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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| BHO | Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis / ed. P. Peeters. Bruxellis: Apud Editores 22, Boulevard Saint-Michel, 1910. (Subsidia hagiographica; vol. 10). |
| CC | Clavis Patrum Copticorum / An Index of the Authors and Works of the Coptic Literature. [Электронный ресурс]. URL: http://www.cmcl.it/~cmcl/chiam_clavis.html (дата обращения 05.06.2025). |
| CPG | Clavis Partum Graecorum. Vol. 1–4 / cura et studio M. Geerard. Turnhout, 1983, 1974, 1979, 1980; Vol. 5 / M. Geerard, F. Glorie. Turnhout, 1987; Vol. 3a (addenda vol. 3) / parata a J. Noret. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003. |
| CSCO | Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium. Paris; Leuven, 1903–. |
| ECT | Eastern Christian Texts / ed. by E. Fiori. Leiden; Boston (Mass.): Brill, 2023–. |
| GCS | Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte. Berlin; Leipzig, 1897–. |
| GCS NF | Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte. Neue Folge. Berlin; München; Boston (Mass.), 1995–. |
| LCL | Loeb Classical Library. London; Cambridge (Mass.), 1912–. |
| OCA | Orientalia christiana analecta. Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1935–. Vol. 101–. |
| PG | Patrologie cursus completus… Series Graeca… / accurante J.-P. Migne. Parisiis, 1857–1866. T. 1–166. |
| PO | Patrologia orientalis / éd. par R. Graffin, F. Nau, P. Luisier. Paris; Roma; Turnhout, 1904–. |
| PTS | Patristische Texte und Studien / hrsg. von K. Aland und W. Schneemelcher. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1963–. |
| SC | Sources chrétiennes. Paris: Cerf, 1941–. |
| ST | Studi e testi. Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1900–. |
| TCLA | Texts from Christian Late Antiquity. Piscataway (N. J.): Gorgias Press, 2006–. |
| TSEC | Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity / ed. by K. Parry. Leiden; Boston (Mass.): Brill, 2012–. |
| WS | Woodbrooke Studies: Christian Documents in Syriac, Arabic, and Garshūni: in 7 vols. / ed. by A. Mingana. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1927–1934. |

# THE *CHAPTERS ON KNOWLEDGE* OF RABBAN APHNĪMĀRAN: THE SYRIAC AND ARABIC MANUSCRIPT TRADITIONS. PART III

## A CRITICAL EDITION OF SYRIAC AND ARABIC TEXTS, TRANSLATION, AND NOTES

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**Abstract.** This article presents a critical edition of the *Chapters on Knowledge* by Rabban Aphnīmāran, a 7th-century East Syriac mystic, along with an *Anonymous commentary* on them. In the third part, the authors publish chapters 42–61 and their annotated translation. One of the aims of the genre of chapters, written in a deliberately enigmatic style, is gathering the mind (*hawnā*) and the practice of *hergā*. The authors examine the anthropological

premises behind it, analyze how the term *hergā* was used in both scholastic (5th–6th centuries) and mystical-ascetic circles (7th–8th centuries), and propose a reconstruction of the *hergā* method as applied to the chapters of Rabban Aphnīmāran.

**Keywords:** East Syriac Christian mysticism, Rabban Aphnīmāran, Chapters on Knowledge, anthropology, *hergā*.

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# «Главы о ведении» раббана Афнимарана. Сирийская и арабская рукописные традиции. Часть III

## Критическое издание сирийского и арабского текстов, перевод и комментарии

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**Аннотация.** Настоящая статья содержит критическое издание «Глав о ведении» раббана Афнимарана, восточносирийского мистика VII в., и анонимного толкования на них. В третьей части авторы публикуют главы 42–61 и их комментированный перевод. Одной из целей жанра глав, созданного в сознательно энигматическом стиле, является собирание ума (*hawnā*) и практика *hergā*. Авторы рассматривают антропологические предпосылки, стоящие за ней, анализируют как термин *hergā* использовался в школьной (V–VI вв.) и мистико-аскетической среде (VII–VIII вв.) и предлагают реконструкцию метода *hergā* применительно к главам раббана Афнимарана.

**Ключевые слова:** восточносирийский христианский мистицизм, раббан Афнимаран, «Главы о ведении», антропология, *hergā*.

# Part 1

## 1.1. Introduction

This article continues the existing series devoted to the *Chapters on Knowledge* by Rabban Aphnimaran and for the first time features the English translation of the original text.[1] The study concentrates on 19 chapters and the *Anonymous commentary* on them. The previous two articles, containing the beginning parts of Aphnimaran's treatise, were published in Russian in the preceding issues of the same journal.[2] The discussed article series is a part of our work on the critical edition of the whole of Aphnimaran's text as well as of the commentary on it.

Rabban Aphnimaran lived in the 7th century. He was the elder contemporary of well-known Syriac mystics like Isaac of Nineveh, на Dadishoʿ Qatraya and Simeon d-Taibutheh. Like them, he was attentively read outside of East Syriac communities, yet without his name being widely known, as it was shown in our article of 2020.[3]

1 The texts presented in this paper, along with the rest of Aphnimaran's *Chapters on Knowledge*, were widely discussed in the Seminar on Syriac Mysticism at the Independent University of Moscow. The seminar is part of the non-commercial scholarly-educational project *Laboratory of Unnecessary Things*, and it has been running since 2020.

2 See «Главы о ведении» Раббана Афнимарана. Сирийская и арабская рукописные традиции. Часть I / крит. изд. сир. текста, пер. с сир. и коммент. М. Г. Калинина и А. М. Преображенского; подгот. и пер. араб. текста М. Г. Калинина под ред. А. Н. Дунцова // Библия и христианская древность. 2020. № 1 (5). С. 15–64. ["The Chapters on Knowledge" of Rabban Aphnīmāran. The Syriac and Arabic Manuscript Traditions. Part I / a crit. ed., trans. from syr. and ar. and notes by M. G. Kalinin and A. M. Preobrazhensky; the ar. text prep. and trans. by M. G. Kalinin, copy-ed. by A. N. Duntsov // Bible and Christian Antiquity. 2020. № 1 (5). P. 15–64]; «Главы о ведении» раббана Афнимарана. Сирийская и арабская рукописные традиции. Часть II / крит. изд. сир. текста, пер. с сир. и коммент. М. Г. Калинина и А. М. Преображенского; подгот. и пер. араб. текста М. Г. Калинина под ред. А. Н. Дунцова // Библия и христианская древность. 2022. № 4 (16). С. 14–70. ["The Chapters on Knowledge" of Rabban Aphnīmāran. The Syriac and Arabic Manuscript Traditions. Part II / a crit. ed., trans. from syr. and ar. and notes by M. G. Kalinin and A. M. Preobrazhensky; the ar. text prep. and trans. by M. G. Kalinin, copy-ed. by A. N. Duntsov // Bible and Christian Antiquity. 2022. № 4 (16). P. 14–70].

3 «Главы о ведении» Раббана Афнимарана. Сирийская и арабская рукописные традиции. Часть I / крит. изд. сир. текста, пер. с сир. и коммент. М. Г. Калинина и А. М. Преображенского; подгот. и пер. араб. текста М. Г. Калинина под ред. А. Н. Дунцова // Указ. соч. С. 22–31. ["The Chapters on Knowledge" of Rabban Aphnīmāran. The Syriac and Arabic Manuscript Traditions. Part I / a crit. ed., trans. from syr. and ar. and notes by M. G. Kalinin and A. M. Preobrazhensky; the ar. text prep. and trans. by M. G. Kalinin, copy-ed. by A. N. Duntsov // Op. cit. P. 22–31].

Aphnimaran was considered one of the important ascetical authors within the Church of the East by his biographers. Two accounts of his life are provided in the *Book of Governors* by Thomas of Marga[4] and in the *Book of Chastity* by Isho'dnah of Basra.[5] Thomas of Marga devoted his work to the history of Beth 'Abe, the greatest monastery of the Church of the East in his time. He refers to Aphnimaran's writing activity and claims that "God gave him wisdom and understanding in the Scriptures, and like a spiritual philosopher, he composed many works and 'Responses,'[6] and treatises on doctrine in a perfect manner, and rivers of living water flowed from his belly according to the word of our Lord."[7] He also mentions the accusation of Messalianism[8] followed by Aphnimaran's expulsion from the monastery:

> "…envious people were stirred up, and they placed him on a bier for the dead, and [ascribing to him] the name of Mesalleyana, with psalms and prayers for the dead they brought him out to the place where they make asses run."[9]

4 *Thomas Margensis*. Liber superiorum II, 3 // The Book of Governors: The Historia Monastica of Thomas, Bishop of Margâ A.D. 840: in 2 vols. / ed. by E. A. Wallis Budge. Vol. 1. London, 1893. P. 68–69.

5 *Ishodnah Basrenus*. Liber fundatorum monasteriorum in regno Persarum et Arabum 94 // Liber superiorum seu historia monastica auctore Thoma, episcopo Margensi et Liber fundatorum monasteriorum in regno Persarum et Arabum / ed. P. Bedjan. Parisiis; Lipsiae, 1901. P. 494.

6 i.e., antiphonies.

7 *Thomas Margensis*. Liber superiorum II, 3 // Op. cit. P. 68.

8 On the accusation of Messalianism in the East Syriac milieu, see *Bitton-Ashkelony B.* "Neither Beginning nor End": The Messalian Imaginaire and Syriac Asceticism // Adamantius. 2013. Vol. 19. P. 222–239; *Segovia C. A.* Messalianism, Binitarianism, and the East-Syrian Background of the Qur'ān // Remapping Emergent Islam: Texts, Social Settings, and Ideological Trajectories Social Worlds of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages / ed. by C. A. Segovia. Amsterdam, 2020. P. 111–127; *Hagman P.* St. Isaac of Nineveh and the Messalians // Mystik — Metapher — Bild. Beiträge des VII. Makarios-Symposiums, Göttingen 2007 / hrsg. von M. Tamcke. Göttingen, 2008. S. 55–66; *Griggs J.* John of Dalyatha: Mystic or Messalian? // Parole de l'Orient. 2015. Vol. 40. P. 213–226; *Martikainen J.* Timotheos I. und der Messalianismus // Makarios-Symposium über das Gebet. Vorträge der dritten Finnisch-deutschen Theologentagung in Amelungsborn 1986 / hrsg. von J. Martikainen und H.-O. Kvist. Åbo, 1989. S. 47–60; *Treiger A.* East-Syriac Messalianism in Jewish and Muslim Heresiography // Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies. 2019. Vol. 19. P. 15–40.

9 *Thomas Margensis*. Liber superiorum II, 3 // Op. cit. P. 68–69. Cf. with a passage of Jeremiah, where he tells prophesies about the King being *buried with a donkey's burial, dragged off and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem* (Jer. 22:19). It is not the only biblical allusion in this biographical note: the later mention of envy refers to the passage from the Gospel of Matthew: *for he knew that for envy they had delivered him* (Mt. 27:18). See page 26 for the note on our principles of the Bible quotation.

Ishoʿdnah of Basra mentions the same conflict with minimal detail.[10] Both hagiographies refer to the fact that after the banishment, Aphnimaran founded another monastery.[11] We can thus conclude on the influence of his figure among contemporaries.

*Chapters on Knowledge* is the only surviving work of Aphnimaran. Within it, 91 chapters were preserved. The format of chapters was often used by most of the mystical tradition representatives known to us. They followed the compositional structure introduced to this type of literature by Evagrius. This structure is rooted in widely spread genre of apophtegmata, which was applied for moral, ascetical and theological topics in early Christian and rabbinical literature, Hebrew Bible, and elsewhere across cultures (one of the most influential and long-living examples being the sayings of Ahiqar). The main work of Evagrius demonstrating the structure is his *Chapters on Knowledge*. As one can see from the example of Aphnimaran's work, even the title of Evagrius' treatise could be taken over by East Syriac heirs of Evagrius. The spiritual lineage that began in the 7th century with Aphnimaran and his contemporaries—John bar Penkaye,[12] Simeon d-Taibutheh[13] and Isaac of Nineveh[14]—continues in the 8th–9th centuries with John of Dalyatha,[15] Joseph

10 Aphnimaran's relation to the Messalian controversy will be important for the future discussion.

11 See *Ishodnah Basrenus*. Liber fundatorum monasteriorum in regno Persarum et Arabum 94 // Op. cit. P. 494; *Thomas Margensis*. Liber superiorum II, 3 // Op. cit. P. 69.

12 His treatise the *Book of the Merchant* consisted of seven centuriae, of which only two have survived. For the edition and French translation, see *Phillips D.* Jean bar Penkayé, Le Livre du Marchand: édition et traduction des deux centuries conservées // Bulletin de l'Académie Belge pour l'Etude des Langues Anciennes et Orientales. 2022. Vol. 10–11. P. 335–378.

13 For comprehensive information about the *Book of Grace* also consisting of seven centuriae, see the dissertation by G. M. Kessel, who is preparing its critical edition *Kessel G. M.* Life and Works of Šemʿōn d-Ṭaibūtēh (7th Century): A Tentative Reconstruction. PhD Dissertation. Nijmegen, 2018. P. 191–274. For a partial English translation, see A Selection from The Book of Grace // The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian / trans. by D. Miller. Boston (Mass.), 1984. P. 397–426.

14 A critical edition of his *Chapters on knowledge* is currently being prepared by V. Duca. For the English and Italian translations, see respectively *Isaac of Nineveh*. Headings on Spiritual Knowledge (The Second Part, Chapters 1–3) / introd., trans., and notes by S. Brock. Yonkers (N. Y.), 2022. (Popular Patristics Series; 63); *Isacco di Ninive*. Discorsi spirituali: capitoli sulla conoscenza, preghiere, contemplazione sull'argomento della gehenna, altri opuscoli / introd., trad. e note a cura di P. Bettiolo. Magnano, 1985. (Padri orientali).

15 As considered by R. Beulay, only the first and half of the second centuria from the corpus of works attributed to John of Dalyatha in West Syriac manuscripts belong to our author. See *Beulay R.* Des centuries de Joseph Hazzaya retrouvées? // Parole de l'Orient. 1972. Vol. 3 (1). P. 5–44. Later, Fr. Gabriel (Bunge), based on stylistic considerations, expressed

Hazzaya,[16] and Behisho‘ of Kamul.[17]

The main content of Aphnimaran’s treatise is the enigmatic representation of different biblical passages and theological notions. The evidence

the opinion that the entire second centuria belongs to Joseph Hazzaya (see *Rabban Jausep Ḥazzaya*. Briefe über das geistliche Leben und verwandte Schriften: Ostsyrische Mystik des 8. Jahrhunderts / eingel. u. übers. von G. Bunge. Trier, 1982. (Sophia: Quellen östlicher Theologie; 21). S. 22–24). In the most recent critical edition, Fr. Paolo R. Pugliese reattributed the first half of the second centuria, restoring its authorship to Joseph Hazzaya, and initially published it in his doctoral research (see *Pugliese P. R.* I Capitoli di Conoscenza di Giuseppe Hazzaya (Centurie I–V). Introduzione, traduzione e commento. Dissertatio ad Doctoratum in Theologia et Scientiis patristicis consequendum. Roma, 2018. P. 206–235).

