

# Liturgical and Theological Significance of *Qudaša* in the East Syriac Qurbana

Prof. Dr. Pauly Maniyattu

## Introduction

The Syriac term *Qudaša*<sup>1</sup> means sanctification, consecration, or hallowing. This term is used to denote the anaphora of the Eucharist. One of the most preferred titles of the Eucharistic Prayer in the East Syriac tradition is *Qudaša*.<sup>2</sup> In the post-Portuguese St. Thomas Christian tradition, the sacraments are known as *Qudaše*. Some sacramentals like the consecration of the church, altar, *dapa* and the oil of anointing are also considered *Qudaše* in the East Syriac tradition.<sup>3</sup>

Here we shall discuss the meaning and relevance of the term *Qudaša* used for the celebration of the mysteries. East Syriac commentators like Narsai,<sup>4</sup> and Gabriel Qatraya<sup>5</sup> prefer to use this term emphasising the aspect of the eucharistic prayer as an action. The term *Qudaša* as it is

- 
- 1 R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, tom. 1-2, Oxford 1879-1901, 3500-3503.
  - 2 The title of the Order of the Eucharistic Celebration published in 1960 is *Taksa d' Qudaše*. The book containing the rubrics and calendar is called *Ordo celebrationis Qudaše*.
  - 3 The East Syriac anaphora is titled as *Qudaša*. Cf. J. Vadakkel, *The East Syrian Anaphora of Mar Theodore of Mopsuestia*, OIRSI, Kottayam 1989, 41; S. Naduthadam, *L'anaphore de Mar Nestorius: Edition critique et étude*, UDD, Institut Catholique de Paris, Paris 1992, 158. The Malayalam text of Raza gives both the terms *Qudaša* and *Anaphora*. *The Syro-Malabar Qurbana: The Order of Raza*, SMBC, Trivandrum 1986; Revised version 1989, 77. The Chaldean *Taksa* names the anaphoras as First *Qudaša* (*Anaphora of Addai and Mari*), Second *Qudaša* (*Anaphora of Theodore*), and Third *Qudaša* (*Anaphora of Nestorius*). Cf. *Taksa d'Raze am Tlatha Qudaše d'etta Qaddiša d'Suryaye Mdenhaye d'hennon Chaldaye*, Baghdad, 1992.
  - 4 Cf. "Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries", in *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, R.H. Connolly, trans., TSt VIII, Cambridge 1909, 10, 27.
  - 5 Cf. Gabriel Qatraya, "Interpretation of the Offices", in Jean Mathew, *The Structure and Theology of East Syriac Qurbana according to the Commentary of Gabriel Qatraya*, Kottayam 2012, 21-42.

employed in the East Syriac liturgy has both the anabatic (ascending) and katabatic (descending) dimensions. In the anabatic dimension this term is much similar to the term *eucharistia*. Therefore, it is mainly praise (*tešbohta*) and thanksgiving (*tawditha*). The sanctification or hallowing of God or rendering praise and thanks to God may be called the anabatic *Qudaša*. In the katabatic dimension, *Qudaša* means consecration or blessing of the mysteries or of the assembly. The *Qudaša* of the mysteries and the *Qudaša* of the assembly may be called katabatic *Qudaša*.<sup>6</sup>

## 1. Anabatic *Qudaša* (Eucharistia)

The earliest form of the anaphora in the Church was praise and thanksgiving to God the creator and the redeemer. Justin the Martyr sees the content of the *eucharistia* as thanksgiving for creation and redemption.<sup>7</sup> This could have been the normal content of the Eucharistic Prayer in the second century.<sup>8</sup> As Jungmann says, the Eucharistic Prayer was the thanksgiving prayer, the *eucharistia* over the gifts of bread and wine. Emphasising the thanksgiving aspect, the apologists of the second century spoke of the Eucharist as though it were solely a matter of prayer.<sup>9</sup> The third century East Syriac document the Acts of Thomas witnesses to such a simple Eucharist. It is practically a Eucharistic Prayer in which praises and thanksgivings are found in the primitive form.<sup>10</sup>

The East Syriac anaphoras (*Qudaše*) frequently use terms like *šabbah* (to praise), *tešbohta* (praise, glorification),<sup>11</sup> *awdi* (to confess), and *tawditha* (thanksgiving).<sup>12</sup> The frequent occurrence of these terms points to the general character of the anaphoras as prayers of praise and thanksgiving.

