

## THE THIRD ELEMENT OF THE DIALOGUE OF THE ANAPHORA

The Eucharistic Anaphora has been subjected to endless study and analysis, but the third part of the opening dialogue has been comparatively neglected<sup>1</sup>. This is, I suspect, in part because, minor verbal differences apart, it occurs in virtually every Liturgy that we possess from the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytos, that is from the third century, onwards and so presents few “problems” for scholars. From the point of view of sources and meaning the opening greeting in the West, the “Dominus vobiscum”, is unremarkable and the Syrian East’s use of the “grace” from 2 Corinthians equally so. The fourth element may well go back ultimately to Jewish models, as Gregory Dix, among others, argued in *The Shape of the Liturgy*<sup>2</sup>. The third element, however, appears to be exclusively Christian. There is no obvious Scriptural source, and Brightman, who searched diligently for all the biblical allusions in the Liturgies, can only suggest Lamentations 3:41<sup>3</sup> In the LXX this runs, ἵνα ἀναβώμεν καρδίᾱ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἐν οὐρανῶν, “Let us lift up our hearts on our hands to [the] Sublime One in heaven”. Here Brightman has been influenced, I suspect, more by the standard English translation of the liturgical text than by any very clear parallel between the two sentences in Greek. The only word common to both is “hearts”. On the other hand “Let us lift up our hearts” is a precise translation of the Greek of Lamentations. Is this where Cranmer got the idea of translating “Sursum corda” by “Lift up your hearts”?<sup>4</sup> That this text may be suggested by the liturgical phrase is possible, as we shall see. Moreover, had the biblical text been the source, it is difficult to understand why the verb was omitted and the somewhat gnomic “On high the hearts” substituted, particularly when one observes that the later Greek texts added a verb to the original, though the Latin never did. The LXX of Lamentations seems to intend the masculine, since the Hebrew has the word “God”. If it intends a neuter adverbial phrase, “aloft”, this is presumably a pious substitution for the word “God”.

It is important to notice that this particular exchange seems originally to have been confined to the Eucharistic Liturgy. This is true of Hippolytos’s texts of the third century and is still true of the Eastern liturgies<sup>5</sup>

The familiar English wording is found at least as early as 1549:

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<sup>1</sup> There is a full length study by C.A. Bouman in *Vigiliae Christianae* [Vol. 4 (1950), pp.94-115], “Variants in the Introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer”, but it is more concerned with the text itself rather than its interpretation.. The same is true of the important series of articles by Fr Robert Taft in *OCP*. In this version of my paper I have translated, or occasionally transliterated, all the Greek and most of the Latin citations, for the convenience of readers whose classical learning may have become rusty over the years. The translations are, for the most part, “literal”, rather than “literary”.

<sup>2</sup> Though why, in that case, the Latin should employ the formula used in Judaism when there more than ten persons present and the Greek the one where there are less than ten, is a mystery.

<sup>3</sup> I do not know if this suggestion originated with him. It has certainly been frequently repeated since.

<sup>4</sup> Cranmer’s use of the second person rather than the first goes against almost the whole tradition, which, as the fourth part of the dialogue makes clear, stresses the unity of priest and people in the action.

<sup>5</sup> In his account of the blessing of the evening lamp Hippolytos says that the “Sursum corda” is not to be used “because this occurs in the oblation” [AT 25]. This distinction between the Eucharist and other “thanksgivings” was not maintained in the later Roman tradition, where the full dialogue was also used on other occasions, such as the blessing of palms on Palm Sunday, of the paschal candle and the baptismal water on Holy Saturday.

*Priest:* Lift up your heartes

*Aunswere:* We lift them up unto the Lorde.

This has been followed by all English eucharistic rites ever since, including the ASB and the English of the Missal of Paul VI<sup>6</sup>, though an exception must be made for the Indian, or Bombay, Liturgy, which is avowedly based on Syrian models. Here the exchange is as follows:

*Priest:* Your hearts be with Christ on high.

*People:* Our hearts are with the Lord.