16 According to the description by A. Scher, the *Book of Chapters on Knowledge* by Mar Joseph consisted of 29 discourses, 27 of which were written in the genre of centuriae. The last two treatises were dedicated to the New Age, contemplations, and their fruits. See *Scher A.* Joseph Ḥazzāyā, écrivain syriaque du VIIIe siècle // Rivista degli studi orientali. 1910. Vol. 3. P. 52. Hieromonk Agapie (Corbu) implicitly suggests (*Iosif Hazzaya, avva*. Văzătorul de Dumnezeu / trad., stud., introd., note ierom. Agapie Corbu. Arad, 2019. (Scrieri Duhovnicești; 1). P. 4. N. 4) that the *Book of Chapters on Knowledge* consisted of 27 centuriae and notes that 2,700 chapters result from multiplying 5 by 540 (the number of *Chapters on Knowledge* by Evagrius Ponticus—6 centuriae, each containing 90 sayings). One possible interpretation of the number 540, attributed to the West Syriac writer Dionysius bar Salibi († 1171), is provided by A. Guillaumont (*Guillaumont A.* Les ‘Képhalaia Gnostica’ d’Évagre le Pontique et l’histoire de l’origénisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens. Paris, 1962. (Patristica Sorbonensia; 5). P. 20–21). For the edition and Italian translation of the *classical corpus* containing five centuriae preserved in West Syriac manuscripts, see *Giuseppe Hazzaya*. I Capitoli di conoscenza. Centurie I–V / testo sir. e trad. ital. P. R. Pugliese. Turnhout, 2023. (PO; 58/3). Two newly discovered fragments of the *Book of Chapters on Knowledge* were published by M. G. Kalinin and A. M. Preobrazhensky. See *Iosephi Divini Hazaiae*. Capita gnostica / nunc prim. repert., coll., ed.; text. ed. M. Kalinin. Monte Athone; Aquinci; Moscoviae, 2018. (Opera Mystica Syriaca; 1); *Калинин М. Г., Преображенский А. М.* «Главы о ведении» Иосифа Хаззайи: новое рукописное свидетельство и ранее не идентифицированные главы // Богословские труды. 2018. Вып. 47–48. С. 258–289. [*Kalinin M. G., Preobrazhensky A. M.* The Gnostic Chapters of Joseph Hazzaya: New Manuscript Evidence and Previously Unidentified Chapters // Theological Studies. 2018. № 47–48. P. 258–289]. The second revised edition of these fragments with Russian translation, extensive excursuses and commentaries, is currently in press. See *Иосиф Хаззайа*. Полное собрание творений. Т. 1: Книга глав о ведении. Новонайденные фрагменты / вступ. ст., крит. изд., пер. с сир., коммент. и прил. М. Г. Калинина и А. М. Преображенского. Сергиев Посад, 2025. (*в печати*). [*Joseph Hazzaya*. Complete Collection of Works. Vol. 1: Book of the Chapters on Knowledge. Newly Discovered Fragments / introd. art., crit. ed., trans. from syr., notes and suppl. by M. G. Kalinin and A. M. Preobrazhensky. Sergiev Posad, 2025. (*In print*)].

17 A portion of the *Chapters on knowledge* of Behisho‘, based on the defective manuscript from the Catholic University of America, ICOR syr. 18, accompanied by an English translation, was published by M. Blanchard in her dissertation. See *Blanchard M. J.* Beh Isho‘ Kamulaya’s Syriac Discourses on the Monastic Way of Life: Edition, English Translation, and Introduction. PhD Dissertation. Washington, D. C., 2001. P. 290–291 (text), 367 (transl.).

of East Syriac monastic practices allows us to set Aphnimaran's work into a proper milieu. Reading the Scripture (the process called *qeryānā*) was one of the three core practices of the East Syriac mystical tradition alongside prayer and a special meditation technique called *hergā*. Isaac of Nineveh, Aphnimaran's younger contemporary, refers to this triad, for example, in the ninth discourse of his *Third Collection*.[18] By their enigmatic approach, the chapters of Aphnimaran allowed the reader to keep his mind's focus on a certain biblical passage. Thus, reinforcing the practice of *qeryānā*, Aphnimaran's work provided a monk with a tool for *hergā*. A more detailed description of this technique, as well as of the effect that Aphnimaran's chapters must have had on a reader, is given in the third part of this paper.

Within the tradition, an *Anonymous commentary* accompanying the *Chapters* has been preserved. In the first article of the series, we described its manuscript tradition. This commentary contains at least one detail which can be useful for its dating. While interpreting Chapter 90, the anonymous writer blames "the weakness of the knowledge of those who say that the humanity of our Lord does not see His Divinity."[19] This quote refers to the famous polemics, which was particularly and especially addressed by the council assembled by Patriarch Timothy I in 786/7.[20] One may assume that

18 See quotations from this discourse in the Section 3.3.

19 Anonimi interpretatio Aphnimarani capitum gnosticorum 90 // Paris, BnF syr. 367 (*olim* Seert 29). Fol. 35r.

20 On the inquiry of mystics, see *Treiger A.* Could Christ's Humanity See His Divinity? An Eighth-Century Controversy Between John of Dalyatha and Timothy I, Catholicos of the Church of the East // Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies. 2009. Vol. 9. P. 3–21; *Berti V.* Le débat sur la vision de Dieu et la condamnation des mystiques par Timothée I$^{er}$: la perspective du patriarche // Les mystiques syriaques / éd. par A. Desreumaux. Paris, 2011. (Études syriaques; 8). P. 151–176; *Kavvadas N.* Isaak von Ninive und seine *Kephalaia Gnostika*: Die Pneumatologie und ihr Kontext. Leiden; Boston (Mass.), 2015. (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae; 128). S. 8–24; *Калинин М. Г.* Новое свидетельство полемики о том, может ли человечество Христа созерцать Его Божество // Богословский вестник. 2019. Т. 34 (3). С. 250–264. [*Kalinin M. G.* New Evidence of the Controversy About Whether the Humanity of Christ Can Contemplate His Divinity // Theological Herald. 2019. Vol. 34 (3). P. 250–264]. The Russian translation of all primary sources that mention the Council of Timothy I can be found in *Бёлэ Р.* Безвидный свет. Введение в изучение восточносирийской христианской мистической традиции / пер. с фр., коммент. Т. А. Сениной; ред. фр. пер., коммент. Г. М. Кесселя; ред., сост. и коммент. А. М. Преображенского; ред. и пер. с сир. М. Г. Калинина и свящ. А. Полховского; пер. с сир. А. С. Черкашиной; пер. с араб. Д. В. Черкашина. М., 2021. (Opera Mystica Syriaca; 2. Smaragdos Philocalias). С. 305–344. [*Beulay R.* Light Without Form: An Introduction to the Study of the East Syriac Christian Mystical Tradition / trans. from French, comment. by T. A. Senina; French trans. ed., comment. by G. M. Kessel; ed., comp. and comment. by A. M. Preobrazhensky; ed. and trans. from Syriac by M. G. Kalinin

the commentary was composed in the time when this polemics was still in the active phase. The interpreter may refer to the same polemics in his commentary on the 44th chapter presented in this article. This chapter deals with the question of the knowledge possessed by God the Son. The interpreter, while referring to the commonly accepted thesis that the Son has the ultimate knowledge of the Father, adds the remark that "those who love God have no doubt about this."[21] (This wording itself seems to hint at the controversy.) At the same time, he says that "the word on the incarnation and the conjoining of natures is told in a different sense,"[22] i.e., refers to a different matter. The interpreter explains that the unity in sonship, authority and dominion is meant, and demonstratively avoids the question of knowledge which is available to the human nature of Christ. Summing up, the interpreter, on the one hand, defends the idea that the mystical vision of God is possible, but, on the other hand, he is cautious in his Christological formulations, precisely distinguishing between the knowledge of the Son and that of the assumed Man (although he avoids discussing the latter).

Through his commentary, the interpreter provides additional context and insights which help understand the sense of the Aphnimaran's riddles. However, as a reader may notice, his method tends to extend the passages rather than untangle their meaning or provide a more straightforward explanation. Both this strategy and the fact that the commentator is not afraid to demonstrate his individuality allow us to assert that he was himself a self-sufficient mystical author, distinguished by both authority and creativity.

Various East Syriac mystical writers wrote or are said to have written commentaries on texts composed in the genre of chapters. According to ʿAbdishoʿ bar Brikha, Joseph Hazzaya interpreted Evagrius' *Chapters on Knowledge* as well as the book called *Merchant*,[23] which should be identified as the *Book of the Merchant* by John bar Penkaye[24]—an identification supported by allusions to this work in Joseph's preserved writings.[25] Aphrem

and Priest A. Polkhovsky; trans. from Syriac by A. S. Cherkashina; trans. from Arabic by D. V. Cherkashin. Moscow, 2021. (Opera Mystica Syriaca; 2. Smaragdos Philocalias). P. 305–344].

21 See p. 33.

22 See p. 33.

23 *Abdisho Nisibensis*. Catalogus librorum ecclesiasticorum 68, 580–587 // ECT. 2. P. 143 (trans.), 235 (text).

24 Ibid. 124, 860 // Op. cit. P. 178 (trans.), 240 (text).

25 See *Преображенский А. М., Калинин М. Г.* Рецепция ангелологии Иосифа Хаззайи у богословов Церкви Востока в X–XV вв. // *Иосиф Хаззайа*. Полное собрание творений.

of Qirqephion wrote a commentary on the difficult *Chapters on Knowledge* by Joseph Hazzaya.[26] Besides this, Isaac of Nineveh characterized at least some of his *Chapters on Knowledge* as clarifying glosses to his own writings.[27] The interpretive method of the anonymous commentator on Aphnimaran's treatise should be examined in relation to these works.

The topics explored in the selection of chapters introduced in this article include Triadology and Christology, presented in accordance with the views of the Church of the East (chapters 44 to 46 and 49 to 52). In this context, the formula of "the twoness of natures and *qnomas*"[28] is adhered to by both the author and the interpreter. From the remaining text of Aphnimaran's work, we know that the expected notion of one person (*parṣōpā*) is also applied in both the chapters and the commentary.

Several passages address eschatological questions, such as the ultimate condition of human nature and angelic ranks. The text illustrates the reception of the ninefold structure of the angelic world, systematically described in the Areopagite corpus (chapter 53). The interpreter lists all nine ranks (chapter 43) in accordance with Pseudo-Dionysius, with one notable exception: Cherubim appear to belong to the highest rank, reflecting the predominant trend in the East Syriac tradition.[29]

Т. 1: Книга глав о ведении. Новонайденные фрагменты. (*в печати*). [*Preobrazhensky A. M., Kalinin M. G.* The Reception of Joseph Hazzaya's Angelology by 10th–15th Century Theologians of the Church of the East // *Joseph Hazzaya*. Complete Collection of Works. Vol. 1: Book of the Chapters on Knowledge. Newly Discovered Fragments. (*In print*)].

26 See *Beulay R.* Des centuries de Joseph Hazzaya retrouvées? // Op. cit. P. 5–44.

27 *Isaacus Ninevita.* Collectio secunda. Capita gnostica I, 41 (scholium) // Oxford, Bodl. Lib. MS syr. e. 7. Fol. 26v. See the English translation by S. Brock: "…the individual headings on knowledge written above the lines in various places in the book <…> serve as a kind of gloss on much of what is said in this book. Hence, for the insight and greater ease of the reader—and also as a reminder for ourselves—this [present] book has been made by us from the abundant contemplation of Scriptures, as I wrote in the beginning of this book; and also, from experiences that have come my way. For each subject we have marked down above them some of these chapters on knowledge, so that by them the mind may be illumined in any obscure meanings [that occur] in the reading. For there are words, each one of which indicates a different sense when it is read, but inside it is different in sense" (*Isaac of Nineveh*. Headings on Spiritual Knowledge. P. 79–80).

28 See p. 33.

29 See *Преображенский А. М., Калинин М. Г.* Рецепция ангелологии Иосифа Хаззайи у богословов Церкви Востока в X–XV вв. // *Иосиф Хаззайа.* Полное собрание творений. Т. 1: Книга глав о ведении. Новонайденные фрагменты. (*в печати*). [*Preobrazhensky A. M., Kalinin M. G.* The Reception of Joseph Hazzaya's Angelology by 10th–15th Century Theologians of the Church of the East // *Joseph Hazzaya*. Complete Collection of Works. Vol. 1: Book of the Chapters on Knowledge. Newly Discovered Fragments. (*In print*)].

The topic of renewal and collective transformation (chapter 56) is discussed alongside questions concerning the mortality of the soul and the body (chapters 58 to 60). Another subject addressed by Aphnimaran is the hearing and comprehension of names (chapter 42). Additionally, several chapters present riddles in which specific biblical allusions are encoded (chapters 47 to 48, 54 to 55, 57, and 61).

In the first article of our series, we identified the West Syriac and Arabic versions of the *Chapters*.[30] Their existence testifies to the influence Aphnimaran had outside his own tradition. The Arabic version is a translation of the West Syriac one, both of them revealing corrections made for theological reasons. In particular, the West Syriac and the Arabic versions omit some chapters known from the original version. More detailed remarks on this can be found in the aforementioned paper.

### 1.2. Manuscript sigla and critical symbols used in the apparatus

East Syriac manuscripts containing only the *Chapters on Knowledge* of Rabban Aphnimaran:

**B** Baghdad syr. 210, 1st half of the 9th century—Metropolitan Library of the Assyrian Church of the East, Baghdad, Iraq; Estrangela; size 24.5×16.0 cm; fol. 173v–174v.[31]

East Syriac manuscripts containing the *Chapters on Knowledge* of Rabban Aphnimaran and the *Anonymous commentary* on them:

**I** Brit. Lib. MSS syr. 9 (*olim* India Office 9), 1712/3—The British Library, London, United Kingdom; East Syriac script; fol. 261v–268r.[32]

**P** Paris, BnF syr. 367 (*olim* Seert 29[33]), 14th century—National library of France, Paris, France; convolute; East Syriac script; size 18.0×12.5 cm; fol. 5r–35v.[34]

30 See note 2.

31 *Al-Muṭrān Kīwarkīs Ṣlīwā.* Fihrist maḫṭūṭāt maktabat muṭrāniyyat kanīsat al-mašriq fī Baġdād. Baġdād, 2003. Ṣ. 206. [*Al-Muṭrān Kīwarkīs Ṣlīwā.* Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Library of the Metropolitan See of the Church of the East in Baghdad. Baghdad, 2003. P. 206]; *Kaplan A.* Expertise paléographique du ms. Syr Bagdad 210 en vue de sa datation. Dadisho Qatraya. Commentaire sur le Paradis des Pères // Bulletin de l'Académie Belge pour l'Étude des Langues Anciennes et Orientales. 2013. Vol. 2. P. 105–121; especially 108, 121.

32 *Furlani G.* Il manoscritto siriaco 9 dell'India Office // Rivista degli studi orientali. 1923–1924. Vol. 10. P. 315–320; especially 319.

33 *Scher A.* Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et arabes, conservés dans la Bibliothèque épiscopale de Séert (Kurdistan) avec notes bibliographiques. Mossoul, 1905. P. 20.

