

Ecumenical Scholarship and the Catholic-Orthodox Epiclesis Dispute^(*)

By Robert F. Taft, SJ, Rome

I. Premise

Though most of my work has been dedicated to elucidating the history of the eastern liturgical traditions, the title of the chair I am assuming – “Eastern Catholic Theology” – has led me to chose a theological theme for this “Antrittsvorlesung”. I propose to reflect on the *lex orandi* of the traditional Byzantine and Roman anaphoras in the light of presumed or perceived differences in the Orthodox and Catholic *leges credendi* on the issue of the eucharistic consecration. But if the topic is theological, let me make it clear from the start that I speak as an historian of the liturgy, not as a dogmatician. I do so, however, without apology. Although dogmatics is a distinct discipline not to be subsumed into church history or the history of liturgy or theology, any notion that the science of theology can be exercised outside its ongoing historical context would be to pretend that theologians and theology are not influenced by the society and culture of their times. For the historian of ideas, such a view is little better than amusing.

^(*)Public lecture at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, 28 March 1996, as “Opening Lecture” of “The Sir Daniel and Countess Bernardine Murphy Donohue Chair in Eastern Catholic Theology at the Pontifical Oriental Institute”. Some of the material is resumed from a fuller discussion in R.F. Taft, “The Epiclesis Question in the Light of the Orthodox and Catholic *Lex orandi* Traditions”, in: Bradley Nassif (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Theology. Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1996) 210–237.

Abbreviations:

APSyr = The Syriac Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles (I).

BAS = The Liturgy of St. Basil (Byzantine redaction unless otherwise specified).

CHR = The Byzantine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

CPG = *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* I–V, ed. M. Geerard, F. Glorie (Corpus Christianorum, Turnhout 1983–1987).

CSEL = Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna, 1866–).

DOL = International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy 1963–1979. Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville 1982) – references are to text numbers.

Dz = H. Denzinger, A. Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (ed. 33ff, Freiburg/B. 1965–).

EDIL = R. Kaczynski (ed.), *Enchiridion documentorum instaurationis liturgicae*, Bd. I: 1963–1973 (Turin 1976) – references are to text numbers.

LEW = F.E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (Oxford 1896).

PE = A. Hänggi, I. Pahl, *Prex Eucharistica* (Spicilegium Friburgense 12, Fribourg 1968).

SC = Sources chrétiennes.

The title of the lecture expresses what my point of departure and method will be. I call it "ecumenical scholarship". Let me define my terms.

1. *Scholarship:*

Scholarship is pseudo-scholarship unless it is historico-critical, objective, fair, and representatively comprehensive. *Historico-critical* means that one deals with texts and facts in context, and that theories cede to historical data, not vice-versa. *Objective* means evidence must be presented not tentatively slanted to support a position, but without bias, to find an answer to the question whatever that answer might turn out to be. Though no study can ever pretend to cover all the evidence, the selection and presentation of the evidence must be *comprehensive*, i.e., sufficiently representative to avoid glossing over or explaining away whatever does not fit comfortably into some preconceived theory. Finally, one must be scrupulously *fair* in presenting and evaluating the evidence, sedulously avoiding caricature, and without substituting rhetoric for the facts. In a word, the true scholar seeks to find and present the truth wherever it is found, regardless of whom it pleases or displeases, or whose pet theories it confirms or contradicts. Scholarship, therefore, is the opposite of confessional propaganda, which marshalls evidence to support a predetermined doctrine. In our case, the question will be, not what arguments can we find to support the common Catholic teaching that the Words of Institution alone comprise the form(ula) of the eucharistic consecration – to do that is to begin with the answer – but rather, what does the tradition of the undivided Church have to say about the eucharistic consecration?

2. *Ecumenical Scholarship:*

So much for plain scholarship. But *ecumenical* scholarship is not content with these purely natural virtues of honesty and fairness, virtues one should be able to expect from any true scholar. Ecumenical scholarship takes things a long step further. I consider ecumenical scholarship a new and specifically Christian way of studying Christian tradition in order to reconcile and unite, rather than to confute and dominate. Its deliberate intention is to emphasize the common tradition underlying differences which, though real, can be the accidental product of history, culture, language, rather than essential differences in the doctrine of the faith. Of course to remain scholarly, this effort must be carried out realistically, without in any way glossing over real differences. But even in recognizing differences, this ecumenical effort must remain a two-way street where each side in the dialogue judges itself and its tradition by the exact same criteria and standards

with which it judges the other. Eschewing all scapegoating and the double-standard, ecumenical scholarship seeks to describe the beliefs, traditions, and usages of other confessions in ways their own objective spokespersons would recognise as reliable and fair. Such a method renounces all caricature or "oblique criticism", in which the not-always-realized ideal of one Church is compared to the not-always-glorious realities of another.

So ecumenical scholarship rejects the very notion of contest or debate, seeking not confrontation but agreement and understanding. It seeks to enter into the other's point of view, to understand it insofar as possible with sympathy and agreement. It takes seriously the other's critique of one's own tradition, seeking to incorporate its positive contributions into one's own thinking. It is a contest in reverse, a contest of love, one in which the parties seek to understand and justify not their own point of view, but that of their interlocutor.