This is far closer to the meaning of the Greek, Latin and Syriac than the usual English, despite the use of the second person, for which the authors could claim East Syrian authority. It clearly recognises that the key word in the priest's invitation is *anô* — "on high"

## 1. The Early Fathers

The earliest evidence we have for the whole dialogue is in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytos, of which the Greek can be confidently reconstructed as *Ἀνω ταῦ καρδιᾶν*. *Ἐκομεν προῖ τον Κυριον*, "On high the hearts. We have [them] with the Lord"<sup>7</sup>. In Latin this becomes "Sursum corda. Habemus ad Dominum", which has survived to this day unchanged in the Roman rite. In the East the liturgy of the 8th book of the *Apostolic Constitutions* has "On high the mind". Neither Hippolytos nor the *Apostolic Constitutions* have a verb in the first part, but in the earliest MS of the Byzantine liturgy, the Barberini codex of the late 8th century, we find the familiar *Ἀνω σὺν μεν ταῖς καρδιᾶν*, "On high let us have the hearts"<sup>8</sup>. Leitzmann suggests that this form of the phrase is "wohl unter dem Einfluss von Lament. Jer. 3:41". As I have said, this seems unlikely. The Liturgy of St James in both Greek and Syriac has both "mind" and "hearts". The Greek has the verb, but the Syriac instead has "of us all". Brightman translates "The minds and hearts of all of us be on high. They are with the Lord our God". He is here using a 12th century MS in the BM<sup>9</sup>. St Cyril of Jerusalem has exactly the same wording as Hippolytos. Where Gregory Dix got the idea that St Cyril has "Lift up your minds", I do not know. St Efthymios has the usual "Byzantine" form, again *pace* Gregory Dix, whereas St Anastasios Sinaita has the form found in St James. The Egyptian liturgies have the Hippolytan form, with

<sup>6</sup> Including the second person rather than the first.

<sup>7</sup> For the reasons discussed below I translate the Greek *προῖ* here by "with" rather than "to" or "towards".

<sup>8</sup> If the texts of Cyril of Scythopolis (c.555) and Anastasios of Sinai (c.700) are reliable they show that the addition of the verb goes back at least to the 6th century. If Homily 9 *On Repentance*, attributed to St John Chrysostom, were authentic and the text reliable, the addition would go back to the 4th century. The evidence of St Germanos's commentary, which is confirmed by the Latin version by Anastasios the Librarian, allows us to say with certainty that at the latest the verb had been introduced by around 700.

<sup>9</sup> This MS appears to conform to the remarks of Moses bar Kepha, who says the correct reply is: "They are with the Lord our God". The earlier (9th-10th century) MS edited by Connolly and Codrington has "We have them with the Lord". The addition of the verb in the Greek version of St James is probably due to assimilation to the Byzantine norm.

the addition of ἡμῶν, “our” [Greek] or ὑμῶν, “your” [Sahidic]<sup>10</sup>. The East Syrian and Armenian forms are somewhat expanded and need not concern us<sup>11</sup>.

There are not many patristic comments on this particular exchange, but those few are naturally of great interest. St Cyril of Jerusalem already suggests the verb that the Byzantine text will add. His emphasis is on the place where the heart should be, less on the idea of “lifting”, and his words are also strongly reminiscent of the later Cherubic hymn.

After this the priest cries, “On high the hearts”. Truly at that most dread moment one must have the heart with the Lord, and not below close to earth and earthly affairs. Powerfully<sup>12</sup> then the priest at that moment bids all to lay aside concerns of life and cares at home, and have the heart in heaven with God who loves mankind.

In his comment on the response St Cyril, like other commentators, stresses that we assert a fact, and that we must not be found to be liars. We assert that our heart is **already** “above”. Again the stress is on the state rather than the lifting.

Then we answer, “We have [it] with the Lord”, consenting to this by what you confess. Let there be no one then present whose mouth says, “We have [it] with the Lord, but whose thought keeps the mind occupied with the concerns of life<sup>13</sup>.”

Does this last phrase suggest that St Cyril knew of the other form of the priest’s words with “mind” rather than “hearts”?

St John Chrysostom refers to the exchange in his commentary on Hebrews. He says,

With the *hands let us lift up* the mind also. You who have been initiated know what I mean. You at once recognise the phrase and realise what I was alluding to. Let us raise [our] thought to the heights<sup>14</sup>.

It is possible that St John may see an allusion to Lam. 3:41, as I have indicated by the words emphasised, but he is in fact commenting at this point on Psalm 140, “The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice”. If, as seems generally agreed, these homilies were given in Constantinople, the form of the exchange in the liturgy of the Great Church at this period was probably the same as that which we find in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, with “mind” rather than “hearts”. It is important to notice that St John is using the Liturgy to comment on the Psalm, not the other way round, and that the Psalm does stress the idea of “lifting up”.

The other passage in the writings attributed to St John Chrysostom which refers to the exchange is in the ninth Homily *On Repentance*,

<sup>10</sup> These two words, which only differ by one letter, would of course have been pronounced the same, as in modern Greek, *imôn*.