34 *Briquel-Chatonnet F.* Manuscrits syriaques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (№ 356–435, entrés depuis 1911), de la Bibliothèque Méjanes d'Aix-en-Provence, de la Bibliothèque

**S** Mingana syr. 108, 1550—University of Birmingham's Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, United Kingdom; East Syriac script; size 15.5×10.0 cm; fol. 186v–208r.[35]

West Syriac manuscripts containing the *Chapters on Knowledge* of Rabban Aphnimaran:

**A** Archdiocese of Aleppo, Syrian Orthodox Church, MS 141 A, 1485—Archdiocese of Aleppo Library (Syriac Orthodox Church), Aleppo, Syria; West Syriac script; size 15.5×12.0 cm; fol. 187v–190r.[36]

**C** Cambridge Add. 1999, February 1573—Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, United Kingdom; West Syriac script; size 17.8×13.6 cm; fol. 127v–129v.[37]

**$H_1$** Harvard syr. 42 (*olim* Semitic Museum 3968), 2nd half of the 15th century[38]—Harvard Library (Houghton Library), Cambridge (Mass.), United States of America; West Syriac script; size 26.0×18.0 cm; fol. 86r–87r.[39]

**$H_2$** Harvard syr. 115, November 1889[40]—Harvard Library (Houghton Library), Cambridge (Mass.), United States of America; West Syriac script; size 23.0×17.0 cm; fol. 124r–125v.[41]

municipale de Lyon et de la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg. Catalogue. Paris, 1997. P. 37–39; especially 37.

35 *Mingana A.* Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts: in 3 vols. Vol. 1: Syriac and Garshūni Manuscripts. Cambridge, 1933. Col. 263–268; especially 266.

36 HMML Project Number: SOAA 00141 A. URL: https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/508552. The manuscript was known to A. Vööbus (see *Vööbus A.* Die Entdeckung wichtiger Urkunden für die syrische Mystik: Jōḥannān von Dāljātā // Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft. 1975. Bd. 125 (2). S. 268. N. 16) and R. Beulay (see La collection des lettres de Jean de Dalyatha / éd. crit. du texte syr. inédit, trad. franç., introd. et notes par R. Beulay. Turnhout, 1978. (PO; 39/3). P. 273. N. 34) as "Ms. Aleppo Orth. 102," but has not been taken into account in any edition of the works of Joseph Hazzaya or John of Dalyatha.

37 *Wright W.* A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge: in 2 vols. Vol. 1. Cambridge, 1901. P. 445–471.

38 According to a note in the Harvard University Library online catalog, this codex is erroneously listed in R. Beulay's works as Harvard syr. 30 (https://id.lib.harvard.edu/alma/990075832170203941/catalog): "Detailed description of ff. 1–102 by R. Beulay in Patrologia Orientalis 39:3, pp. 268–272. (It is wrongly called 'Harvard Syr. 30')." Nevertheless, on the first page of the manuscript, in the upper right corner there is a note "Syr. Ms. № 30" (see the description by N. Khayyat: "42 (formerly 30)": *Jean de Dalyatha.* Les Homélies I–XV / éd. crit. du texte syr. inédit, trad., introd. et notes par N. Khayyat. Antélias, 2007. (Sources syriaques; 2). P. 34). Vööbus dates this manuscript to the 17th/18th centuries (*Vööbus A.* Die Entdeckung wichtiger Urkunden für die syrische Mystik: Jōḥannān von Dāljātā // Op. cit. S. 269. Fußnote 21).

39 La collection des lettres de Jean de Dalyatha. P. 270–271.

40 R. Beulay lists this codex as Harvard syr. 109 (Ibid. P. 265–266).

41 См.: http://id.lib.harvard.edu/aleph/009275496/catalog.

**J** Jerusalem, Saint Mark's Monastery 290 old, 1477/8—Jerusalem, Saint Mark's Monastery Library, Israel; West Syriac script; size 27.5×18.5 cm; fol. 193v–195r.[42]

**K** Pampakuda, Konat syr. 303, 18th century—Family Konat Collection, Pampakuda, India; West Syriac script; size 22.0×15.0 cm, fol. 206r–208v.[43]

**L** Brit. Lib. Or. 4074, 15th century—The British Library, London, United Kingdom; West Syriac script; fol. 115v–117r.[44]

**$M_1$** Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs 417, March 1474—Library of Church of the Forty Martyrs, Mardin, Turkey; West Syriac script; size 22.0×17.5 cm; p. 370–373.[45]

**$M_2$** Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs 418, 1470/1—Library of Church of the Forty Martyrs, Mardin, Turkey; West Syriac script; size 19.0×13.5 cm; fol. 159r–161r.[46]

**N** Mingana syr. 7, 17 May 1906—University of Birmingham's Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham, United Kingdom; West Syriac script; size 20.8×14.3 cm; fol. 155b–157b.[47]

Arabic sources containing the *Chapters on Knowledge* of Rabban Aphnimaran:

**E** Cairo, Coptic Museum ar. 80, 11 March 1896—Coptic Museum Library, Cairo, Egypt; size 24.0×17.0 cm; fol. 128v–130v.[48]

**W** Kitāb taʿālīm al-ʾab Yūḥannā ad-Dalyāṭiyy al-maʿrūf bism aš-Šayḫ ar-Rūḥāniyy, ʿan al-maḫṭūṭāt 163, 184 nusukiyāt bi-maktabat Dayr al-Qiddīsa al-ʿAḏraʾ Maryam (as-Suryān). Wādī al-Naṭrūn, 1998. Ṣ. 293–295. [The Book of Admonitions of Father John of Dalyatha Known as the Spiritual Elder, Based on Ascetic Manuscripts 163 and 184 in the Library

42 HMML Project Number: SMMJ 00290 old. URL: https://w3id. org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/136498.

43 *Ploeg J. P. M., van der*. The Christians of St. Thomas in South India and Their Syriac Manuscripts. Bangalore, 1983. P. 178. HMML Project Number: APSTCH KONA 01 00303. URL: https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/539775.

44 Margoliouth G. Descriptive List of Syriac and Karshuni MSS. in the British Museum Acquired Since 1873. London, 1899. P. 23–24. See also La collection des lettres de Jean de Dalyatha. P. 266–267.

45 HMML Project Number: CFMM 00417. URL: https://w3id.org/ vhmml/readingRoom/view/502160.

46 HMML Project Number: CFMM 00418. URL: https://w3id.org/ vhmml/readingRoom/view/137629.

47 *Mingana A.* Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts. Vol. 1. Col. 24.

48 *Macomber W.* Final Inventory of the Microfilmed Manuscripts of the Coptic Museum, Old Cairo, Egypt. Rolls A1–20. Manuscripts in Arabic, Coptic (Bohairic, Oxyrhynchite [1], Sahidic), Greek. April 16, 1990. Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library. Provo (Utah), March 8, 1995. URL: https://archive.org/details/CMA7-14. Interestingly, in the title of this manuscript, the "Spiritual Elder" is identified with "Julian [the Persian], according to what St. Philoxenus says" (Cairo, Coptic Museum ar. 80, fol. 1r). See also *Simaika M., ʿAbd Al-Masih Y.* Catalogue of the Coptic and Arabic Manuscripts in the Coptic Museum, the Patriarchate, the Principal Churches of Cairo and Alexandria and the Monasteries of Egypt: in 3 vols. Vol. 1. Cairo, 1939. P. 41.

of the Monastery of the Holy Virgin Mary. Wadi El Natrun, 1998. P. 293–295]. (*Editio princeps arabica*).

**Notations in critical apparatus**

| | |
|---|---|
| *a.corr.* | ante correctionem |
| *l.c.* | lapsus calami |
| *marg.* | marginalis |
| *sub.l.* | sub linea |
| *sup.l.* | supra lineam |
| *trsp.* | transposuit |

### 1.3. Technical notes

The present article covers chapters 42 to 61. Below we provide the table showing the distribution of the preserved chapters among the manuscripts. We take into account 14 Syriac manuscripts (among them, **B** does not contain the chapters in question), as well as two Arabic sources, one being a manuscript from the Coptic Museum of Cairo, and another, a published monastic anthology in which Aphnimaran's chapters remained unidentified and unmarked. Detailed remarks on the manuscript tradition of the *Chapters* were given in the first article of our series.[49]

The vocalization marks used in the manuscripts are reproduced in the edition only when they help avoid ambiguity. As for the punctuation marks, they are reproduced according to the oldest manuscript. For the chapters as well as for the anonymous commentaries edited in our article it is the manuscript **P**. In the apparatus, vocalization marks are generally not reproduced. Abbreviations used in the manuscripts are expanded in the edition. Except in special cases, this is not specified in the apparatus.

Variant readings in the manuscripts are indicated in the translation notes only when they provide a meaningful alternative reading. In other words, omissions of words that disrupt the integrity of the text, grammatical errors in Syriac words, and variations in the word order (if they do not affect the translation), as well as similar issues, are reflected only in the critical apparatus to the Syriac text. In **P**, a later hand wrote over the damaged text, circling part of the blurred phrases. In our edition, the blurred words which were not inscribed anew are indicated by the sign ▲, while the

49 See note 2.

rewritten phrases are colored gray. The text of the chapters quoted by the anonymous commentator is marked in bold when the corresponding Syriac words in the commentary repeat those from the chapter.

If there is not enough space in the end of a line for a whole word, the scribe of **P** often places the first letters of the word to complete a line and then writes it anew in the beginning of the next line; sometimes also short dash-like lines are used for the same purpose. Such cases are not addressed in the footnotes. At the end of every textual unit, be it a chapter or a commentary, we are using the sign ❖. To render the punctuation signs *ʕellāyā* and *taḥtāyā*, we use the punctuation marks ܀ and ܁ respectively. The vocalization *rb̲āṣā karyā* (◌ܰ), when used to render a stem vowel of a solid verb, is replaced by *rb̲āṣā ʔarrīḥā* (◌ܲ).

In the critical edition of the chapters, as well as in the accompanying apparatus, we use either East or West Syriac fonts, depending on the type of the manuscript. In the third part of the article, the East Syriac font is used consistently for all texts of East Syriac authorship.

In Arabic chapters, we follow standard Arabic orthography in placing the *hamzah*. The omission of *hamzah* in **E** and **W** is not indicated in the apparatus. Likewise, the absence of dots in the final letter *yāʔ* in **E** is not noted.

Quotes from the original New Testament text (where necessary, in alignment with the readings from the Peshitta) are provided according to the edition: Novum Testamentum Graece / based on the work of E. Nestle and E. Aland; ed. by B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini and B. M. Metzger. Stuttgart, [28]2012. In our translation, for Biblical quotes, we generally used the *New American Standard Bible* (hereafter NAS) version as a starting point, making necessary adjustments. Where more appropriate, we adopted the translation decisions from the King James Version instead. In our commentaries, including footnotes, we may use both translations or modify them without indication. The translations of the quoted Syriac sources, unless otherwise indicated, are ours.

### 1.4. Distribution of the text of the chapters and commentaries among the manuscripts

The "+" symbol marks the presence of the chapter text in the manuscript, the "–" symbol—its absence, the "▲" symbol—the presence of the commentary on the chapter in the manuscript.

| Chapter, № | B | P | S | I | L | $M_1$ | $M_2$ | J | $H_1$ | $H_2$ | C | K | N | A | E | W |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42 | – | + ▲ | – | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 43 | – | + ▲ | – | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 44 | – | + ▲ | – | – | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| 45 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 46 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 47 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 48 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 49 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 50 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 51 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 52 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 53 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 54 | – | + ▲ | + ▲ | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 55 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 56 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 57 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 58 | – | + ▲ | + ▲ | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 59 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 60 | – | + ▲ | + ▲ | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| 61 | – | + ▲ | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |

## 42.

W 294, E 130r

ܟܝܢܐ ܕܫܡܥܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܥܝ ܡܢ ܣܓܝܐ ܕܡܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܦܫܦ ܩܕܡ ܕܢ ܦܬܓܡ ܥܠ ܐܡܪܗ ܘܥܠ ܦܥܠܗ ❖

P 18v

ܫܡܗ. ܟܝܢܐ ܕܫܡܥܐ ܠܐ ܡܫܬܥܝ ܡܢ ܣܓܝܐ ܕܡܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܦܫܦ ܩܕܡ ܕܢ ܦܬܓܡ ܥܠ ܐܡܪܗ ܘܥܠ ܦܥܠܗ: ܐܝܟ ܕܡ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ. ܐܢܫ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ ܕܡ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ. ܐܢܫ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ ܕܡ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ. ܐܢܫ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ ܕܡ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ. ܐܢܫ ܕܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܠ ܐܢܫ ❖

P 18r, L 116v, $M_1$ 372, $M_2$ 160v, J 194v, $H_1$ 86v, $H_2$ 125v, C 129r, K 208r, N 157r, A 189v

اسم الأشياء لا تزعج السامع من قبل أن يفتش أمرهم وفعلهم

## 43.

ܫܡܗ ܕ ܕܐܠܘܬ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܥܝܢ ܗܝ ܠܗ ܬܪܝ ܦܩܛ ܒ ܕܢ ܫܘܐ ❖

عين الثالوث القدوس هي لها ترى فقط

*Traditio textus*: **42,1** *a* ܟܝܢܐ *inc.* **P L $M_1$ $M_2$ J $H_1$ $H_2$ C K N A** | *a* اسم *inc.* **W E** **2** *a* وفعلهم *des.* **W E** **3** *a* ܐܡܪܗ ܘܥܠ ܦܥܠܗ *des.* **L $M_1$ $M_2$ J $H_1$ $H_2$ C K N A** **43,1** *a* ܫܡܗ *inc.* **L $M_1$ $M_2$ J $H_1$ $H_2$ C K N A** | *a* عين *inc.* **W E** | *a* فقط *des.* **W E** **2** *a* ܫܘܐ *des.* **L $M_1$ $M_2$ J $H_1$ $H_2$ C K N A**

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**42,1** ܟܝܢܐ] ܟܝܢܐ ܕ **$M_1$ J A C** **2** الاشياً] الأشياء **E** | ܕܒܪ] *om.* **J** **3** ܐܡܪܗ ܘܥܠ ܦܥܠܗ] **L $M_1$ $M_2$ J A $H_1$ $H_2$ C K N** | ܐܡܪܗ ܘܥܠ ܦܥܠܗ] *hoc verbum litteris parvis scriptum est* **$M_1$** **4** ܫܡܗ] *l.c.* **P** **8** ܐܝܟ] ܒ *sup.l.* **P**

**43,1** المقدس] القدوس **E** **2** ܕܢ] *corruptum in textu* **$M_1$**

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i In **L $M_1$ $M_2$ J A $H_1$ $H_2$ C K N**, instead of *znā* (“kind, type”), the word *dīnā* (“judgment; manner, custom”) is used. Yet, this alternative reading does not influence the sense of the riddle

## Part 2.

## The *Chapters on Knowledge* of Rabban Aphnimaran and the *Anonymous commentary* on them. Chapters 42 to 61

### 42.

Hearing of names does not move the listening ones before their type[i] [i.e., of the names] and operation are examined.

**WE:** The name of things does not move the listening one before their circumstances and operation are examined.*

**Explanation. Hearing of names does not move the listening ones** whether they are spoken of the Creator or the creation, unless **their type and operation are examined**, [that is,] of each name: what its type and operation signify. When [these names] are spoken of God, the name "Lord" (*Maryā*) indicates His lordship (*mārūṯẹh*); the name "King" (*malkā*)—His kingdom (*malkūṯẹh*); and the name "Ruler" (*šallīṭā*)—His simple authority (*šulṭāneh*); and the name "Savior"—the salvation that He provides; and the name "Judge" belongs to Him who will judge the nations with righteousness; and the name "Mighty" [points to] His invincible strength. And by the name [of God], His operation is known from its type. The same also [applies to] the people and everything that is called by a name: [each of their names] is known from its properties and its operations.