Such an effort and method, far from being baseless romanticism, is rooted in generally accepted evangelical and Catholic theological principles. Let me sum up the principal ones, beginning with the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity:

1. The theological foundation for this method is our faith that God's Holy Spirit is with his Church, protecting the integrity of its witness above all in the millennium of its undivided unity. Since some of the issues that divide us go right back to that first millennium, one must ineluctably conclude that these differences do not affect the substance of the apostolic faith. For if they did, then contrary to Jesus' promise (Mt 16:18), the "gates of hell" would have indeed prevailed against his Church.
2. The next principle is based on ecclesiology. The Catholic Church recognizes the Orthodox Churches to be the historic apostolic Christianity of the East, and Sister Churches of the Catholic Church. Consequently, no view of Christian tradition can be considered anything but partial that does not take full account of the age-old, traditional teaching of these Orthodox Sister Churches. Any theology must be measured not only against the common tradition of the undivided Church of the first millennium, but also against the ongoing witness of Orthodoxy as the Spirit-guided apostolic christendom of the East. That does not mean that East or West has never been wrong. It does mean that neither can ever be ignored.
3. An authentic magisterium cannot contradict itself. Therefore, without denying the legitimate development of doctrine, in the case of apparently conflicting traditions of East and West, preferential consideration must be given to the witness of the undivided Church. This is especially true with respect to later polemics resulting from unilateral departures

- from or narrowing of the common tradition during the second millennium, of divided christendom.
4. Those who have unilaterally modified or narrowed a commonly accepted tradition of the first millennium of the undivided Church bear the principle responsibility for any divisions caused thereby. So it is incumbent first of all on them to seek an acceptable solution to that problem.
 5. Within a single Church, any legitimate view of its particular tradition must encompass the complete spectrum of its witnesses throughout the whole continuum of its history, and not just its presently accepted expression.
 6. Doctrinal formulations produced in the heat of polemics must be construed narrowly, within the strict compass of the errors they were meant to confute. When Trent said the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ after the consecration (Dz 1640, 1654) it was combatting those who denied that transformation, and not making a statement about the "moment" or "formula" of consecration.
- With these principles in mind, let us look at the epiclesis dispute.

II. The Orthodox Tradition

First, the Orthodox tradition. Though I limit my attention here to the Byzantine Orthodox tradition, most of what I say is relevant to the Oriental Orthodox Churches too. Despite the numerous past attempts of western polemicists to explain it away, it is perfectly obvious to anyone who can read that the eastern anaphoras contain an explicitly consecratory petition to the Holy Spirit. This petition is found in the prayer we call the "epiclesis" (Greek substantive ἐπίκλησις), "invocation", from the verb ἐπικαλέω, "to call upon" or "to invoke".

Although textual evidence shows that the earliest anaphoral epicleses contained no explicit petition for the consecration of the elements, one must not overwork the distinction between the more primitive "communion epiclesis", and the more "developed" or "consecratory epiclesis" containing the later interpolated explicit prayer for the hallowing of the gifts and their change into the Body and Blood of Christ. If this distinction has proved useful for the history and interpretation of liturgy, its *theological implications* must not be exaggerated. Any prayer asking the power of God to come upon something in order that it be unto salvation for those who partake of it or participate in it as God intended, necessarily implies that God *do something* by his coming to make that object salvific – in this case, to make bread and wine the Body and Blood of Christ. Hence to call a text a "communion epiclesis", not a "consecration epiclesis", is *only to comment*

on the structure of its text, and not in any way to infer that such a more primitive, less explicit epicletic prayer is not, in fact, implicitly consecratory. As Cyril/John II, earliest witness to an expressly consecratory Holy Spirit epiclesis, says in *Catechesis* 5, 7, "Whatever the Holy Spirit has touched is sanctified and changed"¹, and that remains true whether the prayer asks for that change expressly or only implicitly. Hence a simple petition for the Spirit to come upon the gifts so that they may be for us unto sanctification, implies that this is not an empty petition without effect.

This realization led early on to rendering this intention explicit, and by the fourth century our earliest witnesses to the Spirit epiclesis after *Apostolic Tradition* 4², have a prayer that is expressly consecratory, as we see in Cyril/John II of Jerusalem (*Catechesis* 5, 7, cf. 1, 7; 3, 3)³, Theodore of Mopsuestia, (*Homily* 16, 12)⁴, the *Apostolic Constitutions* (VIII, 12:39)⁵, and the Byzantine anaphoras of Chrysostom and Basil still in use today (texts cited below).

So the Holy Spirit epiclesis, in its most explicitly consecratory sense as a petition to change the gifts, had evolved peacefully in the eucharistic theology and prayers of the Christian East during the classic patristic period long before any East-West dispute over the question. It is equally clear that this development does no more than explicitate the meaning already implied in the more primitive communion epiclesis – and indeed, in the New Testament Words of Institution ("this is my body, this is my blood") themselves, as the saner theologians of East and West have held all along.

1. The Byzantine Epiclesis Texts:

With this brief background in mind, let us examine the epiclesis texts of CHR and BAS. Parallel with the CHR text from the earliest ms, the mid-eighth-century Vatican codex *Barberini Gr. 336* (ff. 31^v-32^r)⁶, I give the

1 Cyrille de Jérusalem, *Catéchèses mystagogiques*. Introduction, texte critique et notes de A. Piédagnel, traduction de P. Paris (SC 126bis, Paris 1988) 154.

2 B. Botte, *La Tradition apostolique de S. Hippolyte. Essai de reconstitution* (Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 39, Münster 1963) 16 = PE 781.

3 SC 126bis:94, 124, 154.

4 R. Tonneau, R. Devreesse, *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste* (Studi e testi 145, Vatican 1949) 553.

5 *Les Constitutions apostoliques*, ed. M. Metzger, tome 3: livres V–VIII (SC 336, Paris 1987) 198-200 = PE 92.