6 For a detailed understanding of the anabatic and katabatic dimensions of *Qudaša* see Pauly Maniyattu, “Theology of Syro-Malabar Qurbana” in A. Mekkattukunnel, ed., *Mar Thoma Margam: The Ecclesial Heritage of the St. Thomas Christians*, Kottayam 2012, 261-267.

7 Cf. Justin, *Apologia* I. 5.

8 Cf. D.H. Tripp, “The Thanksgiving: An Essay by Arthur Couratin”, in B.D. Spinks, ed., *The Sacrifice of Praise: Studies on the Themes of Thanksgiving and Redemption in the Central Prayers of the Eucharistic and Baptismal Liturgies in Honour of Arthur Hubert Couratin*, Rome 1981, 59-60.

9 Cf. J.A. Jungmann, *The Mass: An Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Survey*, J. Fernandes, trans., Collegeville 1976, 156.

10 Cf. A.F.J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, ET, Intr. & Commentary, Leiden 1962, 90.

11 Payne Smith, *Thesaurus*, 4023-4025.

12 Payne Smith, *Thesaurus*, 1550-1553. Cf. Vadakkel, *Anaphora of Mar Theodore*, 133-134.

Having analysed the primitive structure of the *Qudaša* of Mar Addai and Mar Mari (AM), E.C. Ratcliff says that it is a pure and simple *eucharistia*.<sup>13</sup> We find an address of praise to the name of the creator and redeemer, a thanksgiving for what has been done for man, and finally praise and thanksgiving for the redemptive death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>14</sup> However, this final thanksgiving is characterized by the commemoration of the Lord's death and resurrection. This commemoration is accomplished not only in words, but also in act, imitating Christ's own actions. Thanksgiving prayer is said over bread and wine, and the bread and wine thus blessed are eaten and drunk.<sup>15</sup> The other two East Syriac *Qudaše*, those of Mar Theodore and Mar Nestorius, also place thanksgiving at the heart of the eucharistic action.<sup>16</sup> Praise and thanksgiving in the *Qudaše* are joined to that of the heavenly assembly. It is clear in the expression: "And with these heavenly hosts we give you thanks, O Lord, and we bless God the Word."<sup>17</sup>

Theodore emphasises the aspect of thanksgiving in his commentary on Eucharist. The *Qudaša* contains praise and glorification of the visible creatures and invisible hosts. There is commemoration of the economy accomplished in Christ. Thanks are rendered on account of this economy.<sup>18</sup> Narsai, too, underlines the importance of the praise and glorification of the Divinity. According to him, the important elements of Eucharist are seen in the action of Christ at the Last Supper, namely thanksgiving and blessing over the bread and wine. Claiming to be citing

13 E.C. Ratcliff, "The Original Form of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari: A Suggestion", *Journal of Theological Studies* 30 (1928-1929), 30.

14 See the thanksgiving in the g'hanta prayers of Addai and Mari. For the ET of Mar Ešaya text of AM see B.D. Spinks, *Prayers from the East*, Washington DC, 1993, 4. Cf. also K.A. Paul & G. Mooken, trans., *The Liturgy of the Holy Apostles Addai and Mari together with the Liturgies of Mar Theodorus and Mar Nestorius and the Order of Baptism*, Trichur 1967, 31-34; The Syro-Malabar Qurbana: The Order of Raza, SMBC, Trivandrum 1989, 37-42.