### 43.

That eye of the Holy Trinity sees only itself.[1]

**WE:** The eye of the Most Holy Trinity sees only itself.

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in the given context.

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* A possible variant of translation: "…before he [i.e., the listening one] examines their circumstances and operation"

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1 Cf. *Babai Magnus*. Interpretatio Evagrii Pontici capitum gnosticorum III, 81 // *Frankenberg W.* Euagrius Ponticus. Berlin, 1912. (Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse, NF; 13/2). S. 248): "Therefore, what [Evagrius] says, '*The one who knows God or has the knowledge of His nature*,'—[this means the following]. The One who knows His nature is the venerable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It [i.e., the Trinity] knows Its Nature, and the quality of everything pertaining to It (*w-ʾaykannāyūṯā d-ḵulheṇ dīlāh*)."

ܗܘ ܕܢܦܫ ܐܢ ܫܠܡ ܐܢܫ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܗܢ. ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܒܪ ܐܢܫ ܐܢ ܐܦ ܐܢܐ ܐܡܪ ܠܟ ܕܐܢ ܐܫܬܟܚ ܐܢܫ ܒܥܠܡܐ ܗܢ ܐܘ

**Explanation. The eye of the Holy Trinity** is wisdom that is incomprehensible to both spiritual and corporeal beings. The vision of this [eye] is knowledge that no created or made being whatsoever has, but it is this very eye alone that beholds its Holy Trinity, glorified by the Trisagion hymn by [both] simple and corporeal beings (*mqadšaṯ pšīṭę wa-ǧšīmę*). Just as spiritual beings see spiritual beings spiritually and corporeal beings see corporeal beings corporeally, so does the eye of the Holy Trinity see its nature triadic in properties. [The latter] represent the three *qnomas*—not as [separate] *qnomas* shaped by a limited image (*da-mṣalmīn ba-ḏmūṯā*), but [as] those that have no image outside themselves. Neither does vision comprehend them, nor does knowledge investigate them, nor does the wisdom of made beings depict them, nor does rationality expound them—neither [that] of Cherubim, nor of Seraphim, nor of Thrones, nor of Dominions, Virtues, and Powers, nor of Principalities (*ręšānę*) [who are called] *ʔarkos*, rich in gifts, nor of Archangels and Angels[2]—[all of them are not] able to see the Holy Trinity, the One sanctifying them, as the Trinity itself sees its own nature; and [the Trinity] encompasses every created being according to Its vision, and has mercy [on all] and cares for all.[i]

## 44.

As the Father knows the Son, [so] also the Son knows the Father.

**WE:** As the Father knows the Son, so the Son knows the Father.

i The copyist of **P** has placed the punctuation marks in such a way that the following meaning is implied: "[all of them are not] able to see the Holy Trinity the one sanctifying them; [and] as the Trinity itself sees its own nature, [so] It encompasses every created being according to Its vision, and has mercy [on all] and cares for all." Syntactically and substantively, such a reading is less likely

2 This same order of ranks in the angelic hierarchy is described by Joseph Hazzaya. See *Iosephus Hazaias*. Liber quaestiones et responsiones II, 6 // Baghdad, Chaldean Patriarch of Babylon 131. Fol. 79r–81r; *Idem*. Capitum gnosticorum fragmenta nova II, 14–22 // *Калинин М. Г.*, *Преображенский А. М.* «Главы о ведении» Иосифа Хаззайи: новое рукописное свидетельство и ранее не идентифицированные главы // Указ. соч. С. 272. [*Kalinin M. G.*, *Preobrazhensky A. M.* The Gnostic Chapters of Joseph Hazzaya: New Manuscript Evidence and Previously Unidentified Chapters // Op. cit. P. 272]. For more details on the enumeration of angelic ranks in the works of Church of the East authors (6th–15th centuries), see *Преображенский А. М.*, *Калинин М. Г.* Рецепция ангелологии Иосифа Хаззайи у богословов Церкви Востока в X–XV вв. // Указ. соч. (*в печати*). [*Preobrazhensky A. M.*, *Kalinin M. G.* The Reception of Joseph Hazzaya's Angelology by 10th–15th Century Theologians of the Church of the East // Op. cit. (*In print*)].

P 19v ⲡⲉϫⲉ ⲡⲁⲗⲁⲓⲟⲥ. ⲙⲁⲣⲕⲟⲥ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲟⲩⲛ ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗⲏⲧⲟⲥ ⲛⲉⲙ ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲛⲉⲙ ⲡⲓⲛⲁ ⲙⲏ ⲙⲁⲣⲉⲩⲥⲩⲛⲁⲅⲱⲅⲟⲥ

**Explanation.** The Saint teaches that the Son is equal in nature with His Father. And just as the nature [of the Father and the Son] is equal, so too are [Their] knowledge and essence. And **as the Father knows the Son** with His incomprehensible knowledge, so **the Son knows the Father** in the same way, and those who love God have no doubt about this. And the word on the incarnation and the conjoining of natures is told in a different sense*: [on] separating of the natures, but the unity of the one Son, and authority, and dominion over everything *in heaven and on earth*,[a] according to His saying that gives life to all.[3]

## 45.

At first the Son was in one nature. However, in the sixth month He was confessed in the twoness of natures and *qnomas* and [like that] remains.

**Explanation. At first the Son was in one** divine **nature**. **However**, when the chief angel[4] proclaimed to the Virgin **in the sixth month**, the Word of God assumed a living temple from human nature, which was created *in the image of God*,[b] and united it with Himself in an indivisible union. Natures and *qnomas* are two in number, but the Son is one. Regarding His divine *qnoma*, speech is weak (*mākkā ʔāmōrūṯā*),** for there is no authority for a created and made [being] to speak of its Creator and comprise (*nsayyeḵ*) the Maker. But regarding His human *qnoma*, humble [matters] are spoken of (*meṯʔamrān mākkāṯā*)—those that became the reason for the elevation of the whole [human] nature.[5]

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clause as a main clause

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3 See our considerations concerning this chapter in the Introduction.

4 An epithet referring to the angel Gabriel, who, according to Joseph Hazzaya, belongs to the rank of cherubim. See *Iosephus Hazaias*. Sermo de natura [Dei] essentiae 61 // TSEC. 8. P. 88. For probable sources of this idea, see *Преображенский А. М.*, *Калинин М. Г.* Рецепция ангелологии Иосифа Хаззайи у богословов Церкви Востока в X–XV вв. // Указ. соч. (*в печати*). [*Preobrazhensky A. M.*, *Kalinin M. G.* The Reception of Joseph Hazzaya's Angelology by 10th–15th Century Theologians of the Church of the East // Op. cit. (*In print*)].

5 There is a word play in the original text: when speaking about the divine *qnoma*, human speech is "soft/humble" (*mākkā*), that is, unable to clearly tell anything about this *qnoma*; when speaking about the human *qnoma*, this qnoma itself is humble and as such can be described by speech.

**46.**

**ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ ⲧⲉⲛⲟⲩϯ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ

**46.**

By some matters He is confessed doubly and by some matters singly.

**Explanation.** Doubly by nature, singly by sonship.

**47.**

On the seventh day behind the eyes of many the Savior of all straightened the head that was inclined for two hundred sixteen months, and reproved envy, and made the many rejoice.

**Explanation.** On the seventh day: the Sabbath day, on which our Lord healed the woman who *was bent over, and could not straighten up at all*.[a] **The two hundred and sixteen months** of which he spoke are the years of which our Lord spoke, and [of which] the blessed evangelist Luke wrote—that she *was bent over for eighteen years*.[b] And when our Lord healed her on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, the ruler of the synagogue became angry and said to the crowds, "*There are six days in which work should be done; come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day*."[c] But our Lord **reproved** him and said to him, "*You hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall, and lead him away to water him?* And this one, being a daughter of Abraham*"[d] and so on. When He was saying this, those who rebelled against Him were ashamed, while the whole folk was **rejoicing** at all the miracles that were performed through Him.

**48.**

The sweet fruit has become a death-bringer, whereas the insipid kindred of it has borne a fruit [that was] not of its nature; and from the bitterness through the nearness of the Life-Giver Himself it turned to the blissful taste, and acquired life.

a Lk. 13:11 b Lk. 13:11 c Lk. 13:14 d Lk. 13:15–16

* The pronoun "him" (*leh*) is present in the Old Syriac Version of Gospels, but is absent from the standard editions of the New Testament Peshitta. See Comparative Edition of the Syriac Gospels: Aligning the Sinaiticus, Curetonianus, Peshîṭtâ and Ḥarklean Versions: in 4 vols. / by G. A. Kiraz; Ḥarklean text prep. by A. Juckel. Vol. 3: Luke. Piscataway (N. J.), $^{3}$2004. P. 280

ܗܘ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܝܫܘܥ ܗܘܕܝ ܒܝܬܐ ܗܢܐ ܗܐ ܒܪ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܗܘ׃ ܕܐܬܐ ܒܪ ܐܢܫܐ ܠܒܥܐ ܘܐܫܪܒ ܕܐܒܕ ܗܘ׃ ܐܡܪ ܝܫܘܥ ܠܗ ܗܘܕܝ ܒܝܬܐ ܗܢܐ ܗܐ ܒܪ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܗܘ׃ ܕܐܬܐ ܒܪ ܐܢܫܐ ܠܒܥܐ ܘܐܫܪܒ ܕܐܒܕ ܗܘ׃

49.

ܐܬܝ ܒܪ ܐܢܫܐ ܠܒܥܐ ܘܐܫܪܒ ܕܐܒܕ ܗܘ׃ ܐܡܪ ܝܫܘܥ ܠܗ ܗܘܕܝ ܒܝܬܐ ܗܢܐ ܗܐ ܒܪ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܗܘ׃ ❖

P 21v ܐܬܝ ܒܪ ܐܢܫܐ ܠܒܥܐ ܘܐܫܪܒ ܕܐܒܕ ܗܘ׃ | ܐܡܪ ܝܫܘܥ ܠܗ ܗܘܕܝ ܒܝܬܐ ܗܢܐ ܗܐ ܒܪ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܗܘ׃ ❖

*Traditio textus*: **P**

**48,5** ܐܬܝ ... ܗܘ׃] ⁘ *sub.l.* **P** | ... ܗܢܐ] ⁙ *sup.l.* **P**

**49,6** ... ܗܘ׃] *l.c.* **P**

a Lk. 19:8 according to the Peshitta version. The original Greek text has a conditional clause (εἴ τινός τι ἐσυκοφάντησα) b Lk. 19:9

* In the Greek text, it is σωτηρία ("salvation"). The word *ḥayyę* ("life") is the analogue of the Greek σωτηρία, which is regularly used in the Peshitta. See *Sokoloff M.* Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's *Lexicon*

**Explanation. The sweet fruit** is the one to which Adam stretched out his hand and took it in paradise, transgressing the commandment, so that the eating of it became the cause of his [i.e., Adam's] death in his sin. The **insipid relative** of that first tree is the sycamore tree, to the top of which Zacchaeus the publican climbed. **From the bitterness** of seizing the property that did not belong to him, it **turned to the fortunate taste and acquired life through the nearness** of Christ, our Lord, who returns the lost and **gives life** to mortals. Zacchaeus himself spoke of the aforementioned **bitterness** and testified about himself in the penitential promise that he brought before our Lord, saying, "*My Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and to anyone whom I have defrauded of anything, I will give back four times as much*."[a] And our Lord answered and said, "*Today life* has come to this house*,"[b] and so on.

**49.**

When you hear [the word] "Himself," understand [it] not regarding one nature, but regarding the two that joined together and [remain in unity] forever.[6]

**Explanation. When you hear [the word] "Himself"**: [this phrase] refers to the union of the divinity of our Lord and His humanity: not **one** essence and **nature**, but **two that have united—and forever**. It is about them (*lhon wa-ʕlayhon*) that the saint said **"Himself."** The saint said **"Himself"** about the union, for it will never be divided. And therefore it is truly said about His union **"Himself"**—neither in the [reference to] change of natures, nor to mixture or mingling.

*Syriacum*. Winona Lake (Ind.); Piscataway (N. J.), 2009. P. 444

6 Aphnimaran draws the attention of his readers to the predicates applied to Christ. In Chapter 48, he uses the pronoun "Himself," marking the relation of the subject to the action, and now he addresses a question. If Christ, according to the standard Christology of the Church of the East, has two natures and two *qnomas*, to what of them the pronoun 'Himself' can be applied? Aphnimaran emphasizesthat, when one speaks of Christ's action, they should not divide His natures. This corresponds well to the Christological model of the Church of the East that presupposes a single will and action in Christ. The invisible Divine Logos shows itself through the visible human being in the single and simple act of revelation. The way Aphnimaran treats the pronoun "Himself" reveals the incorrectness of the phrase "two-subject Christology" which is often applied to the teaching of the Church of the East.

**50.**

❖ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓ ⲛⲥ ⲛⲥⲟ ⲛⲥⲟ ⲛⲥ

ⲛⲁⲓ ⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲓⲁ ⲙⲡ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ: ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓ ⲛⲥ ⲛⲥⲟ ⲛⲥⲟ ⲛⲥ. ⲛⲁⲥⲟⲁⲓ
ⲁⲥⲙⲁⲓ ⲥⲛ ⲥⲟ ⲥⲛ. ⲁⲓ ⲛⲙⲧⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ: ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲛⲥⲙⲁⲓ
ⲛⲥⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲥⲟ: ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲥ. ⲛⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲥⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲛⲛⲁⲕⲁⲟⲁⲓ
ⲛⲥⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲥⲟ: ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲥ. ⲛⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲥⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲓⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲛⲛⲁⲕⲁⲟⲁⲓ 5
ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁ ⲁⲛⲁⲕⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ, ⲛⲁⲟ ⲟⲁ ⲟⲁ ⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲕ ⲛⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲁⲓ
ⲛⲥⲟ ⲥⲛ. ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ. ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲕ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ. ⲥⲛ ⲥⲟ
ⲛⲥⲟ: ⲥⲟ ⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲛⲁⲕ. ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ
P 22r ⲛⲥⲟ: ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙⲡ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ: ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ | ⲛⲁⲛⲁ. ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲙⲡ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ: ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ
ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲕ: ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ: ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ: ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ 10
ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ: ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ. ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲟ ⲛⲁⲟⲁⲓ ❖

**51.**

❖ⲥⲛⲟⲁⲓ ⲛⲥ ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓ: ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲥⲛⲁ ⲛⲥⲙⲁⲓⲁ ⲙⲡ ⲛⲥ

*Traditio textus*: **P**

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**50,11** ⲛⲥⲙⲁⲓ] *l.c.* **P** | ⲁⲟⲥⲙⲁⲓ] ⲟ *sub.l.* **P**

**50.**

One, one and one are one.[7]

**Explanation. One, one, and one are one** by nature, and *qnomas* are three. It is not with respect to number that it is said **"one, one, and one,"** but [with respect to] the properties that represent the *qnomas* (*dīlāyāṯā da-myaqnān qnōmę*): Nature, Power, and Operation—of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **One** essence (*ʔusiya*), and **one** existence (*ʔīṯūṯā*), and **one** God, who has neither beginning nor determined time. He is utterly invisible, and ineffable, and unexplainable, and untraceable, the Existence (*ʔīṯūṯā*) that cannot be investigated. **One, one, and one**—not as separate *qnomas* (*qḇīʕę*)* and corporeal images, and also not as the *qnomas* of His [i.e., God's] fiery ministers, which are separated in one respect and united in another: the Divine *qnomas* are separated by names, and not by nature, and not by will, and not with respect to number, which is said and asserted about spiritual and corporeal [beings]. But **one, one, and one are one**. He is **one** according to how the joined (*mḥayḏę*) perceive the joined, [and] not according to how God Himself knows the unity of His nature and the trinity of His *qnomas*, but according to how the power of the created [being] is able to know its Creator.