6 S. Parenti, E. Velkovska (eds.), *L'Euclologio Barberini gr. 336* (ff. 1–263) (Bibliotheca Ephemerides liturgicae, Subsidia 80, Rome 1995) no. 35. In this ms the corresponding BAS text is missing: *ibid.* p. 17 note 10. LEW 329–30 fills in the lacuna in the BAS text from codex *Grottaferrata Gb VII*; cf. LEW 308 note 1.

related Syriac Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles I (APSy⁷), since I shall need to exploit some parallel passages of these two anaphoras presently. Both the CHR and APSy anaphoras are derived from a no-longer extant common Greek Urtext known as the Greek Anaphora of the Apostles.

The Chrysostom and related 12 Apostles Anaphoras

The non-italicized texts are common to both redactions. They can be presumed to constitute that lost Urtext, from which both CHR and APSy derive⁸.

CHR

1. *Again we offer you this reasonable and unbloody worship,*
 2. *and we invoke and pray and beseech [you],*
 3. send down your Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these offered gifts,
 4. and *make* this bread the precious body of *your* Christ,
 5. *changing [it] by your Holy Spirit,*
 6. *and that [which is] in this chalice the precious blood of your Christ,*
 7. *changing [it] by your Holy Spirit,*
 8. so that for those who receive [them] they might be for *sobriety of soul,*
- for forgiveness of sins,
for communion in your Holy Spirit, for fullness of the kingdom, for filial confi-

APSy⁹

1. *So then,*
 2. we ask of you, *Lord almighty and God of the holy virtues, prostrate on our faces before you,*
 3. that you send your Holy Spirit upon these offered gifts
 4. and *show* this bread [to be] the precious body of *our Lord Jesus Christ,*
 6. and this chalice [to be] the blood of *our Lord Jesus Christ,*
 8. so that for *all* those who receive them they might be for *life and resurrection,*
- and the forgiveness of sins,
and the health of soul and body, and the enlightening of the mind, and for a

⁷ *Anaphora Syriaca duodecim Apostolorum prima*, ed. A. Raes, *Anaphorae Syriacae* I.5 (Rome 1940); H. Engberding, "Die syrische Anaphora der zwölf Apostel und ihre Paralleltexthe einander gegenüberstellt und mit neuen Untersuchungen zur Urgeschichte der Chrysostomosliturgie begleitet," *Oriens Christianus* 34 = ser. 3 vol. 12 (1938) 213-247; PE 265-68.

⁸ On this extremely complex question, those interested may consult R.F. Taft, "The Authenticity of the Chrysostom Anaphora Revisited. Determining the Authorship of Liturgical Texts by Computer," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 56 (1990) 5-51.

dence before you, and not unto judgement or damnation. *good defense before the dread judgement seat of your Christ, and that no one of your people might perish, Lord, but make us all worthy ... etc.*

The Anaphora of St. Basil (BAS)

The italicized segments are found in Byzantine BAS⁹ but not in the Urtext extant in Sahidic BAS¹⁰.

1. Wherefore, all-holy Master, we too, your sinful and unworthy servants, deemed worthy to serve at your holy altar ... because of your mercies and compassions which you have so abundantly showered upon us, dare to approach your holy altar and, offering you the figures (τὰ ἀντίτυπα) of the holy body and blood of your Christ,
2. we pray you and beseech you, O holy of holies, that, by the favor of your goodness,
3. your Holy Spirit may come upon us, and upon these offered gifts,
4. *and bless* and hallow and show (ἀναδειξαι) this bread to be *indeed the precious body of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ,*
6. *and this cup to be indeed the precious blood of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the life of the world,*
8. so that all of us who partake of this one bread and chalice may be united to one another in the communion of the one Holy Spirit, and that the partaking of the holy body and blood of your Christ may be for none of us unto judgement or condemnation, but that we might find mercy and grace together with all the saints ... [there follows the commemoration of the saints and of the dead].

Permit me to make a few animadversions on these texts.

a. The Consecratory Verbs: "show" vs. "make"

Over against the strong CHR verb "make" (4), the petition of APSy (4) for the Spirit to "show" or have the gifts "appear" to be the body and blood of Christ seems a more subtle, sacramentally sensitive term, referring to the "mystery of faith" to be "seen" only with the eyes of faith. I would consider it more primitive than the CHR reading, especially since it is supported by analogous expressions in *Apostolic Constitutions* (VIII, 12:39: "so that [the Holy Spirit] make this bread appear [ἀποφῆνῃ] as the body of your

⁹ LEW 329-30 = PE 236-38.

¹⁰ J. Doresse, E. Lanne, *Un témoin archaïque de la liturgie copte de S. Basile* (Bibliothèque du Muséon 47, Louvain 1960) 21-22.

Christ")¹¹, BAS (nos. 4, 6: "bless and sanctify and show [ἀναδείξαι] this bread [to be] indeed the precious body of our Lord ..."), and Theophilus of Alexandria, *Epistula paschalis* 13 (AD 402), preserved in Jerome's Latin version ("The dominical bread in which the body of the Savior is shown [ostenditur] and the holy chalice ... are sanctified through the invocation and coming of the Holy Spirit"¹²). Jugie has pointed out the parallelism between the "show" reading of the BAS epiclesis and the Words of Institution in the same anaphora¹³, with Jesus, "Taking bread in his holy and immaculate hands, and having presented (ἀναδείξας) it to you, the God and Father ..." ¹⁴ In the institution narrative, together with Jesus we dedicate to the Father the gifts which the Father will then present to us in communion as Jesus' Body and Blood.