15 Cf. Ratcliff, "Original Form", 29-30.

16 Cf. Vadakkel, *Anaphora of Mar Theodore*, 83-87; Naduthadam, *Anaphore de Nestorius*, 243-252. In AN the praise and thanksgiving occur in the third and fourth g'hantas.

17 Raza, 39. Cf. the Ešaya text ET: Spinks, *Prayers from the East*, 4. Cf. also Paul & Mooken, *Liturgy*, 33.

18 Theodore, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, A. Mingana, ed. & trans., WS 6, Cambridge 1933, 99-103.

the tradition from Theodore, Narsai attributes to Jesus such a prayer of praise and thanksgiving.<sup>19</sup> The importance attached to the thanksgiving for redemption is clear from the long narration of the ministry of Christ.<sup>20</sup>

The *Qudaša* as eucharistia is seen all throughout the East Syriac eucharistic liturgy. In all instances, the eucharistia is one made along with the praises of the heavenly choir. The liturgy begins with the sanctification of God along with the angelic choir. The praise “Glory to God in the highest” is repeated thrice,<sup>21</sup> the repetition being a symbol of the unceasing praise of the heavenly liturgy. The Lord’s Prayer has a special form in which a sanctification, called qanona, is added in the beginning and end. It serves as an extension of the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer, that is, “hallowed be your name.”<sup>22</sup> The prayer before *Lakhu Mara* and the *Lakhu Mara* are classical formulation of the praise and thanksgiving. The prayer before *Lakhu Mara* is as follows:

“For every help and grace that you have given us, for which we can never repay you enough, may we thank you and glorify you unceasingly in your Church, crowned like a spouse and full of all help and blessing, for you are the Lord and Creator of all, for ever.”<sup>23</sup>

In the hymn *Lakhu Mara*, the glorification is indeed a profound confession of faith:

“Lord of All, we praise you; Jesus Christ, we glorify you; for you are the quickener of our bodies and the gracious saviour of our souls.”<sup>24</sup> Jesus Christ is praised as the source of our resurrection. He is the one who shall transform us all and the entire cosmos, the one who shall be our Lord in the heavenly life too.

Trisagion<sup>25</sup> contains praises added to the praises of the heavenly hosts as in the vision of Is 6:3. A similar concern for the sanctification of God is seen in the *Onitha d’ Raze* of the first Sunday of Annunciation.<sup>26</sup>

---

19 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 16-17.

20 Cf. “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 13-18.

21 *Raza*, 1.

22 *Raza*, 2.

23 Prayer on *Dukhrana* and ferial days. *Raza*, 11.

24 *Raza*, 11.

25 *Raza*, 12.

26 *Raza*, 29. Now it is given also in general order of the celebration of Qurbana.

Here this praise is against the background of the commemoration of the passion and death of the Lord. The second *g'hanta*, *sanctus*, and the third *kušapa* are all intense forms of eucharistia, joined with the heavenly hosts. Deacon's *karozutha* after the third *g'hanta* and the onitha during fraction and consignation contain prayers of praise and thanksgiving on account of the divine mysteries. The *tešbohta* after the rite of communion expresses a strong hope of the liturgical assembly praising and thanking God in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>27</sup> Thus it becomes an anticipation of the eucharistia in the heavenly liturgy.

In the East Syriac liturgy, the eucharistia (*Qudaša*) has the following characteristics:

It is an eucharistia in the model of the Jewish Berakah. According to Sarhad Jammo, the anaphora of the Addai and Mari (AM) contains the eucharistia which reflects the same basic structure of *Birkat Ha-Mazon* in its paschal context.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the praise and thanksgiving in the anaphora has the similar function of the praise and thanksgiving during the Jewish paschal meal. In order to understand the true characteristic of the Christian eucharistia we have to view it in the context of the biblical memorial. Walter Kasper describes the nature of the biblical memorial while talking about the Jewish memorials:

“Memorial in the biblical sense is at all events never a merely subjective remembrance. It is a liturgical, sacramental memorial celebration in which a past salvific act is made objectively present by means of a true symbol. This applies to the Feast of Tabernacles, for example (Lev 23.33ff.), and above all to the Passover, as a day for remembering the liberation from Egyptian slavery (Ex 12.14). By way of this remembrance, in each generation, everyone is in duty bound ‘to look upon himself as if he had come out of Egypt.’”<sup>29</sup>

If the eucharistia in AM is closely related to the *Birkat Ha-Mazon*, then a similar experience of the salvation is envisaged of the one praying that eucharistia. It is an eucharistia by a community which already

---

27 *Raza*, 57-58.

28 S. Jammo, “The Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari: A Study of Structure and Historical Background”, *Orientalia christiana periodica* 68 (2002) 35.

29 W. Kasper, *Theology and Church*, 181. According to Louis Bouyer, the eucharistic memorial in no way means a subjective, human psychological act of returning to the past, but an objective reality destined to make some thing or someone perpetually present before God and for God himself. L. Bouyer, *Eucharist*, Notre Dame 1968, 103-104.

experiences the salvation. The true ground for the thanksgiving is not some great deed of God in the past, but his saving work in the present. In fact this characteristic makes the eucharistia a real leitourgia of God. In the liturgy, the people are indeed participating in the salvific work of God.<sup>30</sup> Their glorification of God is nothing but “the making present of salvation in the sacramental form”.<sup>31</sup>

The Jewish Berakah also had an eschatological dimension. The past experience was the guarantee and assurance for the present experience which was in fact the anticipation of a final future experience of salvation. No Israelite could recite the Berakah during the Passover meal without being assured of an eschatological messianic work of salvation. Thus, the eucharistia becomes a meeting point of the past, present and future.

The Christian eucharistia has the same theological pattern of the Jewish Berakah. The convergence of the past, present and future is very significant in the East Syriac liturgy. The eschatological emphasis is evident in the epiclesis of the East Syriac *Qudaše* (anaphoras). In the epiclesis of AM, for example, it is said that the sanctification of the mysteries is intended for the “great hope of resurrection from the dead and new life in the kingdom of heaven with all those who have found favour in your presence.”<sup>32</sup>

The *Qudaša* in the eucharistic celebration is the *Qudaša* of the Church who is already on the way to her glorification. While rendering praise to God, the Church is anticipating her joy in the heavenly marriage feast. The tenth century Anonymous Author of the Exposition of the Offices interprets the *sanctus* as the praise of the earthly Church joining the heavenly Church:

“...but in that manner today we, angels and men, become a single holy Church, and in Christ we have been made one flock; as the heavenly apostle says, he wished that we too may be brought together in harmony, and thus like the watchers [angels] we may praise him with their praises.”<sup>33</sup>

---

30 CCC 1069.

31 W. Kasper, *Theology and Church*, 186.

32 *Raza*, 45.

33 *Anonymi auctoris expositio officiorum ecclesiae Georgio Arbelensi vulgo adscripta. Accedit Abrahae Bar Lipheh interpretatio officiorum*, R.H. Connolly, ed. & trans., CSCO, series secunda, syri 91-92, Roma 1913-1915.) 54; Syr. text, 57.

...This means, heaven and earth have been already made one Church; neither heaven is heaven nor earth is earth because the time and space composite have been dissolved; for heaven is the heaven of earth and earth is the earth of heaven. Certainly, unless there was (might be) a heaven above, there might not be an earth below, and unless there was an earth below, there might not be a heaven above. Now that those above and those below are brought into a single Church, there is neither 'above' nor 'below'. And yet, God appeared on earth, and our nature ascended into heaven; and when God descended to us, earth became heaven; and when the Son of our race was elevated, heaven became earth. Wherefore heaven and earth have become one, and there is neither heaven nor earth; and we were already constituted with the spiritual ones. It is their predication itself- 'holy', that we recite as being perfected through resurrection.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, the East Syriac *Qudaša* is the eucharistia rendered by the Church experiencing salvation here and now, anticipating the eschatological fulfilment of that salvation and joining the heavenly hosts in the eternal praise of God.