**51.**

As for the One Who joined the One Who is Ternary, [that] One adhered to the Three of Them.

As for the One Who joined the One Who is Ternary, [among] the Three of Them [only] One adhered.

* Lit. "fixed"

7 This statement may seem trivial and does not appear to be a riddle, but note how Aphnimaran connects the chapters with each other. In chapter 48, the pronoun "Himself" appears, and Aphnimaran makes it the central topic of chapter 49. Chapter 49 then introduces the notion of one nature for consideration. Aphnimaran explicitly rejects the Miaphysite idea of a single, composite nature of Christ. Further, chapter 50 presents a theological aporia: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit share one nature that transcends number and complexity. How, then, can the claim of Christ's composite nature be reconciled with this belief?

ܗܘ ܕܒܗ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܢ ܕܠܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܢ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܗܘ. ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܢ ܕܠܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܢ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܗܘ ❖ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܢ ܕܠܝܬ ܠܗ ܒܪ ܡܢ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܗܘ.

*Traditio textus*: **P**

8 Two possible translations of chapter 51 are provided: the straightforward version (left) and a less obvious one (right), which implies a non-trivial use of the preposition *l-*. The chapter itself describes two ways in which the unity of the Logos (the eternal Son of God) and the Assumed Man is expressed. Since the Assumed Man is united with the divine nature, it is possible to say that he is united with the three *qnomas* of the Trinity, as They share the same divine nature. Already in the writings of Isaac of Nineveh, a younger contemporary of Aphnimaran, we encounter the idea that all rational creatures perform service and worship to the eternal Hypostases of the Trinity in Christ (*Isaacus Ninevita*. Collectio secunda V, 1 // CSCO. 554. P. 4–5). This concept is further developed by Brikhisho‘ in his *Memra on the Spiritual Life of Mar Shamli* (the latter is likely a disciple of Joseph Hazzaya): “And because in everything the just Shamli came out victorious, he received the crown of the triumph of his labors: the vision of the Son. He saw Christ in the great glory of his deity, being carried along the broad way of the serenity (*d-šapyūṯ*) of his heart. By a great wonder he received the beauty of the Son of God in a hidden mystery of the manifestation of His *qnoma* [revealing the knowledge] about the Existence (*b-ʾrāzā kasyā d-ḇuddāq qnōmeḥ d-ʕal ʔīṯūṯā*). The Trinity was conveyed in an image of his mind (*d-madʕeḥ*): Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one in nature. Three Persons, one Existence (*ʔīṯūṯā*), one will, whose beauty shines out in the corporeality of our Lord Jesus. He is the dwelling and adorable temple of deity and in him the Trinity is worshipped by rational creatures.” (*Brikhisho‘*. Vita Mar Shamli 353–362 // Baghdad, Chaldean Patriarchate of Babylon, Petrous Haddad 90. Fol. 9r. English translation: *Coakley J. F.* A Forgotten Syriac Saint: A Metrical Discourse on the Spiritual Way of Life of Mar Shamli // “Yes! Well…” Exploring the Past, Present, and Future of the Church: Essays in Honor of John W. Coakley / ed. by J. H. Brumm. Grand Rapids (Mich.); Cambridge, 2016. (Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America; 87). P. 51. The English translation by John Franklin Coakley is reproduced here with minor modifications). This logic finds its ultimate expression in the theology Behisho‘ of Kamul (disciple of Mar Shamli), who explicitly states: “For not only one of the *qnômê* of the Godhead dwells in Christ our Lord, but the entire Godhead in three *qnômê* willingly abided and dwelt in our Lord’s humanity, and his qnōmā gleamed in the light and in the ineffable glory of the Holy Trinity” (*Behjesus Camulæus*. Liber perfectionis 5 // *Blanchard M. J.* Beh Isho‘ Kamulaya’s Syriac Discourses on the Monastic Way of Life. P. 265 (Syriac text), 349 (English translation). This position seems to have been adopted by John bar Kaldun (10th–11th c.). His views were anathematized at the Synod of Diamper in 1599 with the following wording: “Also the Book

**Explanation.** The **One Who joined the One Who is Ternary**: The Man of our Lord, Who was united with God's nature. And **to** God the Word He **adhered** in will and Divine power.[8]

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of John Barialdan, wherein it is said in divers places, that there were two Persons, a Divine and Humane, in Christ, which is contrary to the Catholick Faith, which confesses one only Divine Person <…> [It is also said] that the Union of the Incarnation is common to all the Three Divine Persons, who were all Incarnated; that our Lord Christ is the adopted, and not the Natural Son of God; that the Union of the Incarnation is accidental, and is only that of Love betwixt the Divine and Humane Persons." (Acta Consilii Diamperi anno 1599, III, 14 // Synodo diocesano da igreja e bispado de Angamale dos antigos christaõs de Sam Thome das serras do Malauar das partes da India Oriental. Celebrado pello reuerendissimo Senhor Dom Frey Aleixo De Menezes, arcebispo metropolitano de Goa, Primaz da India, & partes Orientaes Sede vagante du dito Bispado por authoridade de dous Breues do Santissimo Padre Clemente Papa VIII. Nosso Senhor, no terceyro Domingo depois de Pentecoste aos 20 dias do mes de Iunho da era de 1599. Na Igreja de todos os Santos, nolugar, et reyno do Diamper sogetto a el Rey de Cochim insiel, no qual se deu obediencia au Sũmo Pontifice Romano, & se sogeitou o dito Bispado com tudos os Christiãos delle à Santa Igreja Romana. Em Coimbra, 1606. Fol. 12v; The quoted English translation is taken from the book: The History of the Church of Malabar, from the Time of Its Being First Discover'd by the Portugueses in the Year 1501. Giving an Account of the Prosecutions and Violent Methods of the Roman Prelates, to Reduce Them to the Subjection of the Church of Rome. Together with the Synod of Diamper, Celebrated in the Year of our Lord 1599. With Some Remarks upon the Faith and Doctrine of the Christians of St. Thomas in the Indies, Agreeing with the Church of England, in Opposition to That of Rome. Done Out of Portugueze into English by Michael Geddes, Chancellor of the Cathedral Church of Sarum. London, 1694. P. 156). Also see *Perczel I.* What Can a Nineteenth-Century Syriac Manuscript Teach Us About Indian Church History? // Parole de l'Orient. 2008. Vol. 33. P. 245–265, especially P. 249. The logical continuation of this line of reasoning likely led some monastic groups to relegate Jesus Christ to the status of a purely prophetic figure. See *Treiger A.* East-Syriac Messalianism in Jewish and Muslim Heresiography // Op. cit. P. 15–40.

However, this unity with the Father and the Spirit is not personal—as traditionally understood: Christ is revealed to the world neither as the Father nor as the Holy Spirit. In contrast, the *qnoma* of the Son, which was hidden from the world before the Incarnation, was revealed in Christ to creatures. This is the personal unity in the single *prosopon* of revelation.

Aphnimaran expresses the distinction between these two types of unity through two verbs: *ʔeṯḥayyaḏ* ("be united, joined") and *ʔeṯnqeṗ* ("adhere"). The latter is a standard Christological term in the East Syriac tradition used to describe the manner of unity between the Divine Logos and the Assumed Man in one Person. The former is a less specific term that does not necessarily imply personal unity.

The anonymous interpreter highlights the same distinction: the Assumed Man "was united with God's nature" (*ʔeṯḥayyaḏ la-ḵyānā ʔalāhāyā*) and "adhered" (*ʔeṯnqeṗ*) "to God the Word."

52.

ⲙⲁⲁⲛⲓ ⲫⲛ ϩⲉ ⲁⲛⲕ ⲫⲛ. ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩ ⲟⲩ ⲛⲥⲙⲟ ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲁⲃⲱⲃ ⲟⲩ ⲟⲩ ⲛⲥⲙ ⲟⲩ ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩ ❖ⲥⲉⲓⲣⲉ

ⲛⲥⲙⲟ: ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲁⲃⲱ ⲛⲟⲩⲕ. ⲛⲥⲙⲕ ⲛⲟⲩⲕ ⲙⲛ ⲛⲥⲙⲥ ⲟⲩ ⲛⲁⲙⲟ. ⲣⲁⲁⲩ: ⲙⲁⲁⲛⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ. ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩ ⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲁⲛⲓ ⲫⲛ ϩⲉ ⲁⲛⲕ ⲫⲛ. ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩ ❖ⲥⲉⲓⲣⲉ

P 22v ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩ ⲁⲙⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲥⲙⲥ. ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲥⲙⲁⲁⲩ ⲟⲩⲁⲁⲟⲕⲁⲁ ⲛⲥⲙⲥ ⲛⲁⲁⲩⲁⲛ | ⲥⲉⲧⲉ ⲟⲩ ⲁⲙⲟⲩⲁⲛ ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲥⲙⲥ. ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲥⲙⲁⲁⲩ ⲟⲩⲁⲁⲟⲕⲁⲁ ⲛⲥⲙⲥ ⲛⲁⲁⲩⲁⲛ ❖ⲥⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ ϩⲉ ⲟⲩⲁⲁⲟⲕⲁⲁ

53.

ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲥⲙⲥⲁ ⲕⲁ ⲙⲡⲟ: ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲓ ⲥⲛⲁⲁⲩ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ ⲥⲛⲁ ⲙⲁⲁⲥⲁⲁ ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁ ⲙⲁⲁⲩ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁ ⲙⲡⲟ ⲙⲡ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁ ⲙⲡⲟ ⲙⲡ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ: ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛⲁⲁ ⲙⲡⲟ ⲙⲡ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ: ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛⲁⲁ ❖ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁⲁⲁ

ⲛⲥⲙⲟ. ⲙⲁⲁⲩ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛⲁⲁ ⲙⲁⲁⲁⲁⲛⲁⲁ ⲥⲛⲁ: ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁⲁ ⲥⲛⲁ ⲙⲁⲁⲥⲁⲁ ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁ ⲙⲁⲁⲩ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ ⲛⲁⲁⲁⲁ ⲙⲡⲟ ⲙⲡ ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲥⲙⲁ: ⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲁⲟⲩⲁⲛ

**52.**

The One Who said "Sit!" is different from the One Who sat. For the One Who sat is the same as the One Who preached.

**Explanation. He is different** by nature: the divine nature in relation to the human. The divine nature **said, "Sit!",** and the human [nature is] **the One Who sat. For the One Who sat is the same as the One Who preached,** [i.e.,] our Lord Christ in two natures: of His Divinity and of His humanity. The One who sat is spoken of according to His humanity, while the One who preached is believed in with regard to His divinity.

**53.**

When the twofold that make up one agree with each other, then also the ninefold will awake from fear. Only those separated from/by their freedom* will be deprived of the participation.

**Explanation. When the twofold ones that make up one**—that is, the body and soul, which constitute the one human nature—**agree with each other** in the renewal that will come at the resurrection, when body and soul will have one will, a spiritual will and the agreement of unwavering love,—**then also the nine** orders of fiery [beings] **will awake from fear**[9] of the inclination in which they abide and which they display (*hāy [d-]ḇāh w-ṯaḥwīṯāh ʔīṯayhon*) because of the inclinable men, until all men become perfect in one divine will and one merciful intention (*nīšā mraḥmānā*). For as long as men are inclinable, the spiritual [beings] will not be freed from inclination. When men are freed from aberration, then the angels too will be freed and will escape from fear. **"Only those separated** in **their freedom"**: the rebellious demons and devils, who have voluntarily (*b-ḥęʔrūṯhon*) separated themselves from the first Goodness and broke off the yoke of the dominion of the Existent and ripped the bands of obedience in the passion of pride; for these voluntarily (*b-ḥęʔrūṯ-hon*) separated themselves from the fiery praisers and servants, equal to them in essence, and were **deprived of the partnership** of the sweetness,

* Both variants fit within the meaning of the preposition men in this context. The interpreter accepts the second, instrumental, variant, as indicated by his wording *b-ḥęʔrūṯhon* (or perhaps this variant was present in the manuscript with which the interpreter worked)

9 Cf. *Isaacus Ninevita*. Collectio prima 35 // *Mar Isaacus Ninivita*. De perfectione religiosa / ed. P. Bedjan. Parisiis; Lipsiae, 1909. P. 255–256; *Iosephus Hazaias*. Sermo de natura [Dei] essentiae 150. Sermo de natura [Dei] essentiae 51 // Op. cit. P. 79.

ⰻⰵⰴⰻⰽⰰⰻⰽⰰ ⰻⰶⰴⰵ ⰻⰶⰴⰵ ⰻⰶⰴⰵ

the quality of which a created [being] is not able to express. Nor is it able to speak about the joy of the **partnership** that will be in the New Age for angels and people.

**54.**

The One Who was crawling with children was not [there] when the waters cleansed the earth from injustice. Preceding Him also was the ram in the thicket, because it was the *typus*, and it is a matter of necessity that a *typus* precede the truth.

**Explanation. The One Who was crawling with children** is our Lord in the nature of His humanity, as the angel said to the shepherds, "*You will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger*." The holy proclaimer (*ʔāmōrā*) of these chapters shows that the body of our Lord is created and that it is **preceded** by the time of the flood, which was in the days of Noah, when the **waters cleansed the earth** from the impurity of adultery and fornication. But **preceding Him was also the ram in the thicket**, which Abraham sacrificed, [and] which was a *typus* of our Lord and indicated the manner of the crucifixion.

**55.**

If the one who ran did not raise, let us beware lest we run and do not rise.

**Explanation.** The one who ran: the disciple of the prophet Elisha. And he **did not raise** [= did not resurrect] the son of the Shunammite,* for he **ran** not for the same aim as of his teacher Elisha, but in order to raise the boy and take from his parents the gifts and the present and the property that is of this world. And by this [the compiler of the chapters] teaches us as he said: "**let us beware lest we run**" after the wealth of this world and snatch what is not ours and do the deeds of wickedness. And when this happens, that will be fulfilled on us of which [the God] said by the prophet, "*Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous*."[a]

a Ps. 1:5

* In the Peshitta (2 Kgs. 4:8), the biblical Shunem is called Shiloh. At the same time, the adjective *šūnammīṯ* (inhabitant of Shunem, f.) is rendered as *šīlōmīṯā*, while Hebrew *šīlōnī* (inhabitant of Shiloh, m.) is translated by a different word, *šīlōnāyā* (1 Kgs. 11:29). In **P**, the scribe left a space after ܫܝܠܘܗ. This could have been done unintentionally, yet the extant text of the manuscript makes sense by itself: ܒܪܗ ܕܫܝܠܘܗ ܡܝܬܐ (*brāh d-Šīlō mīṯā*) literally means "the dead son (= inhabitant) of Shiloh"

**56.**

**ⲁⲛⲟⲩⲃ ⲙ̀ⲡⲉϫⲉ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲩⲙⲉⲧⲙⲁⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲓⲧⲛ <...> ⲛⲥⲱ**

ⲛⲁⲓ ⲇⲉ ⲛⲉⲧⲛⲁϩⲙⲟⲩ ⲉⲡⲓⲥⲧⲟⲗⲏ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲛⲓⲱⲧ ⲙ̀ⲡⲁⲡⲁ ⲡⲓⲱⲁⲛⲛⲏⲥ ⲡⲓⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲩⲥⲱⲧⲡ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲙ̀ⲙⲁⲩ ⲛ̀ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲩⲙⲉⲧⲙⲁⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲡⲓⲙⲁ

## 56.[i]

Passions <…> at the time when mortality is taken out of the way.