But one must reject any attempt to exploit the difference between the strong CHR verb "to make" (4) over against the verb "to show" in APSyr (4) and BAS (4) to weaken consecratory thrust of the formula, as some polemicists have tried to do. If sacramental signs as manifestations of a mystery of faith are to have any meaning at all, then to ask God to *show the gifts to be* the Body and Blood of Christ is to ask him that they be, in fact, what we believe them to be. Besides, the verb ἀναδείκνυμι, literally "show, show forth, manifest as", was used in pagan Greek as a sacral term meaning "to dedicate" or "consecrate" something to a god, and in patristic Greek to mean "bring forth, produce". The Byzantine marriage ritual employs it several times in this sense, for God's having joined Adam and Eve in one body, for his having produced the twelve patriarchs from the union of Jacob and Rachel, and for making the marriage being celebrated an honorable one¹⁵ – all instances in which the verb can only mean "make". So the ἀναδείξαι of BAS is but a synonym for the verb "to make (ποίησον)" of the epicletic blessing in CHR, in the Greek anaphora of St. James¹⁶, and in numerous other anaphoras. The verb "to make" is only *apparently* stronger because of our modern rationalistic disjunction between the symbolic and the real, a disjunction completely foreign to the patristic mentality in both East and West, as Adolf von Harnack pointed out¹⁷.

¹¹ SC 336:200 = PE 92.

¹² PL 20:801.

¹³ M. Jugie, "De epiclesi eucharistica secundum Basilium Magnum", *Acta Academiae Velehradensis* 19 (1948) 204.

¹⁴ LEW 427.27-30 = PE 234.

¹⁵ J. Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον sive Rituale Graecorum ...* (Venice 21730, repr. Graz 1960) 315-16, 318, 320.

¹⁶ PE 250.

¹⁷ "Wir verstehen heute unter Symbol eine Sache, die das nicht ist, was sie bedeutet; damals verstand man unter Symbol eine Sache, die das in irgend welchem Sinne wirklich ist, was sie bedeutet", *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen 41909-1910) I, 476.

b. The Change Petition of CHR

The phrase in CHR "changing [it/them] by your Holy Spirit" (5, 7), with the direct object understood but not expressed, is clearly superfluous to the consecratory sense of the CHR epiclesis, already adequately explicit in the "and make" petition. Furthermore, its absence in APSyr shows it to be a later interpolation not found in the Urtext. Since it does appear in the Anaphora of Nestorius¹⁸, a clone of CHR dating from the first half of the sixth century, it had probably been interpolated into CHR at least by that time. The novel character of the expression is confirmed by the fact that it is not found in other anaphoras, and is not part of the liturgical Formelgut, that common stock of vocabulary, phraseology, and set formulas used repeatedly in the Christian liturgical Greek of Late Antiquity. Its presence in the Armenian anaphora of St. Athanasius¹⁹, in some Greek mss of BAS²⁰, as well as in the *editio princeps* of Doukas (Rome 1526), and other early printed editions of BAS, is an obvious interpolation from CHR. From there it entered the Slavonic recension of BAS, where it is still found.

2. Interpreting the Tradition – "Theologia prima":

What do these texts mean? They mean what they say. It is axiomatic in contemporary liturgical theology to distinguish between *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda*. *Theologia prima*, first-level theology, is the faith in the life of the Church antecedent to speculative questioning of its theoretical implications, prior to its systematization in the dogmatic propositions of *theologia secunda* or systematic reflection on the lived mystery of the Church. Liturgical language, the language of *theologia prima*, is typological, metaphorical, more redolent of Bible and prayer than of school and thesis, more patristic than scholastic, more impressionistic than systematic, more suggestive than probative. In a word, it is symbolic and evocative, not philosophical and ontological. Now although it is perfectly obvious, indeed necessary, that doctrine will acquire theological refinements, especially in the heat of dogmatic controversy, it should be equally obvious that such refinements cannot be read back into texts composed long before the problems arose which led to those precisions. To pounce upon anaphoral texts describing the eucharistic gifts as "bread and wine" before or after some later-determined or supposed "moment of consecration", and then to ex-

¹⁸ PE 395.

¹⁹ PE 323.

²⁰ P.N. Trempelas, *Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις κώδικας* (Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie 15, Athens 1935) 183 (apparatus).

plot these expressions in theological argument, is an anachronistic procedure devoid of any legitimacy.

Since one must reject any attempt to press texts beyond what they can bear, the most one can say is that of themselves, the anaphoral texts surrounding the institution and epiclesis in BAS and CHR or the Roman Canon neither confirm nor exclude any particular theological thesis about when or by what particular part of the anaphoral prayer the consecration is effected.

3. "Theologia secunda":

If we look to Orthodox *theologia secunda* on the eucharistic consecration as reflected in the writings of Orthodoxy's most representative Fathers and theologians, we see what one would expect: a theology, which in unbroken continuity from the fourth century, is perfectly consistent with the obvious meaning of the Byzantine eucharistic prayers, despite the systematic attempts of later Latin polemicists to water down these texts, and the tendency of some later Orthodox theologians, in reaction to these polemics, to depart from their own tradition by exaggerating on the other side. From Chrysostom on, Orthodox saints venerated in East and West have held the doctrine most clearly formulated in the eighth century by St. John Damascene, "last of the Greek Fathers" (ca. 675–753/4), in his *De fide orthodoxa*: "God said 'This is my body' and 'This is my blood', and 'do this in memory of me'. And by his all-powerful command it is done until he comes. For that is what he said, until he should come, and the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit becomes, through the invocation [i.e., epiclesis], the rain to this new tillage"²¹. This is the classic Orthodox teaching: the power of consecration comes from the words of Christ, the divine mandate which guarantees the eucharistic conversion for all time. But the epiclesis of the Holy Spirit is the decisive liturgical moment, for the Damascene continues: "... the bread of the prothesis, the wine, and the water, are converted supernaturally into the body of Christ and the blood, through the invocation and intervention of the Holy Spirit (διὰ ἐπικλήσεως καὶ ἐπιφοιτήσεως τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος)"²².