## 2. Katabatic *Qudaša*

The term *Qudaša*, in the katabatic dimension means sanctification or consecration, of the mysteries and of the assembly. This sanctification primarily refers to the change of bread and wine into body and blood of Christ. Then it means the sanctification of the assembly. The sanctification is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>35</sup> To understand the relevance of the sanctification in the East Syriac Qurbana it is enough to see the epiclesis of the anaphoras, and the commentaries on them.

The epiclesis is one of the most ancient elements of the eucharistic prayers in the East Syriac tradition. A good example may be cited from the *Acts of Thomas*:

And he began to say: "Come gift of the Exalted; come, perfect mercy; come Holy Spirit;...come and communicate with us in this Eucharist which we celebrate, and in this offering that we offer, and

34 *Anonymi auctoris expositio officiorum*, 55; Syr. text, 58. Cf. P. Maniyattu, *Heaven on Earth: The Theology of Liturgical Spacetime in the East Syrian Qurbana*, Rome 1995, 112-113.

35 P. Yousif, "The Divine Liturgy According to the Rite of the Assyro-Chaldean Church", in J. Madey, ed., *The Eucharistic Liturgy in the Christian East*, Kottayam-Paderborn 1982, 224.

in this commemoration which we make.” And he made the sign of the Cross upon the bread, and began to give (it).<sup>36</sup>

Even though this resembles the classical epicletic prayers of the Church, no invocation is made for the change of the offering. Rather, the Holy Spirit is invoked to communicate with the assembly in the offering. The reference to communication brings this epiclesis close to the epiclesis of AM. The epiclesis of AM seems to be an explanation and expansion of the formula of the *Acts of Thomas*. Epiclesis of AM is the following:

O my Lord, may your Holy Spirit come down...and dwell in this Qurbana of your servants and bless it and sanctify it that it may be to us, O My Lord, unto the pardon of debts, remission of sins and the great hope of resurrection from the dead and new life in the kingdom of heaven with all those who have found favour in your presence.<sup>37</sup>

The *Acts* marks the contrast between our action and the action of the Spirit. The communication of the Spirit gives new dimension to our thanksgiving, offering and commemoration. By the invocation of the Holy Spirit they attain a divine dimension. The *Acts* sees the eucharistic liturgy as an encounter of persons involved in different actions: On the part of the assembly the liturgical action is to celebrate the Eucharist through praise and thanksgiving, offer the sacrifice and make commemoration of salvation events accomplished in Jesus Christ. On the part of God it is to communicate through Christ and Holy Spirit.<sup>38</sup> This divine communication is effected in Communion.

In AM there is clear mention of the sanctification of the offering. However, the sanctification of the offering is oriented to the sanctification of the assembly. It envisages a participation in the divine dispensation. The ultimate goal is the resurrection and life in the kingdom of heaven. This is to be realized by the remission of sins. The epiclesis in the Anaphora of Theodore (AT)<sup>39</sup> elaborates and clarifies the theme as in AM. However, the invocation is made first for the assembly. Thus, the sanctification of the assembly is more emphasised than in AM. In AM there is no explicit mention of the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood. AM puts all these in the expression of “the sanctification of the offering”.

---

36 *The Acts of Thomas*, 91.

37 *Raza*, 44-45. Cf. Paul & Mooken, *Liturgy*, 39.

38 *The Acts of Thomas*, 91.