**Explanation.** The **passions**, sufferings and persecutions that come from demons and from evil people and defile them, will turn the righteous and the pious into gods—when the course of this age ceases and **mortality is eliminated** through the resurrection that our Lord Christ will make, and the renewal of His folk, [and] transformation (*šuḥlāpā*), and change (*ḥullāpā*): transformation from inclination [to constancy], and change from death to life—in the age of light.

## 57.[ii]

The one who reproved the priests who were rejected because of the unclean lust, [and] was thrown as food for beasts, and they avoided harming him because of his purity: he was the one who showed that in [the time of] forty-five days, everything alive will turn to its Creator through the o/One over whom death had no power.

**Explanation. The one who [reproved] the priests who were rejected because of the unclean lust**—Daniel the prophet, who **reproved** the unjust priests who testified about Susanna, the saint of the Most High, so that God turned their injustice against them, and they were stoned because they had handed Susanna over to execution. And he **was thrown as food for beasts** when he was thrown to the lions in the den, **and they avoided harming him because of his purity**. He **showed that in [the time of] forty-five days, everything alive will turn to its Creator through the One over whom death had no power** [and] Who is Christ our Lord.[10] Now the forty-five days have a hidden

letters of the term by which explanations are indicated, i.e., ܦܫܪ

10 Joseph Hazzaya in his *Memra on the Nature of the [Divine] Essence* says that the prophet Elijah will convert all people to God during Lent: on the first day of Lent, his preaching will begin, and by the day of the Resurrection, all people will believe in Christ and abandon the Antichrist. On the day of the Resurrection, the second coming of Christ and the general resurrection will take place (*Iosephus Hazaias*. Sermo de natura [Dei] essentiae 150 // Op. cit. 8. P. 164–165). In other words, the conversion of humanity to God, according to Joseph Hazzaya, will take place within 7 weeks. It is possible that by "the one over whom death had no power," Aphnimaran meant the prophet Elijah, who was taken alive to heaven. This prophet, according to the anonymous interpreter, is the subject of chapter 32 of Aphnimaran. Regarding this text, the commentator notes that Elijah "will come before the universal Savior in the last time to make a universal renewal." ▶

ܕܢܐ ܡܢ ܥܕܒܢ ܕܬܡܝܕܐ ܕܒܛܠ ܘܕܫܘܝ ܫܩܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܡ̈ܐ ܘܥܕ ܫܢ̈ܐ ܐܠܦ̈ ܬܠܬ̈ ܡ̈ܐܐ ܘܬܫܥ̈ܝܢ ܝ̈ܘܡ̈ܐ ܐܫܪܝ ܡܢ ܡܚܟܐ ܕܢܒܝܐ ܕܢܐ ܡ̈ܐ ܝ̈ܘܡ̈ܐ ܘܐܬ

mystery, and the angel spoke [of it] to Daniel in hints, and this was his word to him, "*Go, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. Many will be chosen and refined; but the sinners will sin, and none of the sinners will understand, but those who do good things will understand. And from the time that the regular sacrifice ceases, the abomination will be set up for desolation for 1,290 days*.[a] *And how blessed is he who keeps waiting to attain to the 1,335 days!*"[b] And this saying was fulfilled, and the mystery was known, namely that this saying announces and signifies on the coming of our Lord. And this is the interpretation* of the number of forty-five days: that which is between the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five [and the one thousand two hundred and ninety days]. "*But as for you, go to the end, rest;*[c] *and you will rise again for your time at the end of the age.*"[d]

**58.**

That which kills revives if it is kept, and that which revives kills if it is disdained.

**Explanation. That which kills revives if it is kept**: this is the Law. According to what is said, "*You shall love the Lord your God*," etc. **If** the great and first commandment is **disdained**, it **kills**.

**59.**

Killings differ, even though by the name they are the same; yet the deaths they cause** are not the same.

**Explanation. Killings differ**: there are those killed by the sword, there are those killed by sin, there are those killed by deceptive tongues,

Hebrew text of Dan. 12:13

* Lit. "investigation" ** Lit. "their death"

► Chapter 57 also deals with eschatological reality, and one may expect, in accordance with the commentary on chapter 32 and its parallels, that Elijah's mission would be mentioned here as well. This assumption is confirmed by Theodoret of Cyrus, who, in his *Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, points out the same period of forty-five days and relates it to the eschatological ministry of the prophet Elijah (see *Theodoretus Cyrrhensis*. Interpretatio in Danielem XII, 12 // PG. 81. Col. 1541AB) Theodoret's interpretation is referred to by Ishodad of Merv (see *Ishodad Merwensis*. Interpretatio in Danielem 133 // TCLA. 62. P. 66–67). See also *Macina R*. Le rôle eschatologique d'Élie le prophète dans la conversion finale du peuple juif // Proche-Orient Chrétien. 1981. Vol. 31. P. 83.

ܐܘܡܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܢ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܟܠܡܐ. ܒܝܬ ܒܢܝ ܐܢܫܐ ܒܬܪ ܐܘܡܬܐ
ܕܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ❖ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ

**60.**

**ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ❖ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ❖ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ❖ ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ**

ܐܝܟ ܕܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ❖

there are those killed because of envy, there are those [killed] because of the incidents of this world: both these and [others,] even more numerous [examples can be taken into account]. And all these [people] are called killed. But the **deaths caused*** to those killed by the sword and those killed by sin, and so on, **are not the same**.

**60.**

Dead is the living, over whose nature death does not rule, when she gives herself into the arms of her killer.

**Explanation.** The verbal soul, **over whose nature death** has no **power**, is **dead**, when it **gives** its will and intellect (*reʕyānāh*) **over** to Satan, its **killer**, through the evil habits which he teaches it. By means of them he binds it with the bonds of death and brings it down into darkness.

**61.**

The bird that is nourished from poison extinguished the desire of the murmurers, and wrath rushed onto the impetuous.

**Explanation. The bird that is nourished from poison** is the quail. **The desire of the murmurers,** which it **extinguished** [refers to] the folk who murmured against God and said, "*If he struck the rock, so that waters gushed out, and made streams flow; can He give us bread also?*"[a] *Therefore the Lord heard and was angry*, **and wrath rushed onto the impetuous**, *for they did not believe in God* who nourished them, *and did not trust in His salvation. He commanded the clouds from above. And He rained*** *meat upon them like the dust, and winged fowl like the sand of the seas. They ate and were well filled; And their desire He gave to them. They did not forsake their desires, and, while their food was in their mouths, the anger of God rose against them*.[b]

a In the Peshitta version, this verse has some differences with the Masoretic Hebrew text
b Ps. 77:20, 22–23, 27, 29–31

* Same suffixed possessive pronoun *-hon* ("their"), as used in the chapter ** Heb. *wayyamṭēr* "rained"; syr. *ʔaḥḥeṭ*, lit. "brought down." The Aramaic verb is often used with the meaning "to bring rain down," the first attestation of this usage being the earliest known Aramaic text, the inscription from Tell-Fekheriye (line 2; see *Donner H.*, *Röllig W.* Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften. Bd. 1. Wiesbaden, [5]2002. P. 74). For this reason, we kept the translation corresponding to the Hebrew text

## Part 3

Now we proceed with a brief overview of the *hergā* practice and Aphnimaran's method in action.

### 3.1. *Hergā*. The Practice of Mind

As mentioned above, the chapters of Aphnimaran, through their specific approach to Scripture, provided a reader with conditions fitting for the *hergā* practice. Now we shall briefly observe the evidence for this practice belonging to the East Syriac mystical tradition and the preceding usage of the term *hergā*.

First of all, we shall provide definitions of several anthropological concepts relevant to the discussion.

#### 3.1.1. Mind and Reason: Preliminary Definitions

In the present excursus we shall use three core terms designating mentality: *hawnā*, *madʕā* and *reʕyānā*. The distinction between them has not yet been studied thoroughly, even though it remains an essential desideratum for the study of Syriac Mysticism. We follow the description provided in the anthropological treatise of Ahudemmeh *On the Composition of Man*.[50] Regardless of the identity of this author,[51] the treatise, as was shown by Gregory Kessel, influenced Simeon d-Taibutheh as a mystical writer who approached anthropological topics in the most systematic manner. As our practice shows, Ahudemmeh's definitions help one to show the distribution of these terms in other mystical authors' passages.

50 *Ahudemmeh*. De compositione hominis II, 3; III, 3–5 // PO. 3/1. P. 105, 109–112.

51 On Ahudemmeh and his works see *Kessel G. M.* Life and Works of Šemʿōn d-Ṭaibūtēh. P. 117–125.

*Hawnā* and *madʕā* both render the Greek νοῦς[52] and are often considered synonyms.[53] Yet, Ahudemmeh clearly distinguishes between *hawnā* and *madʕā*, as well as between them and the reason with thoughts. Consider his description[54]:

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Madʕā*** *ʕellāy b-maʕbḏānūṯeh da-ḇ-napšā men* ***ḥušš̈āḇā*** *w-***hawnā** *w-***reʕyā-na***—*ʔaʸḵ d-ʔāp̄ īḏaʕṯā rabbā men ḥeḵmṯā w-sukkālā. Hānnā dęn qarrīḇ l-ʔalāhāyāṯā wa-mḏarreḡ l-napšā l-īḏaʕṯā d-ḵasyāṯā.* | In its action, the **mind-madʕā** is higher than the **thought**, the **mind-hawnā**, and the **reason**—as also knowledge is greater than wisdom and understanding. Because it is close to the divine and brings the soul step by step into the knowledge of the concealed. |
| ***Hawnā*** *gęr mṭakkes l-ḥušš̈āḇę wa-mšammeš l-***madʕā** *lwāṯ suʕrānā damyatrūṯā wa-ḏ-ḥeḵmṯā wa-ḏ-sukkālā.* | As for the **mind-hawnā**, it puts thoughts in order and serves to the **mind-madʕā** as regards the performance of virtue, wisdom and understanding. |
| *Wa-ḇ-ḇuyyānā d-sukkālā* ***reʕyānā*** *meṯḥayyal w-meṯgabbar ʕal ḥaššę w-ʕal zawʕę kyānāyę, wa-mšammeš l-***hawnā**, wa-mḥayyel l-***ḥušš̈āḇā**.* | And through the comprehension [performed by the faculty] of understanding the **reason** is strengthened, and becomes steadfast against passions and natural movements, and serves to the **mind-hawnā**, and strengthens the **thought**. |

52 See, e.g., the list of Greek-Syriac correspondences which Emiliano Fiori prepared for Sergius of Resh'aina's Syriac translation of Ps.-Dionysios' *On Divine Names*, *On the Mystical Theology* and *Epistles*: *Dionigi Areopagita*. Nomi Divini, Teologia Mistica, Epistole: la versione siriaca di Sergio di Rēš'aynā (VI secolo) / ed. E. Fiori. Lovanii, 2014. (CSCO; 656. Scriptores Syri; 252). P. 166–167. Two additional representative examples appear in the Syriac translations of anti-Apollinarian passages: Theodore of Mopsuestia's *Catechetical Homilies* renders νοῦς as *madʕā* (see *Theodorus Mopsuestenus*. Homiliae Catecheticae V, 15–16 // ST. 145. P. 120–123), while St. Gregory of Nazianzus's *Letters to Cledonius* uses *hawnā* (the relevant Syriac version lacks a critical edition, but see Babai the Great's transmitted fragment *Babai Magnus*. Interpretatio Evagrii Pontici capitum gnosticorum II, 56 // Op. cit. S. 170).

53 In particular, Babai notes that the Fathers referred to the rational power (*ḥušš̈āḇā*) of the soul as *madʕā* or *hawnā* (see *Babai Magnus*. Interpretatio Evagrii Pontici capitum cognoscitivorum 40 // *Frankenberg W.* Euagrius Ponticus. S. 458). Without examining Ahudemmeh's treatise or considering the distinct bodily localization of these soul faculties, R. Beulay maintains that the terms *reʕyānā*, *madʕā*, *hawnā*, and even the concept of "heart" were frequently used interchangeably by East Syriac authors, which is only partly true (see *Beulay R.* La lumière sans forme. Introduction à l'étude de la mystique chrétienne syro-orientale. Chevetogne, 1987. P. 48).

54 We transliterate this quote to highlight the usage of the terms in question, as well as to show correspondences between them and their analogues in the translation.

*Wa-mḥayyaḏ la-ṯrayhon b-ḥaylęh b-maʕbḏānūṯęh, da-nqablūn maʕbḏānūṯęh d-**madʕā** w-neḏršūn šḇīlā šappīrā la-mlīlūṯā lwāṯ īḏaʕṯā w-ḥeḵmṯā w-sukkālā wa-ʕḇāḏę kulhon da-myatrūṯā.*

And [*reʕyānā*] is united by its force and action with both of them [i.e., to the mind-hawnā and to the thought], so that they receive the action of the **mind-madʕā** and pave for the verbal part [of soul embracing all the mental faculties described here] an excellent way towards knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and all deeds of virtue.

It follows from this description, that *hawnā* comprises the cumulative mental experience of a person, being related to discursive thinking, understanding, and wisdom. This fits well with the etymology of *hawnā*: its known Semitic cognate is Biblical Hebrew *hōn* "wealth, property."[55]

As for *madʕā*, it is responsible for the direct perception of the Divine knowledge. It is focused not on the background experience of a person, but rather on the revelation of the new. Etymologically, *madʕā* means "cognition" (√*ydʕ*), which fits well with the distinction that Ahudemmeh makes between *hawnā* and *madʕā*.

Ahudemmeh connects *hawnā* and *madʕā* to different mental organs of a person, localizing the former in the brain and the latter in the heart. In our excursus, we translate *hawnā* as "mind" and *madʕā*—as "contemplational mind."

*Reʕyānā*, as follows from Ahudemmeh's description, deals exclusively with discursive thinking and therefore is subject to *hawnā*. Etymologically, it is connected to the verb *ʔeṯraʕʕī* "to think; be of opinion." *Reʕyānā* is the most relevant notion when one describes the inner ascetical effort of a person who tries to arrange their dispersed thoughts and to prevent passionate impulses from disturbing the mind. Ahudemmeh characterizes the respective activity of *reʕyānā* as becoming strengthened and steadfast, as well as strengthening the thoughts. He localizes *reʕyānā* in the pericardium (*ḥelbā pārōšā*, which Ahudemmeh also calls *maqrmā d-lebbā* "covering of heart"). In our excursus we translate it as "reason."

55 The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: in 5 vols. / ed. by L. Köhler, W. Baumgartner; subseq. rev. by W. Baumgartner and J. J. Stamm with assist. from B. Hartmann, Z. Ben-Hayyim, E. Y. Kutscher, P. Reymond; trans. and ed. under the supervis. of M. E. J. Richardson. Vol. 1. Leiden; New York (N. Y.); Köln, 1994. P. 242.