²¹ 86 (IV, 13) B. Kotter (ed.), *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, 5 vols. (Patristische Texte und Studien 7, 12, 17, 22, 29, Berlin/New York 1969–1988) 2:194.71–76; cf. the excellent study of N. Armitage, "The Eucharistic Theology of the *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith (De Fide Orthodoxa)* of St. John Damascene", OKS 44 (1995) 292–308 (English trans. 293).

²² Kotter 2:195; trans. Armitage 294.

III. The Latin-Tradition

If we turn now to the pristine Latin *theologia prima* as expressed in the ancient Roman *Canon Missae*, we find a different but not totally dissimilar movement. The text reads as follows:

The Roman Canon Missae (4th c.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Hanc igitur oblationem servitutis nostrae, sed et cunctae familiae tuae, quaesumus, Domine, ut placatus accipias ...</p> <p>2. Quam oblationem tu, Deus, in omnibus, quaesumus, benedictam, adscriptam, ratam, acceptabilemque facere digneris, ut nobis Corpus et Sanguis fiat dilectissimi Filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi.</p> <p>3. Qui pridie quam pateretur ... (Institution narrative)</p> <p>4. Unde et memores ... ejusdem Christi Filii tui Domini nostri tam beatae passionis, nec non et ab inferis resurrectionis, sed et in caelos gloriosae ascensionis, offerimus praeclarae majestati tuae, de tuis donis ac datis, hostiam puram, hostiam sanctam, hostiam immaculatam, Panem sanctum vitae aeternae, et Calicem salutis perpetuae.</p> <p>5. Supra quae propitio ac sereno vultu repicere digneris, et accepta habere, sicut accepta habere dignatus es munera pueri tui justi Abel ...</p> <p>6. Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus, iube haec perferri per manus sancti angeli tui in sublime altare tuum, in conspectu divinae majestatis tuae, ut quotquot ex hac altaris participatione sacrosanctum Filii tui corpus et sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictioni caelesti et gratia repleamur.</p> | <p>1. Therefore, Lord, we ask that you be pleased to accept this oblation of our ministry and also of your whole family ...</p> <p>2. Which oblation we ask you, God, deign to make in all things blessed, and acceptable, that it might become for us the Body and Blood of your beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p>3. Who on the day before he suffered ... (Institution narrative)</p> <p>4. Remembering, therefore ... the blessed passion of this same Christ your Son our Lord, as well as his resurrection from the dead and glorious ascension into heaven, we offer to your glorious majesty, from your own given gifts, a pure offering, a holy offering, an immaculate offering, the holy Bread of eternal life and the Chalice of eternal salvation.</p> <p>5. Deign to look on them with a propitious and kindly regard, and accept them as you accepted the gifts of your child the just Abel ...</p> <p>6. Humbly we implore you, almighty God, bid these offerings be carried by the hands of your holy angel to your altar on high, in the presence of your divine majesty, so that those of us who, sharing in the sacrifice at this altar, shall have received the sacred Body and Blood of your Son, may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace.</p> |
|--|--|

Less smooth and unified in its redactional structure than the Antiochene anaphoral type, the Roman Canon does not first recite the institution narrative, then formulate its meaning. Rather, it imbeds the *Verba Domini* in a series of discrete prayers for the sanctification and acceptance of the oblation (which, theologically, are of course the same thing). Now some of these prayers even before the Words of Institution speak of the species in terms that can only refer to the Body and Blood of Christ; and, conversely, after the Words of Institution speak in a way that could seem to imply the gifts are not yet consecrated.

Only the wooden-headed literalist totally innocent of the proleptic and reflexive nature of liturgical discourse could find anything surprising about this. Such seeming contradictions – and similar apparent contradictions can be found in the Fathers of the Church who comment on the eucharistic prayer – result from the fact that before the Middle Ages no one tried to identify a “moment of consecration” apart from the anaphoral prayer over the gifts in its entirety²³.

In his *De officiis ecclesiae* I, 15, Isidore (ca. 560 – † 636), bishop of Seville from 600/601–636, says that the consecration occurs in the canon, which he calls the “sixth prayer” of the “ordo of the mass and prayers by which the sacrifices offered to God are consecrated”²⁴. From the context it is clear that he is referring to the entire section of the anaphora following the preface that extends from the Sanctus to the Our Father inclusive (and therefore including the complete text cited above):

Then [comes] *the sixth prayer* [of the eucharist], from which results the formation of the sacrament as an oblation that is offered to God, sanctified through the Holy Spirit, formed into the body and blood of Christ. The last of these is the prayer by which our Lord instructed his disciples to pray, saying: “*Our Father who art in heaven*”²⁵.

Isidore is usually considered the “last of the Latin Fathers”, so right through to the end of the patristic period the view was current in Latin as well as Greek theology, [1] that the eucharistic consecration was the work of the Holy Spirit, [2] and that the prayer which effected it was the canon or anaphora without further specifying one of its component parts as the “form” of the sacrament or the “moment of consecration”. Fulgentius of

²³ See Jungmann cited at note 32 below.

²⁴ I, 15.1, PL 83:732: “Ordo ... missae et orationum quibus oblata Deo sacrificia consecrantur.”

²⁵ I, 15.2, PL 83:733: “Porro *sexta [oratio]* exhinc succedit conformatio sacramenti, ut oblatio, quae Deo offertur, sanctificata per Spiritum sanctum, Christi corpori et sanguini conformetur. Harum ultima est oratio, qua Dominus noster discipulos suos orare instituit, dicens: *Pater noster, qui es in coelis.*”

Ruspe († 533)²⁶ and numerous other other early Latin authors teach the same doctrine²⁷.