<sup>11</sup> Translations into English from any of these sources, including Greek and Latin, are frequently unreliable, since translators tend to use the form familiar from the Book of Common Prayer rather than represent the originals accurately, though Brightman’s version of the Syriac St James would appear to be correct. Both the East Syrian and Armenian forms use the second person in the priest’s exhortation. This may occur first in Theodore of Mopsuestia and is discussed below.

<sup>12</sup> The Greek here is *dunamei*, “with power”, “with force”. Is this then meaning of the strange cry of the deacon before the Trisagion, *Dunami*~?

<sup>13</sup> *Mystagogic Catecheses* V:4 [SC 126 pp.150-152; PG 33:1112-3].

<sup>14</sup> PG 63:158.

What are you doing then, friend? Did you not make a promise to the priest when he said, “Let us have our mind and hearts on high”, and you said, “We have [them] with the Lord”? Are you not afraid, do you not blush to be revealed as a liar at that dread moment?<sup>15</sup>

There is considerable doubt as to the authenticity of this homily and the fact that the preacher does not hesitate to reveal the actual words of the Liturgy, unlike the preacher of the commentary on Hebrews, and the Syrian form of the first part, with the double “mind and hearts”, supports the view that the author of the homily is not Chrysostom. Both the writer of this homily and St Cyril of Jerusalem make the point that if the “mind” or “heart” is not “on high” it is a lie to say that it is. This implies that they understand “we have” as describing a present state of affairs, not one that one hopes will be realised.

## 2. The Syrian Fathers

Theodore of Mopsuestia seems to have had a somewhat different exchange at this point. The bishop says: “On high your minds” and the people answer “Towards you, O Lord”<sup>16</sup> The Syrian preacher Narsai, whose master was Theodore, stresses the place rather than the movement. He says,

Let your minds be above in this hour where Christ the King is sitting at the right hand. Do not be occupied with vain thoughts of earthly things; look on him who is now mystically on the altar, who sits in the height and asks mercy for sinners. The people answer: To you, Lord, our minds are uplifted, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the glorious King”<sup>17</sup>

This reply is still found in the East Syrian rite. The echoes of the prayer before the fraction in the Byzantine Liturgy are striking

Give heed, Lord Jesus Christ our God, from your holy dwelling-place and from the glorious throne of your kingdom; and come to sanctify us, you who are enthroned on high with the Father and invisibly present here with us. And with your mighty hand grant communion in your most pure Body and precious Blood to us, and through us to all the people.

The twelfth century West Syrian, Denys bar Salibi, who incidentally anticipates the twentieth century when he says that “And with your spirit” means “And also with you”, comments on the exchange as follows:

At once the priest commands the people, saying, “Let the minds, intellects and hearts of us all be above”, that is: because holy mysteries have been revealed to them and the gates of heaven have been opened, and spiritual hosts and spirits of saints have come

<sup>15</sup> PG 49:343.

<sup>16</sup> Homily 16:3-4 [ST 145 pp. 538-541]. The evidence from Theodore must be used with great caution. The summaries at the beginning of the homilies, as I have shown elsewhere, are the work of a Syrian editor and **not**, as Tonneau misleadingly entitled them “Texte du Livre à Commenter”, and it is not impossible that the text itself may have been adapted to East Syrian forms. Theodore’s comment on the answer “To you, O Lord” is “They confess by their words that they are eager to fulfil this”. The Syriac word I have translated “eager” may represent the Greek *spoudaios* (or the cognate verb), which it translates in a number of places in the Syriac NT like 2 Cor. 8:22.

<sup>17</sup> *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, ed. Connolly [Texts and Studies, vol.8, 1909] pp.11-12.

down for the honour of the mysteries, the minds and intellects of us all should be above, and not below on things of earth<sup>18</sup>.

He also comments at length on the reply, making use of both Jacob of Edessa and Moses bar Kepha, among others, but much of what he says only applies to Syriac and would not really make sense in Greek.