### 3.1.2. *Hergā* in the East Syriac tradition of the 5th and 6th centuries

In its original meaning, the term *hergā* refers to focused rumination and thoughtful meditation. It was widely used in the scholastic tradition of the Church of the East. For instance, in Narsai's *Memra on the Three Greek Teachers*, the term *hergā* is associated with the Christological doctrines of Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius: "If scrutinizing into the matters of faith (*d-ʾnāš neṯhaggę b-haymānūṯā*) is a wrong, then behold, all the righteous ended their lives in this meditation (*hergā*)."[56]

The verb *hragᵹ* is used in connection with the term *turgāmā*, meaning "interpretation": "There were other sages who reflected (*hragᵹʷ*) on this matter (*šarbā*), but no one condemns their interpretations (*l-ṯurgāmayhon*): only those [i.e., Diodore, Nestorius, and Theodore, are condemned]."[57]

In the same *memra*, the term *hergā* is linked to Theodore of Mopsuestia's exegetical method: "As if in a dream, people were inert toward training until the morning[58] of his words dawned and awakened them. The veil of stillness had been spread over the books of the Spirit—but he lifted it with the good meditation (*hergā*) of the movements of his soul."[59]

At the same time, East Syriac scholars used the term *hergā* while referring to the intelligible reality. In this case an angelic practice was described. Barhadbshabba Arbaya speaks of *hergā* in which the angels excelled and, through it, were deemed worthy of knowing the divine mysteries:

> "The associates of (*d-bęṯ*) Gabriel and Michael and all their companions, because they took care of their reading and were not negligent toward that blissful meditation (*hergā*), for this reason He brought them inside, and made them His chamberlains."[60]

Here, Barhadbshabba continues the tradition of Narsai, according to whom *hergā* was a practice of angels from the very beginning of their existence:

> "He brought them [i.e., the angels] into a school, like children, so that they might meditate (*d-nehwōn hārgīn*) on the name of the Creator and His creative power. Into the name of the Creator and His creative power

56 *Narsai*. Sermo de doctoribus graecis 489–490 // *Martin F.* Homélie de Narsès sur les trois docteurs nestoriens // Journal asiatique. 1899. 9ᵉ série. T. 14. P. 470.

57 Ibid. 513–514 // Op. cit. P. 471.

58 Here we read *ṣapārā*, as in the MS Brit. Lib. Or. 5463, instead of *sepārā*, as in the edition.

59 *Narsai*. Sermo de doctoribus graecis 611–614 // Op. cit. P. 475.

60 *Barhadbeshabba Halwanensis*. Causa fundationis scholarum // PO. 4/4. P. 351.

> they were scrutinizing (*meṯhaggęn ʰwaw*), and they marveled (*tammīhīn*) at the transformations of His sayings."[61]

In total, in the corpus of the preserved Narsai's homilies, consisting of 81 units, the term *hergā* appears 79 times, while the verb *hrag* is used 40 times.

### 3.1.3. *Hergā* in the East Syriac Mystical Tradition of the 7th and 8th centuries

In the East Syriac mystical tradition, this term[62] came to denote a specific type of inner work that is given great attention by Isaac of Nineveh and Simeon d-Taibutheh. The goal of this inner work is to bring the mind to a state where it is occupied with a single, simple thought about God and free from all other thoughts[63]:

> "*Hergā* is a thought (*renyā*) that [remains] solely on God and marvels (*tāhar*) only at what is of Him—and the reason (*reʕyānā*) investigates and stays occupied with Him and His greatness alone, with no [other] thought (*renyā*) present, no memory of beautiful things and virtues [performed] through the body and the bodily [actions]. But it is occupied only with *hergā* concerning His very Essence, without engaging in a thought (*renyā*) about those [other things]."[64]

The starting point of *hergā* is meditation on the texts of Holy Scripture, the creation of the world (the existence of the world as a self-sufficient reason for wonder), the realities of the New Age, and the divine love revealed in the life of Christ. Such meditation requires diligent work of the mind, but it does not transition into rational analysis. On the contrary, themes that remain a mystery lead one to wonder and direct the mind's questioning attention toward God.

In the *Second Collection*, in the 10th treatise specifically dedicated to the topic of *hergā*, Isaac of Nineveh describes the directions of thought by which the mind moves toward an amazed focus and astonishment. Here is a fragment from this extensive text:

61 *Narsai*. De creatione angelorum // PO. 34/3–4. P. 226.

62 A different approach to interpreting the term *hergā* may be found in *Seppälä S*. Meditation in the East Syrian Tradition // Meditation in Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Cultural Histories / ed. by H. Eifring. London; New Delhi; New York (N. Y.); Sydney, 2013. P. 107–121.

63 In texts that demonstrate the understanding of the practice of *hergā* in the East Syrian mystical tradition, we will, where possible, leave this term untranslated. As we will see, the term *hergā* can refer to several stages of spiritual practice.

64 *Isaacus Ninevita*. Collectio tertia IX, 6 // CSCO. 637. P. 63.

> "Let us consider then, how rich in its wealth is the ocean of His creative act, and how many created things belong to God, and how in His compassion He carries everything, acting providentially as He guides [creation]; and how with a love that cannot be measured He arrived at the establishment of the world and the beginning of creation; and how compassionate God is, and how patient; and how He loves creation, and how He carries it, gently enduring its importunity, the various sins and wickednesses, the terrible blasphemies of demons and evil men. Then, once someone has stood amazed (*da-ṯmah*), and filled his mind (*hawnęh*) with the majesty of God, [amazed] at all these things He has done and is doing, then he wonders in astonishment (*tāhar w-meṯdammar*) at His mercifulness, how, after all these things, [God] has prepared for them another world that has no end, whose glory is not even revealed to the angels…"[65]

The experience of focusing attention on the New Age (in the cited text by Isaac, this reality is referred to as the "other world"; in Syriac, the concepts of "age" and "world" are denoted by the same term, *ʕālmā*) is described by Simeon d-Taibutheh as follows:

> "The beginning of the course of the mind (*dubbārā d-reʕyānā*) is *hergā* in God, in His holy promises, and in the beauties of the New Age, when [a person] is diligent in deeds of virtue and the struggle for righteousness, and hopes and expects every hour the mercy of grace (*raḥmę d-ṭaybūṯā*); and on the level of mind (*reʕyānāʔīṯ*) it, as it were, dwells in the New Age. [The person] converses with the holy angels and the souls of the righteous who were perfected in the joy of spiritual [beings]. And from this listlessness and grief cease, and peace of joy and consolation reign; and [the practice of *hergā*] results in a state (*šāreḵ*) where [a person] abides constantly in amazement (*tahrā*) at God."[66]

Thus, the person's attention is directed toward the thought of that state of the world when divisions will be overcome, and divine mercy will be fully revealed. Simeon speaks of the expectation of mercy in the practice of *hergā*. This expectation is a twofold practice of will. On the one hand, it is a process involving will and intention. On the other hand, it stands beyond a willing action. It marks the readiness of the person for a genuine

65 *Isaacus Ninevita*. Collectio secunda X, 19 // CSCO. 554. P. 35. English translation by Sebastian Brock: CSCO. 555. P. 43. In the text, we rendered, for the purposes of our description, *hawnā* as "mind" and left the rest of the translation unchanged.

66 *Simeon d-Taibutheh*. Liber gratiae VII, 24 // *Kessel G. M.* Life and Works of Šemʿōn d-Ṭaibūtēh. P. 225–226 (Syriac text and English translation; quoted translation is ours).

encounter with divine power without attempts to replace the mystical experience with one's own thoughts, ideas, and desires.

The works of Syriac mystics contain references to testimonies concerning the contemplation of the New Age. Joseph Hazzaya who synthesized the ideas of the preceding mystical tradition described this experience as belonging to the third degree of mystical ascent (beyond purity and clarity).[67] However, the texts of Isaac of Nineveh and Simeon d-Taibutheh cited in this excursus refer not to contemplative experience but to the ascetic discipline of the mind. Thus, the active correlation of oneself with the experience of the New Age occurs both at the initial and at higher stages of spiritual practice. This represents a mystical development of Theodore of Mopsuestia's thesis that Christians should orient their daily lives toward the realities of the New Age: "I desire," [Christ] says, "that you look toward what is of that World-to-come, and, while being in this world, arrange your lives, according to your strength, as if you were already in that [world]."[68]

Likewise, Narsai, who was most effective in transmitting the ideas of Theodore into the East Syriac milieu, considered *hergā* as not only a school practice, but also as an experience related to the New Age. He distinguished between *durrāšā* (training, investigation) and *hergā* (meditation). The former, as demanding the effort of investigation and ascertainment, characterizes the Present Age. As for the latter, in the practice of *hergā* the starting effort results in constancy. Consider the following text (we cite Narsai's metrical homilies in transcription to convey their rhythm):

| | |
|---|---|
| *ḥaḏ ʔassen bęh / znay durrāšā / damlę ʕamlę* | As for the one [world], He gathered in it [different] kinds of training full of labor, |
| *w-la-ʾḥrę̈nā mlāyʰʸ / hergā d-layt bęh / maʔʔīnūṯā* | While the other one He filled with meditation which has no reluctance.[69] |

In the same text, he defines the praise of the New Age as "*hergā*, in which [rational beings] will be constant continuously (*d-ʾamīnīn bęh ʾamīnāʔīṯ*)."[70]

67 See, for example *Iosephus Hazaias*. De contemplatione spirituale 9 // Mingana syr. 601. Fol. 145a. For the English translation, see WS. 7. P. 150.

68 *Theodorus Mopsuestenus*. Homiliae Catecheticae XI, 14 // Op. cit. P. 308.

69 *Narsai*. De renovatione creaturae 61–62 // *Narsai doctoris syri* Homiliae et carmina: in 2 vol. / ed. A. Mingana. Vol. 2. Mosul, 1905. P. 57 (No 26 in Mingana's edition and 44 in the *Clavis* of Sebastian Brock and Aaron Butts; see *Butts A. M., Heal K. S., Brock S.* Clavis to the Metrical Homilies of Narsai. Lovanii, 2021. (CSCO; 690. Subsidia; 142). P. 44–45).

70 *Narsai*. De renovatione creaturae 176 // Op. cit. P. 60.

In the 9th treatise of the *Third Collection*, Isaac explicitly states that the practice of *hergā* is not limited to the level of discursive thought but reaches a state beyond words:

> "Wherever the reading itself is as such, it is *hergā*, and it is prayer. It is *hergā* because it does not abide in the realm of language (*ba-mnāṯā d-leššānā*), but only in the gaze (*ḫawrā*) that makes understanding (*buyyānā*) enter the contemplative mind (*madʕā*). And it is prayer because it is captivated by the memory of God at all times, being inwardly and outwardly filled with the longing for and the *hergā* of heavenly [matters]."[71]

From the texts cited above, the reader could notice that the primary efforts pertaining to the practice of *hergā* belong to the realm of *reʕyānā*, the reason. Now Isaac of Nineveh shows that at the higher stages of *hergā* the integration of the experience related to *hawnā* and *madʕā* is achieved. Understanding, being the faculty of *hawnā*, meets the contemplative experience of *madʕā* at a stage where a person overcomes the level of the discursive thinking. The topic of integration will be continued in other Isaac's texts cited below.

The entire path—from reflection and amazed attention to standing in complete stillness—is connected with the experience of prayer. In the practice of *hergā*, God is not an object. In grammatical terms, this practice can be described as occurring in the second person, if one may use such a phrase to describe an experience where the limitations of language are overcome.

In the following text, Isaac of Nineveh describes the two mentioned practices that accompany *hergā*—prayer and the reading of Holy Scripture:

> "And how often in that prayer is born *hergā* akin to this! From here, the entry of the mind (*hawnā*) into an ineffable height—when the spirit is supported by grace in what pertains to prayer. Again, when [the mind] is supported by *hergā* and reading (*qeryānā*), there is no one able to narrate to what amazing movements [prayer] ascends in its investigation (*baḇʕāṯāh*), to what desire it stretches, and into what sweetness it places the reason (*reʕyānā*). The reading [done] with discernment brings this practice of *hergā* to perfection. This very [reading] supports [*hergā*] so that it can reach wondrous [realities]. Behold the order of reading that is useful for this service!"[72]

71 *Isaacus Ninevita.* Collectio tertia IX, 11 // Op. cit. P. 64.
72 Ibid. IX, 7 // Op. cit. P. 63.

Simeon d-Taibutheh characterizes a refusal to engage in conversation with others (ideally, even staying in darkness) as a necessary condition for *hergā*. However, he connects its practice with verbal-related activities, advising to delve into the meaning of spiritual hymns and compose such hymns on one's own.[73] Joseph Hazzaya prescribes dedicating a third of the night's vigil to *hergā* and, like Simeon, associates *hergā* with spiritual hymns:

> "Spend in sober vigilance of body and soul the whole night, dividing it into three parts: one for psalms and kneelings; another for reading; and the third for *hergā* of the reason (*d-reʕyānā*) and the sweet sounds of the refrains and hymns composed by the Holy Spirit. Let these be to you a refreshment through the whole lasting of the long night. A monk who stays awake from evening to morning in vigil of the reason (*d-reʕyānā*) is a semblance of the angels of light, who mysteriously chant the Trisagion of the New Age without cease."[74]

> "Blessed is the monk who is deemed worthy of those ineffable blisses, granted in the night vigil to those who have devoted themselves to this commerce (*taʾgurtā*). There is no monk who labors in vigil throughout the night whose thoughts during the day do not meditate (*hārgīn*) in the blessings of the New Age."[75]

Thus, at its initial stage, the practice of *hergā* is associated with discursive thought and accompanies prayer and reading. At its mature stage, however, *hergā* transcends words and ceases to be distinct from prayer, which also rises above forms, words, and images. For this reason, Isaac of Nineveh states that the "three" gathered in the name of Christ, as mentioned in Mt. 18:20, are the contemplative mind (*madʕā*), *hergā*, and prayer, united in astonishment (*temhā*):

ܗܪܓܐ ܥܡ ܨܠܘܬܐ ܒܫܠܝܡܘܬܗ ܡܬܚܒܪ ܗܘ ܕܐܡܪ ܒܗ ܡܪܢ ܕ̈ ̈ ̈

ܬܪܝܢ ܘܬܠܬ ܐܝ. ܦܓܪܐ ܘܢܦܫܐ ܘܪܘܚܐ ܐܘ ܡܕܥܐ ܘܥܠܬܐ ܘܬܡܗܐ ܐܠܝܢ ܬܠܬ ܣܘܦܗܝܢ ܒܫܪܟܘܢ ܕܡܬܚܙܐ ܕܠܐ ܐܦ ܥܠܬܐ ܡܛܐ ܒܗ ܕܡܕܥܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܛܐ ܠܗ ܐܦ ܥܠܬܐ.

["Two and three" refer to] the soul, the body, and the spirit. Or the contemplative mind (*madʿā*), *hergā*, and prayer. And these three end up (*nešrk̲ūn*) in astonishment (*temhā*). It can happen that the [contemplative mind] does not even attain prayer [by the moment it reaches astonishment].[76]

The East Syriac mystical Tradition also provides descriptions of how various human mental faculties (*madʿā*, *reʿyānā, hawnā*) operate in the practice of *hergā*. Consider the following text by Simeon d-Taibutheh:

ܕܬܡܢ ܕܒ ܫܪܪܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܬܬܣܝܡ ܒܢ ܐܝܟ ܕܟܬܒܐ ܒܛܒܥܬܐ. ܕܒܟܠ ܙܒܢ ܒܗ ܒܡܕܥܐ ܕܥܠܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܡܕܥܐ ܕܥܠܬܐ ܕܡܬܚܕܕ ܒܗ ܡܫܚܝܦ ܠܪܥܝܢܐ ܘܡܠܗܒ ܢܦܫܐ ܘܡܫܒܐ ܠܪܘܚܐ ܘܠܚܫܫܒ̲ܐ ܐܚܪܢܐ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܝܠܕ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܚܕ ܥܠܬܐ ܕܡܪܓܐ.