Nor is this view substantially different from that of the medieval Latin commentators. Peter Lombard (ca. 1095 – † 1160), speaking of the *Supplices* (text above, no. 6), says in his *Sentences* IV, 13: “It is called ‘Missa’ that the heavenly messenger might come to consecrate the lifegiving body, according to the expression of the priest: ‘Almighty God, bid that this be borne by the hand of your holy angel to your altar on high ...’”²⁸. Even more explicitly, shortly after 1215, John Teutonicus’ comment on the same prayer says: “‘Bid’, that is: *make*. ‘Be borne’, that is: *be transubstantiated*. Or: ‘be borne’, that is, be assumed, that is: *be changed* ...”²⁹ The inclusion of this text in the *Glossa ordinaria ad Decretum Gratiani*, shows how common and acceptable such a view must have been.

Note, please, that both these authoritative medieval Latin commentators are speaking about a prayer said *after the Words of Institution* in the Roman Canon. In modern times a Catholic classic on the eucharist, Maurice de la Taille’s *Mysterium fidei*, also accepts Cabasilas’ identification of the *Supplices* prayer as “a Roman epiclesis that corresponds both in the place it occupies and in its meaning – though not in its external form – to the eastern epicleses”³⁰. This is precisely what the fourteenth-century classic Orthodox eucharistic commentator Nicholas Cabasilas himself recognized in ch. 30 of his *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, when he cites the *Supplices* prayer following the institution in the Roman Canon as saying basically the same thing as the Byzantine epiclesis³¹.

No less an authority on the Roman eucharist than J.A. Jungmann sums up the original tradition of the undivided Church as follows: “In general Christian antiquity, even until way into the Middle Ages, manifested no particular interest regarding the determination of the precise moment of the consecration. Often reference was made merely to the entire Eucharistic prayer”³².

²⁶ *Ad Monimum* II, 6 & 9–10, PL 65:184–85, 187–88.

²⁷ J.R. Geiselmann, *Die Abendmahlslehre an der Wende der christlichen Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter. Isidor von Sevilla und das Sakrament der Eucharistie* (Munich 1930) 198–224; Y. Congar, *Je crois en l’Esprit Saint*, 3 vols. (Paris 1979–1980) III, 320–330.

²⁸ PL 192:868: “*Missa enim dicitur eo quod caelestis nuntius ad consecrandum vivificum corpus adveniat, juxta dictum sacerdotis: Omnipotens Deus, jube haec perferri per manus sancti Angeli tui in sublime altare tuum ...*”

²⁹ “Jube, id est: *fac*. Perferri, id est: *transsubstantiari*. Vel: perferri, id est sursum efferri, id est *converti* ...” *Decretum de consecratione* 2, 72, in *Glossa ordinaria* (Rome, 1582) II, 1813, cited by Salaville, SC 4bis:322.

³⁰ M. de la Taille, *Mysterium fidei* (Paris 1931) 276; Salaville, SC 4bis:319–20, cites this and similar modern Latin views.

³¹ SC 4bis:190–99.

³² J.A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite. Missarum sollemnia*, 2 vols. (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1951, 1955) 2:203–204 note 9. He goes on to say, “It is Florus

The later western narrowing of the perspective, ultimately doctrinalized in the scholastic hylomorphic materia/forma theory of the eucharistic consecration, contrasts sharply with the *theologia prima* of the Roman Canon and its earlier Latin interpreters, which views, in turn, were fully consonant with traditional Orthodox doctrine. The new Latin theology was sanctioned, doctrinally, in the *Decretum pro Armenis* (Dz 1321, cf. 1017) and *Decretum pro Jacobitis* (Dz 1352) in the aftermath of the Council of Florence³³, at which the Greeks were fully justified in refusing to exchange their age-old tradition for the new scholastic theories.

I will leave to the dogmatists what "theological note" they wish to assign this Latin teaching, construed in its narrowest popular Catholic understanding in vogue still today, that the *Verba Domini*, they alone, and nothing else, are the so-called "words of consecration" of the mass (e.g., Dz 2718). Certainly the *Decretum pro Armenis* does not recommend itself by the fact that it also proclaims the *traditio instrumentorum* to be the sacramental matter of holy orders (Dz 1326), a teaching not only no longer held today (Dz 3858-3860), but one that *even in its own day* contradicted the clear facts of liturgical history. More important, it also conflicted with age-old Catholic teaching, which never impugned the validity of ordination rites of Churches with no *traditio instrumentorum* like the Latins. So one must either reject that decree, or, if your theory of magisterium obliges you to squirm to salvage the decree by arguing that it envisaged only the medieval Latin ordination rite in which the *traditio* had assumed a significant place, then intellectual honesty would require saying the same for its teaching on the Words of Institution. For the decree assigns them an exclusive importance they had assumed only in the West. More significant for me is the fact that the decree sanctions a culturally and temporally conditioned medieval scholastic theology of the sacraments that can in no wise claim to be traditional to the teaching of the undivided Church. Here we are talking not about magisterial teaching but the undeniable facts of history available to anyone able to read Latin and Greek.

Diaconus [of Lyons, † 860], *De actione miss.*, c. 60 (PL 119:52f.), in the Carolingian period, who with particular stress brought out the significance of the words of consecration; *ille in suis sacerdotibus quotidie loquitur*".

³³ See J. Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge 1959) 116, 265-67, 272-78, 280-81, 284-86, 292.