### 3. The Later Greek Fathers

Some of the later commentators in Greek do lay more stress on the idea of “raising”. At the turn of the seventh century<sup>19</sup>, St Anastasios of Sinai comments at length on the exchange. It is not clear whether his actual text read “Let us have our hearts on high” or the form with the addition of the word “mind”, which we encountered in the homily *On Repentance*. It seems likely that St Anastasios knew and used the latter work; he even uses more than once the rhetorical question, “What are you doing, friend?” On the priest’s invitation he comments,

Let us have our mind and hearts on high. Let us raise the eye of the soul on high towards [Greek *pro*] God. Let us pass beyond heaven, let us pass beyond the Angels, let us pass beyond the Cherubim, and let us hasten to the very throne of the Master. Let us take hold of the immaculate feet of Christ, let us weep, let us compel his compassion, let us give thanks *at his holy, immaterial and spiritual altar*. This is what the priest bears witness to when he says, “Let us have our hearts on high”<sup>20</sup>.

In an extended comment on the people’s reply he links this with the petition in the Lord’s Prayer “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” and the kiss of peace, without which we cannot truly say we have our hearts with the Lord.

St Germanos’s comment is shorter but he also emphasises the idea of raising.

Then the priest, leading us all to the Jerusalem on high, to his Holy Mountain, cries out, “See, let us have our hearts on high.” All affirm this, saying, “We have them with the Lord.” The priest, “Let us give thanks to the Lord.”<sup>21</sup>

The comment of Theodore of Andida is of particular interest to us, since he links this exchange with the people’s reply to the deacon’s opening exhortation:

The high priest in addition gives the order to have [our] hearts on high and our whole mind. While the faithful, as these things are said, are commanded *to offer first mercy, then peace as a sacrifice of praise*, and they confess that they also have their hearts thus with the Lord as they are commanded<sup>22</sup>.

Incidentally this confirms the correct text of the reply to the deacon’s invitation, indicted by italics in the citation.

<sup>18</sup> CSCO vol. 93 (Syr. 13) pp.50-51. Latin version in Syr. 14 pp.67-68. Like much else in his commentary this is a straight crib from Moses bar Kepha (c.813-903).

<sup>19</sup> ODCC gives his floruit as c.700. Brightman for some reason dates him to the late 6th century.

<sup>20</sup> PG 89:837. Notice the quotation from the Litany before the Lord’s Prayer, which I have emphasised.

<sup>21</sup> I use the Greek text in the edition by Paul Meyendorff [Crestwood, 1984]. The text in PG 428 is a late and corrupt one. Meyendorff’s translation however is misleading. He renders the Greek *αἰνῶ* by “heavenly” rather than “on high”, thus obscuring the allusion to the liturgical formula.

<sup>22</sup> PG 140:445.

Since Michael Psellos's verse commentary is not easily available I give it for completeness, though it adds little to what we have met already:

From things of earth our senses let us raise;  
So to this end this answer he receives,  
As all cry out, "We have them with the Lord."<sup>23</sup>

Finally among the Greek commentators we come to St Nicolas Cavasilas, who writes

Having vouchsafed them this blessing and thus raised their souls from the earth, he lifts up their thoughts and says, "Let our hearts be on high", "Let us think on the things on high, not those on earth". And they give their assent and say that they have their hearts "there where our treasure is", where Christ is enthroned at the right hand of the Father, "We have them with the Lord"<sup>24</sup>.

The stress here is clearly on the place where our hearts are already — or should be, unless we are liars, as the earlier commentators point out.

#### 4. The Latin Fathers

This note concentrates on the Eastern, particularly the Greek, evidence for obvious reasons, but there is also much interesting material from the Latin West from St Cyprian onwards, notably from St Augustine. One passage is strikingly reminiscent of some of the Greek comments:

After the greeting that you know, that is, "The Lord be with you", you hear, "Heart on high". The whole life of true Christians is "heart on high", not that of Christians in name only, but of Christians in reality and truth. Their whole life is "heart on high". What then is "heart on high"? It is hope in God, not in yourself, for you are below, God is on high. If your hope is in yourself, your heart is below, it is not on high. And so, when you have heard from the priest, "Heart on high", you answer, "We have [it] with the Lord". Make sure that you make a true answer<sup>25</sup>

The second passage, again like a number of the Eastern ones, stresses the "place where", rather than the "motion whither":

Firstly after the prayer we are admonished to have the heart on high. This befits the limbs of Christ. For if you have been made limbs of Christ, where is your head? Limbs have a head. If the head had not gone on before, the limbs would not follow. Where has your head gone? What do you say when you repeated the Creed? "On the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father." Therefore our head is in heaven. So when "Heart on high" is said, you answer, "We have [it] with the Lord." And so that you may not attribute the fact that you have your heart on high with the Lord to your own strength, your own merits, your own efforts — because to have one's heart on high is a gift of

<sup>23</sup> BZ (1958) p.7, l.156-158.