39 Vadakkel, *Anaphora of Mar Theodore*, 90-91.

As regards the sanctification of the offering and that of the assembly, the epiclesis of the Anaphora of Nestorius (AN) is similar to that of AT.<sup>40</sup> But AN adds a new factor in the sanctification of the assembly, namely the aspect of becoming one in love and peace; one body and one spirit, as envisaged by the Christian vocation: “We may all be joined to one another in unity and in one bond of love and peace, that there may be one body and one spirit, as we are called in one hope.”<sup>41</sup>

These two types of the sanctification are explained in the commentaries. According to Theodore of Mopsuestia, the priest prays to the Holy Spirit to come upon the bread and wine so that they may become the body and blood; and to come upon all those present so that they may be knit into one body by Communion.<sup>42</sup> As in AN, Theodore stresses the unity of the liturgical assembly. According to Theodore, receiving a kind of anointing by the Holy Spirit, the elements of bread and wine become immortal, incorruptible, impassible, and immutable by nature, as the body of our Lord was after resurrection.<sup>43</sup> By the *Qudaša*, the offering passes into a new state of existence, transcending the space-time. In Theodore’s view the body and blood are realities in space-time, but with the properties of non-space-time. Comparing the body and blood after the epiclesis to the resurrected body of our Lord, he states that the epiclesis is the celebration of the resurrection. For those who partake of this sanctified body and blood, they acquire the power of spiritual and immortal nourishment.<sup>44</sup>

Narsai also speaks of the sanctification of both the offering and the assembly. Like Theodore, he gives only a second place to the sanctification of the assembly. The goal of the coming of the Spirit upon the congregation is preparation for the Communion.<sup>45</sup> He sees the epiclesis as the celebration of the resurrection.<sup>46</sup> What is particular to Narsai in his commentary is his stress on the two types of celebrants: the priest and the Holy Spirit. The priest indeed consecrates. “...the dread Mysteries, lo, are

40 Naduthadam, *Anaphore de Nestorius*, 269. Cf. also Paul & Mooken, *Liturgy*, 108.

41 *Second Qudasha: The Order of Mar Theodore and Third Qudasha: The Order of Mar Nestorius*, Syro-Malabar Commission for Liturgy, Kakkanad 2018, 69.

42 Cf. Theodore, *Eucharist*, 104.

43 Theodore, *Eucharist*, 104. Cf. also Gabriel Qatraya, “Interpretation”, 97.

44 Theodore, *Eucharist*, 118-119.

45 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 20.

46 Cf. “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 20.

being consecrated by the hands of the priest...”.<sup>47</sup> The sign of the cross made over the mysteries by the priest shows his important role in the consecration.<sup>48</sup> However, he is only a medium of the consecration. The real celebrant is the Holy Spirit. “The Spirit comes down at the request of the priest, be he never so great a sinner, and celebrates the mysteries by the mediation of the priest whom he has consecrated”.<sup>49</sup> “To this effect the priest gives thanks before God, and he raises his voice at the end of his prayer to make it audible to the people. He makes his voice heard, and with his hand he signs the Mysteries that are set (on the altar).”<sup>50</sup>

While speaking of the sanctification of the offering, Gabriel Qatraya does not speak of the sanctification of the assembly.<sup>51</sup> He emphasises the celebration of the resurrection in the epiclesis. According to Qatraya and Yohannan Bar Zo’bi, the whole anaphora, namely the eucharistic action is a celebration of the resurrection.<sup>52</sup> According to them the cross, the gospel and the icon of our Lord which stand in the place of the person of our Lord are necessary for the consecration of the mysteries.<sup>53</sup>

*Qudaša*, both in the ascending and descending dimensions have gestures along with the words. In the anaphoras, we find the signing (*rušma*) of the mysteries. Narsai speaks about these blessings.<sup>54</sup> The first one is with the Pauline blessing.<sup>55</sup> Išo’yahb IV mentions this signing. He forbids adding new *paghra* (body, here meaning bread) to those already on the paten after the first signing during the Pauline blessing.<sup>56</sup> Narsai sees it as a

---

47 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 10.