IV. Reflections

1. *Toward a Balanced View of the Whole Tradition:*

So much for our two traditions. Can they be reconciled? Much has been made of the fact that long before the dispute began, John Chrysostom attributes consecratory efficacy both to the Words of Institution and to the epiclesis. Chrysostom states in at least seven different homilies that what happens in the eucharist happens by the power of the Holy Spirit³⁴, a teaching common to both the Greek and Latin Churches. In at least one instance it is clear Chrysostom is talking about the epiclesis. But in his *Homily on the betrayal of Judas* (*De prodicione Judae hom. 1/2, 6*), he attributes the consecration to Christ in the Words of Institution:

It is not man who causes what is present to become the body and blood of Christ, but Christ himself, who was crucified for us. The priest is the representative when he pronounces those words, but the power and the grace are those of the Lord. "This is my body", he says. This word changes the things that lie before us; and just as that sentence, "increase and multiply", once spoken, extends through all time and gives to our nature the power to reproduce itself; likewise that saying, "This is my body", once uttered, from that time to the present day, and even until Christ's coming, makes the sacrifice complete at every table in the churches³⁵.

Nicholas Cabasilas (ca. 1350) and numerous Orthodox theologians after him have attempted to weaken the Latin polemical exploitation of this text by arguing, rightly, that Chrysostom assigns consecratory power *not to the priest's liturgical repetition* of Jesus' words now, but *to the historical institution itself*, i.e., to the original utterance of Jesus whose force extends to all subsequent eucharistic celebrations³⁶. But this is no different from the position of the Latins, who obviously attribute the efficacy of Jesus' words not to the prayer of the priest, as Cabasilas accuses them³⁷, but to the indefectible effectiveness of the Word of God, as is perfectly clear in Ambrose. In his *De sacramentis* IV, 4.14-17, he says:

³⁴ *De sacerdotio* III, 4:40-50; VI, 4:34-44, Jean Chrysostome, *Sur le sacerdoce* (*Dialogue et Homélie*), ed. A.-M. Malingrey (SC 272, Paris 1980) 142-46, 316 = PG 48:642-45, 681 (= CPG 4316); *Oratio de beato Philogonio* 3, PG 48:753 (= CPG 4319); *De resurr. mortuorum* 8, PG 50:432 (= CPG 4340); *In pentec. hom. 1, 4*, PG 50:458-59 (= CPG 4343); *In Ioh. hom. 45, 2*, PG 59:253 (= CPG 4425); *In 1 Cor hom. 24, 5*, PG 61:204 (= CPG 4428). In *De coemet. et de cruce* 3, Chrysostom is clearly speaking of the epiclesis: PG 49:397-98 (= CPG 4337).

³⁵ PG 49:380, 389-90 (= CPG 4336).

³⁶ Ch. 29, SC 4bis:178-90; cf. the commentary of Salaville, *ibid.* 314-15, and J.H. McKenna, *Eucharist and Holy Spirit. The Eucharistic Epiclesis in 20th Century Theology* (Alcuin Club Collections 57, Great Wakering, Essex 1975) 59.

³⁷ Ch. 29.10, SC 4bis:184-86.

14. ... to produce the venerable sacrament, the priest does not use his own words but the words of Christ. So it is the word of Christ which produces this sacrament.
15. Which word of Christ? The one by which all things were made. The Lord commanded and the heavens were made, the Lord commanded and the earth was made, the Lord commanded and the seas were made, the Lord commanded and all creatures were brought into being. You see, then, how effective the word of Christ is. If then there is such power in the word of the Lord Jesus that things which were not began to be, how much more effective must they be in changing what already exists into something else! ...
17. Hear, then, how the word of Christ is accustomed to change all creatures and to change, when it will, the laws of nature ...³⁸.

This is exactly what Chrysostom says on other occasions: the same Jesus accomplishes the same eucharist, the same marvels, in the liturgy as at the Last Supper³⁹. For instance, his *Homily 2 on II Timothy*, affirms:

The gifts which God bestows are not such as to be the effects of the virtue of the priest. All is from grace. His part is but to open his mouth, while God works all. He [the priest] only completes the sign (σύμβολον πληροῦ). The offering is the same whoever offers it, Paul or Peter. It is the same one Christ gave to his disciples, and which priests now accomplish. The latter is in no way inferior to the former, because the same one who sanctified the one, sanctifies the other too. For just as the words which God spoke are the same as the ones the priest pronounces now, so is the offering the same, just like the baptism which he gave⁴⁰.

So the classic Eastern Orthodox theology of consecration does not attribute the sanctification of the gifts to the Holy-Spirit epiclesis *alone*, i.e., *sensu negante*, in deliberate exclusion of Jesus and his words. Nicholas Cabasilas, for instance, says of the Words of Institution:

³⁸ "14. ... ut conficiatur uenerabile sacramentum, iam non suis sermonibus utitur sacerdos, sed utitur sermonibus Christi. Ergo sermo Christi hoc conficit sacramentum. 15. Quis est sermo Christi? Nempe is quo facta sunt omnia. Iussit dominus factum est caelum, iussit dominus facta est terra, iussit dominus facta sunt maria, iussit dominus omnis creatura generatus est. Vides ergo quam operatorius sermo sit Christi. Si ergo tanta uis est in sermone domini Iesu ut inciperent esse quae non erant, quanto magis operatorius est ut sint quae erant et in aliud commutentur ... 17. Accipe ergo quemadmodum sermo Christi creaturam omnem mutare consueuerit et mutet quando uult instituta naturae ..." Ambroise de Milan, *Des Sacrements, Des mystères*, ed. B. Botte (2nd ed., SC 25bis: Paris 1961) 110 = CSEL 73:52-53; English trans. adapted in part from E. Mazza, *Mystagogy* (New York 1989) 183; Cf. Ambrose, *De mysteriis* IX, 52: "The sacrament you receive is produced by the word of Christ", SC 25bis:186 = CSEL 73:112.

³⁹ *In Mt hom.* 50 (51), 3 and *hom.* 82 (83), 5, PG 58:507, 744 (= CPG 4424).