<sup>24</sup> *On the Divine Liturgy*, 26:6 [SC 4bis, PG 150:424D.

<sup>25</sup> Sermo 227 [PL 38:1099ss.]. St Augustine uses the singular since he is directing his remarks to each individual in the congregation. It does mean that his liturgical text had "Sursum cor".

God — the bishop or the priest who offers continues and says, when the people have answered “We have [them] with the Lord”, “Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God” because we have our heart on high. Let us give thanks, because had we not been granted it, we would have our heart on earth<sup>26</sup>.

## 5. Conclusion

The key word in this invitation by the priest is *aḥw*, “on high” or “above”, which can mean both “up” and “upwards”, the latter normally with verbs of motion. It is not common in the Greek Bible. In the OT it occurs a number of times in the phrase “in heaven above” and “God in heaven above”. In these examples it is usually contrasted with the “earth below — *katw*”<sup>27</sup>. In the NT it occurs in some important passages especially in the phrase *ta; aḥw* “the things above”. In St John’s Gospel Jesus says “I am from the [things/places] above — *ek twn aḥw*” [8:23] and St Paul uses the expression twice in Colossians, “Seek *ta; aḥw*” and “Think *ta; aḥw*” [Col. 3:1-2]. In Galatians he also contrasts the “Jerusalem *aḥw*” with the earthly one [4:26]<sup>28</sup>. In two relevant passages it means “upwards”. In John 11:41 Jesus raises his eyes *aḥw*, and in Philippians St Paul speaks of “the upward — *aḥw* — call of God” [3:14]. In these passages the word effectively means “heaven”, indeed NJB, NRSV and REB actually translate it “heavenly” in Philippians. For that reason I do not agree with Arndt-Gingrich that the word is “superfluous” at John 11:41, which really means “He raised his eyes to heaven”. The meaning of *aḥwqen* is also important since it often means “from God”, “from heaven”, both in the New Testament and in the Liturgy, notably at the opening of the Litany of Peace.

It might be objected that the prepositions *pro;* and *ad* in Greek and Latin respectively mean “to” and not “with”. In fact both are used of the place to which one has come, and so both are used where in English we would use “at”. In Latin *apud* is the usual word for this, and it is interesting to notice that the Vulgate translates the Greek of John 1:1 — *pro; ton Qeon*, which English translators normally render “and the Word was **with** God”, by *apud Deum*.

For all these reasons I am not happy with a translation of the Liturgy that does not translate the word *aḥw* in the opening dialogue of the Anaphora. What the first sentence means is something like “Let us have our hearts in heaven”. A strictly literal rendering would be, “Let us have our hearts on high here and now. The verb is Aorist Subjunctive, indicating a particular and immediate action. For reasons of euphony something like:

<sup>26</sup> Sermon on the Holy Pascha 7 [Morin, 462ss.]. St Augustine is addressing the newly baptized, hence his reference to the “Redditio Symboli”, the “Handing Back of the Creed”, part of the ceremonies of Baptism.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. for example, Ex.20:4, Dt.4:39, 5:8, Jos.2:11, 3 Kingd.8:23, 2 Chron.20:6, Pss.49:4, 113:11, Qoh.5:1, Joel 2:30, Isai.5:30, 8:21. 1 Esdr.9:47 is interesting, “And the whole multitude cried, ‘Amen’, and raising their hands on high [*anō*] and falling to the earth, they worshipped the Lord”, as is Qoh.3:21, “And who has seen the spirit of mortals, whether it goes up on high? And the spirit of a beast of burden, whether it goes down below to the earth?” Here *anō* virtually means “heaven”, as it does in various NT passages.

<sup>28</sup> All these passages are cited or alluded to by the commentators on the Liturgy, in particular Germanos and Nicolas Cavasilas.

Let our hearts be on high.

We have them with the Lord

seems to me to convey the meaning of the original more accurately than the familiar “Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.” It also takes into account the living theological tradition of the Church, as expressed in the commentaries of the Fathers.<sup>29</sup>

The united testimony of both East and West then would suggest a translation such as the one proposed above for the third part of the Dialogue which opens the Anaphora, and this has been adopted for the new translation of the Divine Liturgy issued with the blessing of the His All-holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and His Eminence Archbishop Gregory of Thyateira and Great Britain.

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<sup>29</sup> Since writing this paper I have discovered that both the Italian and Spanish versions of the Missal of Paul VI translate this part of the dialogue of the Anaphora in a similar way, though the French is closer to the traditional English one, except that the priest’s invitation is in the first, not the second, person.