48 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 18.

49 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 21.

50 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 18.

51 Gabriel Qatraya, “Interpretation”, 99. Cf. Yohannan Bar Zo’bi, *Explanation of the Divine Mysteries*, T. Mannooramparampil, trans., OIRSI, Kottayam 1992, 49.

52 Cf. Gabriel Qatraya, “Interpretation”, 97; Yohannan Bar Zo’bi, *Explanation*, 40-41.

53 Gabriel Qatraya, “Interpretation”, 95; Yohannan Bar Zo’bi, *Explanation*, 37.

54 “Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries”, 22.

55 AM. Raza, 37; LEW, 283. AT. Vadakkel, *Anaphora of Mar Theodore*, 82; AN. Naduthadam, *Anaphore de Nestorius*, 238. In AN it is not clear whether the signing is on the mysteries or not.

56 W.C. Van Unnik, ed. & trans., Nestorian Questions on the Administration of the Eucharist by Išo’yahb IV: A Contribution to the History of the Eucharist in the Eastern Church, Haarlem 1937 (= Išo’yahb, Eucharist), Q. 76, p.175.

blessing of the people.<sup>57</sup> The second signing is after the anamnesis.<sup>58</sup> The third signing is after epiclesis.<sup>59</sup> AM in its present Syro-Malabar version has signing of the mysteries during the Institution Narrative also.<sup>60</sup> Through the blessing, the praise and thanksgiving is sealed by the sign of the cross. The consecratory role of the sign of the cross is based on its importance in emphasising the act of glorifying and thanking God for the mysteries of the economy in which the cross is of great importance.<sup>61</sup>

The fact that there is an inseparable relation between the anabatic and katabatic dimensions of *Qudaša* is evident in the *qanonas* of the *g'hanta* prayers. During the *qanona* of the first *g'hanta* of AM, the priest blesses himself while reciting the doxology.<sup>62</sup> Priest has to bless himself (make a sign of cross over himself) such a way that it becomes a blessing for the people too.<sup>63</sup> A similar blessing is made while reciting a doxology in the embolism of Lord's Prayer before Communion.<sup>64</sup> In the *qanona* of the third *g'hanta* and the *qanona* of the epiclesis the mysteries are blessed during the doxology.<sup>65</sup> The blessing of the mysteries is in view of the sanctification of the people. Thus, indirectly this gesture of blessing becomes a sign of the blessing of the people. The blessing of the persons and the mysteries

---

57

58 AM. Raza, 42; AT. Vadakkel, *Anaphora of Mar Theodore*, 87; AN (after the fourth *g'hanta*). Naduthadam, *Anaphore de Nestorius*, 252. Cf. "Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries", 18; Išo'yahb, Eucharist, Q. 88, p.177.

59 AM. Raza, 45; LEW, 288; AT. Vadakkel, *Anaphora of Mar Theodore*, 91; AN. Naduthadam, *Anaphore de Nestorius*, 270. Cf. "Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries", 22; Išo'yahb, Eucharist, Q. 88, p.177. Qatraya and Bar Zo'bi are of the view that there is no signing after epiclesis because the mystery is already perfected. Cf. Gabriel Qatraya, "Interpretation", 99; Yohannan Bar Zo'bi, Explanation, 49-50. However, Narsai gives just another explanation for the signing. He says: "He signs now, not because the mysteries have need of the signing, but to teach by the last sign that they are accomplished." "Homily (XVII): An Exposition of the Mysteries", 22.

60 Raza, 40.

61 Cf. C. Payngot, *The Cross: Its Place in the Hudra and its Sign in Baptism and Eucharist*, UDD, PIO, Rome 1971, 114-124.

62 Raza, 35.

63 While making the sign of the cross on himself, the priest raises his right hand just above the head. General Instructions. 14. *Raza*, x.

64 Raza, 53.

65 Raza, 42, 45.

during the sanctification of God thus makes it clear that the anabatic *Qudaša* cannot be thought of as distinct from the katabatic *Qudaša*.