For in this love of Christ is set and established within us, like the imprint on a dinar—in the constant hergā in Him / in it. For the constant *hergā* of the reason (*reʿyānā*)—insofar as the contemplative mind (*madʿā*) practices within it (*me̲thaggę*)—sharpens the reason (*reʿyānā*), inflames the soul, and captivates the mind (*hawnā*) and the thoughts (*ḥušš̄ā̲bę*), [drawing them along] after the searching of that which is born from that single *hergā*.[77]

This text clearly explains how a person transcends the limits of discursive thinking. Thoughts are brought to silence, as is the mind-*hawnā*, the faculty to which thoughts are ultimately subordinate. At the same time, the reason does not stop; on the contrary, it becomes sharper in the utmost focusing on God. The contemplative mind-*madʿā*, responsible for perceiving divine mysteries, is described here as being fully engaged in the practice of *hergā*. At the same time, the experience of encountering divine power remains indescribable: the author refers to it as "that which is born of the single [experience of] *hergā*."

Simeon also describes the stages of prayer accompanied by *hergā*:

> "And from prayers [performed] with compulsion, which are offered constantly in suffering and tears, we acquire patience and retention of habit (*mḥamsnānū̲tā da-ʿyād̲ā*), from which spring up the prayer of will

76 *Isaacus Ninevita.* Collectio secunda. Capita gnostica II, 88 // Op. cit. Fol. 57r.

77 *Simeon d-Taibutheh.* Liber gratiae V, 85 // Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs 196. P. 100.

> [i.e., performed not out of compulsion but out of desire], offered without distraction (*duwwāḏā*) in peace, and joy. And from contemplation, which is gathered (*d-meṯkanšā*) from reading (*qeryānā*) and spiritual *hergā* on [created] natures, we experience communion (*ʕenyānā*) with hidden prayer. And from the constancy of these [practices], in the heart the prayer of *hergā* is set. [This prayer] stirs in the contemplative mind (*madʕā*) outwardly and inwardly—which is the expansion (*mawʕīṯā*)[78] of the heart and the prayer of grace."[79]

Here, not only are four stages of prayer named (prayer by compulsion, prayer by desire, hidden prayer that transcends words and external forms, and the prayer of grace, where the will is no longer active, and the person is led by the Holy Spirit), but also two kinds of *hergā*: amazed reflection on created natures and a simple single thought directed toward God, which surpasses the level of human concepts.

### 3.2. Aphnimaran's method in action

As a reader can see, originally *hergā* was a technical term for one of the aspects of the educational process at schools of the Church of the East. The main aspect of this process was the study of the Bible. In the East Syriac mystical tradition, the term *hergā* was applied to designate a special technique of gradual ascending to a simple thought on the Divine Essence—the thought free of any ideas and images. This practice preserved its connection with the educational tradition and work with Scripture remained the necessary condition for its beginning and progress.

As one can see from the text of Aphnimaran's work, his chapters did not provide the reader with new information about the biblical text or theology, they rather brought the reader into engagement with their subject, assuming the reader's acquaintance with the related context. This fits well into our reconstruction of the complex *hergā* practice. The information on the latter helps us find the *Sitz im Leben* of Aphnimaran's treatise.

Now let us consider the method of Aphnimaran in action. Chapter 66, although not belonging to the present selection, illustrates in the best way the multi-level task Aphnimaran's reader had to undertake:

78 Lit. "sprouting."

79 *Simeon d-Taibutheh.* Liber gratiae V, 29 // *Kessel G. M.* Life and Works of Šemʿōn d-Ṭaibūtēh. P. 229–230 (Syriac text and English translation; quoted translation is ours).

ܗܝ ܕܒܛܝ ܚܕ ܟܒܘܟܐ ܗܘ ܀
ܒܬܪܝܗܘܢ ܕܗܦܟܘ ܠܐܬܪܐ ܕܠܝܠܝܐ ܀
ܟܒܝܫ ܗܘ ܀[80]

The One who once restrained the flame,
He eliminated His fire in the two who turned
back to the village to spend the night.

One can imagine how a monk who spent a certain time (e.g., seven weeks according to the popular practice[81]) in seclusion interacted with this text.

To find a key, a monk had to recollect all passages of the Scripture in which fire is mentioned[82]. Among them, he had to choose passages in which fire had been stopped: the task difficult even for someone having access to a full codex of the Bible. The lack of easy text navigation methods required both memory and attention. Further, a reader should have understood who had stopped the fire: this had to be the same subject who is mentioned in the second part of the riddle, i.e., someone who had extinguished *his* fire within two persons who turned towards a village. One may expect that the subject is God. But what then does it mean that God extinguished *His own* fire in certain people?

The reader can do the same procedure on their own. Needless to say, fire is a very popular topic in the Bible. While sorting out all the verses that come to mind, one would most likely stop at two of them. The most famous one belongs to the Book of Daniel and describes how God saved Anania, Azariah and Mishael in the Babylonian furnace. Another one is less cited. The Book of Numbers tells how people complained against God *and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp* (Num. 11:1). After this, *the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched* (Num. 11:2). The former passage refers to an exploit of faith. The latter one tells about sin, punishment and mercy.

To choose between these two options, one should unravel the second part of the riddle. Who are "the two who turned back to the village to spend the night?" The answer that comes to mind first is the two disciples whom Christ met on their way to Emmaus, as is narrated in the Gos-

80 *Aphnimaran*. Capita gnostica 66 // Paris, BnF syr. 367. Fol. 26v.

81 Consult the relevant treatises by Dadisho' of Qatar on this ascetic practice (Los cinco tratados sobre la quietud (šelyā) de Dāḏišō' Qaṭrāyā / ed. F. del Río Sánchez. Barcelona, 2001. (Aula Orientalis Supplementa; 18)).

82 It is noteworthy that one of the monastic anthologies includes a short text that begins with the question: "How many times did fire descend from heaven for good?" It then lists eight episodes from the Old Testament. See MS Mardin, Chaldean Cathedral, Syr. 14 (*olim* Diyarbakir 112; 81.5), fol. 89v–90r.

pel of Luke. They indeed came to a village to spend the night. Moreover, in this story, the spiritual fire is mentioned. When Christ revealed Himself to the disciples and disappeared, they said one to another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road…?"[83] (Lk. 24:32) Though this looks like a solution, very soon the reader would realize that it had been a false trail. First, the phrase "eliminated His fire" remains unclear. Second, the connection between the first and the second parts of the riddle is not obvious.

There is another biblical passage which fits Aphnimaran's text. In the same Gospel of Luke, it is said how Christ "sent messengers on ahead of Him. And they went, and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make arrangements for Him" (Lk. 9:52). We do not know the number of these messengers, but further, after Jesus had not been received, it was Jacob and John who suggested bringing down the divine fire on the Samaritans. Jesus forbade them from doing this. Now one sees that, first, God did not allow the disciples to operate the Divine fire, and, second, in this story sinners were forgiven. This perfectly fits the allusion made in the first part of the riddle—the story about forgiven Jews who were not killed by the Divine fire.

The chapter also contains a clue, which a reader could finally come across in the process of recollection. When the disciples suggest to Christ destroying a Samaritan village with the Divine fire, they use, according to the Peshitta version, the same verb *ʔasīp̄* which is used in Aphnimaran's chapter:

> "Lord, will you that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them (*tsīp̄ ʔennon*), even as Elijah did?"[84]

The narrative of Elijah who called fire down on the earth and of Christ who forbade His disciples to do the same was frequently given attention in the East Syriac mystical Tradition, as it was investigated by Dmitry Bumazhnov.[85]

83 In the Peshitta, it is literally said "our heart was heavy" (ܟܒܕ, instead of the expected ܡܨܥ). It is noteworthy that the anonymous interpreter of Aphnimaran is apparently aware of the Greek reading of this verse, as he mentions the episode described in Lk. 24:13–32 in connection with the divine fire (Anonimi interpretatio Aphnimarani capitum gnosticorum 66 // Op. cit. Fol. 26v–27r). His source could be the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Gospel of Luke.

84 Cf. Lk. 9:54.

85 See *Бумажнов Д. Ф.* Низведение небесного огня пророком Илией в раннехристианской литературе. Некоторые наблюдения // Труди Київської Духовної Академії. 2024. № 40. С. 45–88. [*Bumazhnov D. F.* The Descent of Heavenly Fire by the Prophet Elijah in Early Chris-

Thus, the disciples were going to eliminate people with the help of fire, but God eliminated His own fire instead. Now the connection between the two parts of the riddle is crystal clear.

Thus, Aphnimaran's work forces the reader to explore interconnections within the Biblical text and face the general theological problem behind the literal sense of the Scripture. Chapter 66 emphasizes the conceptual pair which is fundamental both for Christianity and Judaism—the correspondence between Divine justice and Divine mercy, asserting that Divine mercy surpasses justice. Note that after one has clarified the allusions lying behind the 66th chapter, it turns out that the first part of the riddle refers to the Old Testament, while the second one—to the Gospel: thus, the writer shows that even the severe laws of the Old Testament make a hint that Divine love prevails over justice.

Reading the Scripture from the perspective of the interrelation between Divine mercy and justice allowed one to make an investigation and meditate even on the passages from the Bible that can embarrass and terrify the reader or seem to be trivial and telling nothing significant. A marvelous illustration can be the well-known story from the Book of Genesis on how God called for Adam in Paradise, retold by Isaac of Nineveh, who, like Aphnimaran, used to express biblical stories in an intentionally enigmatic way:

ܩܕܡܝܐ ܒܬܪ ܕܒܚܕ ܒܪܝ ܡܬܓܠܝ ܒܪܙܐ

In this text, Isaac says that the Divine Unity taught the first people through the shape of their body, meaning that God is described in Genesis as walking in Paradise. This fact brings Isaac into amazement. He believes that God revealed Himself to angels ("the older rational beings") through the process of creation described in the first chapter of Genesis ("bodies" mentioned by Isaac refer to material creatures which were formed in the presence of angels to teach them, according to Theodore of Mopsuestia and his East Syriac followers). Against this background, the fact that God revealed Himself to people through the image of their own body looks like a privilege and testifies to great mercy towards humankind. Above all, the fact that this mercy was revealed not in a different time but after the first people had transgressed the commandment of God, makes Isaac interrupt his speculative text and start expressing his wonder. The culmination of the divine pedagogy is the Incarnation, to which the final passage of Isaac's chapter refers. Incarnation, as well as the New Testament divine economy, revealed the pre-eternal divine plan for the world.

Such an approach can be found already in the poetical homilies of Narsai. Sometimes he expresses obvious theological notions through riddles so that his students can find the answer on their own. For example, Narsai describes the present unstable state of the world and its renovation in the following way:

| | |
|---|---|
| *ʔaʸḵ da-l-napīlā / ʔaḥdẹh b-ʾīḏā /* | He took it [i.e., the world], like a fallen |
| *besrānāytā* | one, by a fleshly hand, |
| *wa-smaḵ tarṣẹh / wa-ṯlā ḥyāreh /* | And upheld, and straightened it,[88] and |
| *l-ʾappay rawmā* | raised its sight towards the height. |

[from] a single [source of] contemplation by means of bodies. Those coming second had as teacher the uniquely singular condition in the likeness of the body in which they were clothed. Praise to the vastness of your immeasurable love, praise to the wondrous nature of your incomparable grace, praise to the unattainability of you coming down to our level: you set the spiritual beings in a state, of wonder that they could not explain. Finally, with the reality of their body, you raised them up to the contemplation of his eternal thought concerning their establishment." (*Isaac of Nineveh*. Headings on Spiritual Knowledge. P. 98). The differences in the two translations prove once again that the riddles of Syriac mystical writers often make the reader wander and wonder, rather than unravel an unequivocal author's intention.

88 Cf. Ps. 145:14 (the Peshitta): *Sāmeḵ Māryā l-ḵol d-nāplīn w-ṯāreṣ l-ḵol da-ḵpīpīn* ("Lord upholds all who fall and straightens all who are curved").

| | |
|---|---|
| *b-ʾīḏā d-ʾnāšā / ʔaḥdẹh l-ʕālmā / mārẹh d-ʕālmā* | By a human hand the Master of the world took the world |
| *wa-qʕā lẹh d-qūm / w-qām* | And shouted to it: "Arise!", and it arose |
| *w-ʾeṯnaḥḥam / men kurhānẹh* | and recovered from its illness. |
| *meḏrā d-mennẹh / maddeḵ yaʰḇ lẹh / ba-ḏmūṯ sammā* | He mixed the soil from it [and] gave it to the [world] like a medicine, |
| *w-ʾeštī mennẹh / w-napṣāh l-merṯā / d-māyōṯūṯā* | And [the world] drank from it and shook away the poison of mortality. |
| *ḥyā w-ʾeṯnaḥḥam / ʕālmā mīṯā / ʾrāzānāʔīṯ* | The dead world revived mysteriously |
| *w-īlep̄ ṭaḵsā / d-ṯūḇ meṯnaḥḥam / bhon ba-ʕḇāḏẹ* | And learned the order [according to] which it will be resurrected in deed.[89] |

Step by step, a reader had to recognize that the hints of "fleshly hand" and "soil" used as a medicine lead to the theological teaching on Incarnation, and it is Christ who is described in the cited verses. Beginning with the wonder of "soil," which was taken from the present world and returned to it, provided as a medicine, the reader moved toward recognizing the allusion to the biblical story of Adam's creation (Gen. 2:7) and then to the concept of Christ as the second Adam (Rom. 5:12–21; 1 Cor. 15:47). From this point, the reference to Christ's resurrection became clear. The resurrection itself was understood as, in a mysterious way (*ʾrāzānāʔīṯ*), revealing the eschatological transformation of the entire world. It is worth mentioning here that Narsai was the most influential East Syriac theologian of his time and remained the prototypical poet for the subsequent East Syriac tradition.

Both mystical riddles analyzed by us, i.e., the 66th Chapter of Aphnimaran and the passage by Isaac of Nineveh, demonstrate how a reader shifted from speculation on the text toward meditation on the Divine attributes which are revealed, often indirectly, through Biblical passages.

Starting with careful attention to the Biblical text in its historical and philological details, the reader investigated the Divine plan standing behind the Scripture. From this, he gradually ascended in the mystical presence before God. This was an experience free from human projections, but it by no means was an impersonal ecstasis. This presence was described as a revelation of the Divine love, and a person had to align their own life with this revelation. For this reason, social topics are so strong in the writings of Isaac of Nineveh, the author who pays attention to *hergā* more than any other mystic of the 7th century whose texts reached us.

89 *Narsai*. De renovatione creaturae 69–76 // Op. cit. P. 57.

Starting from attentively focusing on the details of the Biblical text, a mystic, through the practice of *hergā,* returned to taking care of details on a deeper scale—in his conduct and communication. The *Chapters on Knowledge* of Aphnimaran were a brilliant instrument for any traveler who undertook such a journey.

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