possible connection between the two poems. As the similarities between the language of the canticles of glorification and the poetry of Kadavil Chandy Kattanar generally consist of small lexical choices scattered throughout his poems—without repetition of entire verses—it is difficult to take such fragmented evidence as proof of his authorship of the canticles of glorification. Yet, the same observation is valid for other compositions of the same Kadavil Chandy: there is a predilection for certain words, but not for premade formulas.¹⁴³ To make things even more complicated, the poetry of Kadavil Chandy uses sometimes Syriac words which seem to be tributary to the language of Malabar Sermonary quoted several times in this article. It is not possible to provide here an inventory of words and expressions shared by the canticles and other poems by Kadavil Chandy, as this would require systematic philological work on the whole corpus: the edited work of the poet will shed more light on this complicated matter. [121]

The fact that pieces of poetry by Kadavil Chandy might have been used for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Hudrā* might not be as surprising if one takes into account that he was apparently appointed “to complete the Syriac translation of the Roman Pontifical, which was begun by Francisco Ros” (Kaniaparambil 1989, 90–91). This information comes from the account of Giuseppe Maria Sebastiani O.C.D., Apostolic Commissary in Malabar, which is the most important source of information on Kadavil Chandy's life (an account on the poet's life based on various sources is included in Toepel 2011; an English translation of Sebastiani's account has been provided in Pallath 2006). After recounting the appointment of Parambil Chandy as the first indigenous bishop of the local Catholic Christian community in 1663, Sebastiani mentions the fact that the poet was appointed as a vicar of the newly elected bishop and that he was charged with the completion of the Syriac translation of the Pontifical: [122]

Donai anco 400. Fanos del mio al Padre Alessandro de Carò per tradlatate molte cose del Pontificale Romano in Siriano, hauendone già le forme tradotte da D. Francesco Ros, primo Arcivescouo della Compagnia in quella Christianità; il chè detto Padre fece con aiuto de' Sacerdoti Portoghesi, e di altri, che sapeuano benissimo Malauare, essendo egli perfettissimo in detta Lingua Siriana, e l'vnico Cassanare, che sapeua ben comporre nella medesima. (Sebastiani 1672, 147 [Book II, ch. 25]) [123]

[“I [i.e. Sebastiani] donated my own four hundred *fanams* to Alexander Kadavil for translating many parts of the Roman Pontifical into Syriac, the (sacramental) [124]

142 I did not find the word in Aaron Butts' book on Greek loanwords in Syriac (2016); however, the term is recorded in *Thesaurus Syriacus*, and seems to be first attested in the Syriac translation of the Festal Letters of Athanasius of Alexandria (see Payne-Smith 1879, s.v. ܐܪܛܘܫ). The word is also listed in the Lexicon of Bar-Bahlul, which means that it was used in Syriac texts at least since medieval times (see *Bar Bahlul* s.v. ܐܪܛܘܫ; for the present reference: [from sedra.bethmardutho.org, accessed on June 3, 2021]).

143 The three *mēm̄rē* on Syriac, Hebrew and Arabic are an exception from this point of view, as the poet uses similar arguments to praise any of these languages.

forms of which were already translated by Francis Ros, the first Jesuit Archbishop of that Christianity. The said father did this with the help of some Portuguese priests and others who knew Malayalam well, he being most perfect in the said Syriac language and the unique cassanar, who knew how to compose well in that language. (translation by Paul Pallath in Pallath 2006, 214–15)

While on the basis of the available evidence the authorship of the canticles of glorification is uncertain, pieces of information like the one quoted above suggest that the collaboration between European missionaries and the local clergy (Kadavil Chandy Kattanar) for the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* and *Gazzā* prescribed by the Synod of Diamper is certainly possible. The part played by the European missionaries is strongly supported by the occasional translation into Syriac of fragments from Latin hymns belonging to the Roman Breviary. On the other hand, the use of the Malabar Sermonary in the hymnography of the canticles of glorification points to the mediation of European theological knowledge through Syriac intermediary from Malabar. The amalgamation of newly composed canticles of glorification with the poetry of Kadavil Chandy in MS Thrissur Syriac 62 suggests that the Indian poet might have played a role in the composition of new Catholic poetry to be inserted in the ritual. While the extent of this collaboration remains an open question, Giuseppe Maria Sebastiani's account testifies to such a "collaboration" between Francisco Ros and Kadavil Chandy Kattanar for the translation of the *Pontifical*. [125]

Conclusions

This study of entangled literary genres is an important witness to the amalgamation of the East Syriac heritage of the Malabar Christians in contact with the Catholic missionaries, especially the Jesuits, in the second half of the sixteenth and first decades of the seventeenth centuries. Due to their literary interconnectedness, the texts under scrutiny allow one to carefully examine the complicated textual layers and transmission networks of the Syriac heritage of the Malabar Christians in the times of the Synod of Diamper; they also illustrate the attempt of the missionaries to create an unitary ideology encompassing both the cult and the preaching, as part of a new Syriac Catholic *paideia* in Malabar. The case studies presented here display an interesting instance of religious entanglement: the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* presents both continuity and innovation compared to the tradition of the Church of the East in Iraq. At the textual micro-level of the poetry presented here, this entanglement is expressed through a synthesis which incorporates the poetry of Narsai, the Roman Breviary and Syriac Catholic sermons produced locally in Malabar by the Catholic missionaries. [126]

The study of the canticles of glorification is in itself important, as it helps to recover a corpus of Syriac poetry from early modern Malabar which otherwise would be lost. It raises new research questions regarding the so far unexplored but fascinating Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā*, such as the need to reconsider the ratio between translations from Latin into Syriac and original compositions which were at interplay in this liturgical enterprise. The intertwined relationship between sermons and pieces of liturgical poetry provides important dating criteria: many of the sermons used as the main source for the canticles of glorification survive in nineteenth-century manuscript copies, and this type of poetry can be used as a *terminus ante quem* for dating back the sermons to the times surrounding the Synod of Diamper (when the Malabar Catholic revision of the *Ḥudrā* was made). Source analysis of this [127]

material studied together also offers an interesting incursion into the intellectual history of Syriac writing in Malabar in the seventeenth century, leading one from the workshop of one (or more) skillful poet(s) and the sources of his (or their) Syriac education to the liturgy. The entanglement between sermons and the hymns testify to the mediation of European knowledge from the Catholic missionaries to their Indian pupils. While the sermons are based on European theological and humanistic erudition of the sixteenth century, the canticles of glorification often seem to rely on similar information only through the mediation of the corpus of sermons.

From a cross-cultural perspective, the Malabar Sermonary represents the adaptation of a European literary genre into Syriac; the canticles of glorification in their turn are an example of adapting and conveying Catholic doctrine by making use of a literary genre specific to the Syriac culture of the Middle East, and as such it is in itself an example of textual *accommodatio*. If the author of at least some of these poems is Kadavil Chandy Kattanar, this example shows that the Jesuits involved the local people in this process of Syriac literary production and translation as a means of *accommodatio*. [128]

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Manuscripts

MS Mannanam Syriac 30
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