The emphasis on the sanctification of the assembly is remarkable in the East Syriac liturgy. The eucharistic celebration, according to the East Syriac tradition, ought to be a *Qudaša* for the Christian assembly. *Qudaša* as eucharistia finds its true meaning in the *Qudaša* of the assembly. The sanctification of the assembly as the goal of the celebration is all the more strong in the epiclesis of AM. This epiclesis is recognized as a communion epiclesis.<sup>66</sup> The stress is on the change of the assembly. The sanctification of the mysteries is presented as a means for the sanctification of the assembly. Perhaps, due to the influence of the Latin theology, the Malayalam translation for the Syro-Malabar Church has reduced the primary importance given to the sanctification of the assembly. According to the Malayalam text, the invocation of the Spirit is made for two things. First for the sanctification of the mysteries, and then for the sanctification of the assembly, both having equal importance. The original text means that the sanctification of the mysteries should become the means for the sanctification of the assembly. Such an intrinsic relation between these two types of sanctification is ignored in the Malayalam translation.

In the Western traditions the eucharistia or the *Qudaša* is often isolated from the sanctification of the assembly. There is a tendency to reduce the liturgical community to a cultic community, praising and thanking the Lord, however, not much concerned about the personal sanctification. Believers are happy about the eucharistia, which they are ready to continue even outside the eucharistic celebration itself.

From the Middle Ages onwards there has been an exaggerated emphasis on the change of the mysteries. With the encouragement of the scholastic theologians, the change of the mysteries became the central point of attraction. Great theologians of the Middle Ages tried to explain the mystery of the eucharist in terms of the Aristotelian philosophy. The question of the real presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament became so vital that for many believers this real presence was the goal of the entire eucharistic celebration. According to them, the priest through his words of divine guarantee works out the miracle of bringing down the Lord of the universe to the simple and humble table of the church!

---

66 Cf. J. Lambert, "May Your Holy Spirit, Lord, Come...: Some Reflections on the Epiclesis", *Ephrem's Theological Journal*, 2 (1998) 99-115.

Thus, the eucharistic celebration becomes an invitation to the assembly to witness the greatest miracle possible on earth.

One should not ignore the tremendous amount of work done by the scholastic theologians to convince ‘scientifically’ the Christian believers in the Middle Ages of the real change occurring in the bread and wine. However, amidst the over enthusiasm to emphasise the change of bread and wine into Body and Blood, the question of the change of the human persons was rather ignored.

## Conclusion

The Syriac term *Qudaša* in the East Syriac liturgical tradition is of great advantage in understanding the true meaning of the liturgical action. The most important thrust of the liturgical celebration is “the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God”.<sup>67</sup> The term *Qudaša* has the connotation of both ‘the sanctification of man’ and ‘the glorification of God.’ Therefore, *Qudaša* has to be the true measuring rod of the quality of Church’s liturgy. Whether it contains direct words and gestures of anabatic *Qudaša* or katabatic *Qudaša*, liturgical worship should have the ultimate goal of anabatic *Qudaša*, that is glorification of God. However, the anabatic *Qudaša* can be authentic only when there is the accompaniment of katabatic *Qudaša*, that is the consecration of man. God the Father is best glorified through his children who are sanctified. The eucharistia rendered by the sanctified children of God is the most authentic anabatic *Qudaša*. There is no katabatic *Qudaša* which does not ultimately aim at anabatic *Qudaša* and no anabatic *Qudaša* becomes authentic without the katabatic *Qudaša*. The East Syriac Qurbana maintains a perfect balance between the anabatic and katabatic *Qudaša* and therefore, the Eucharistic Prayer in this tradition is given the title ‘*Qudaša*’.

---

67 Vatican Council II, *Scorosanctum Concilium*,10. Cf. *Scorosanctum Concilium*,33.