⁴⁰ PG 62:612 (= CPG 4437). On this point see Congar, *Je crois en l'Esprit Saint* III, 303-4.

Repeating those words, he [the priest] prostrates himself and prays and beseeches, while applying to the offered gifts these divine words of his Only-Begotten Son, the Savior, that they may, after having received his most holy and all-powerful Spirit, be transformed (μεταβληθῆναι) – the bread into his precious and sacred Body, the wine into his immaculate and sacred blood (ch. 27). ... Here [in the liturgy] we believe that the Lord's words do indeed accomplish the mystery, but through the medium of the priest, his invocation, and his prayer (ch. 29.4)⁴¹.

For Cabasilas as for John Chrysostom and John Damascene, therefore, neither epiclesis nor institution narrative stands alone: they are interdependent in the context of the anaphora, as we would say today. If one prescind from the polemical context of some of Cabasilas' remarks, forced on him by Latin impugning of the Byzantine consecratory epiclesis, one will see a balanced view of the anaphora and of the interrelatedness of its constituent parts: "The words [of institution]", he continues, "do not take effect simply of themselves or under any circumstances, but there are many essential conditions, and without those they do not achieve their end" (ch. 29.4)⁴².

2. Two Liturgical Expressions of Two Liturgical Theologies:

Where do we go from here? My own view is that contemporary advances in eucharistic theology have made the whole dispute sterile and pointless. The scholastics were answering questions no one is asking today, nor, indeed, was anyone asking them at the time the eucharistic prayers in question were composed. This does not necessarily mean that one theology is "right" and the other "wrong". For I think it fair to say that the overall flow, the thrust and sequence of idea and expression, of the Roman Canon on the one hand, and of BAS and CHR on the other, are more patient of the distinct consecration theologies of the Latin and Byzantine traditions respectively. In short, what we are dealing with here, as in other issues that divide Catholics and Orthodox today, are two distinct but complementary and equally ancient liturgical expressions of what the Church does in the eucharist.

The eagerness with which some theologians, even today, attempt to magnify these issues into major doctrinal differences, even dire portents of defective dogma at the very heart of trinitarian faith, is reflective of little more than their need to bolster their self-identity by showing how different they are from everyone else. For the Byzantines to denigrate the Roman

⁴¹ SC 4bis: 174, 182; English trans. Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. by J.M. Hussey and P.A. McNulty, London 1960) 70, 72 (hereafter Hussey-McNulty).

⁴² SC 4bis:182 = Hussey-McNulty 72.

view because it has no Holy-Spirit epiclesis is simply untenable, for the old Roman *Canon Missae* is a prayer more primitive than any anaphora with an explicitly consecratory Spirit epiclesis⁴³. The textual evidence for that is no earlier than the second half of the fourth century, and it would have been unthinkable before the developments in pneumatology in the third century, when we first see the sanctification of the eucharist attributed to the Holy Spirit in Christian writings. Anyone who would wish to argue that such an epiclesis is of the essence of a Christian eucharist, must ineluctably conclude that no eucharist could have existed before the third century.

Equally fatuous would be any attempt to dismiss the explicitly consecratory epiclesis by arguing that it is a fourth-century innovation, whereas the institution narrative is found in the New Testament itself. For the consecratory Spirit epiclesis simply explicates a theology already implicit in more primitive invocations, and is a logical, indeed, perhaps inevitable development, given the later evolution of pneumatology. Furthermore, today few reputable historians of the anaphora would hold it for certain that the earliest eucharistic prayers included, necessarily, an institution narrative.

Is there any way out of the impasse created by the later hardening of different liturgical systems into doctrinal disputes? It is not the task of the liturgical historian to sort such things out. It is the historian's duty, however, to draw attention to the *facts*, insofar as they can be attained. And on the basis of the facts, neither Latins nor Greeks can sustain, without being simply ridiculous in the face of their own history, a position that their view is the only legitimate one. In Christianity, tradition is the gauge of legitimacy. Both the Latin and Greek liturgical expressions of the eucharistic prayer of blessing over the bread and wine, and the implicit theologies they unselfconsciously expressed, coexisted peacefully for centuries not only in the liturgical celebrations of the one undivided Church. They were also explicitly formulated in the theologies of saints like Ambrose and John Damascene, still revered as saints and Fathers of the Church by both East and West. This means, I would think, that each Church must accept both expressions as legitimate, or render their pretense to orthodoxy questionable for having remained in communion for well over a millennium with a Church, and for continuing even today to venerate in their liturgical calendars its saints, that held, celebrated, and professed heretical views on so fundamental an issue as the eucharist.

I believe this opinion is justified by what has long been an accepted principle in Catholic theology: the magisterial weight of the common

⁴³ *Pace* the popular myth that eastern always equals older, the fact of the matter is that until the Islamic conquests practically every liturgical innovation except the 25 Dec. Nativity feast began in the East, and practically all eastern anaphoras in their present redaction except Addai and Mari are less primitive than the Roman Canon.

opinion of reputable theologians. In this matter, Catholic theologians with a modicum of historical knowledge and common sense have long adopted a balanced, non-polemical, irenic view. As early as the seventeenth century, the famous Bossuet (1627–1704) raised his voice in favor of sanity. He says: “without inquiring about precise moments” in this issue,

The intent of liturgies, and, in general, of consecratory prayers, is not to focus our attention on precise moments, but to have us attend to the action in its entirety and to its complete effect ... It is to render more vivid what is being done that the Church speaks at each moment as though it were accomplishing the entire action then and there, without asking whether the action has already been accomplished or is perhaps still to be accomplished⁴⁴.

Dom Charles Chardon, OSB, in his *Histoire des sacrements* (Paris 1745), expressed a similarly balanced view of the situation:

Despite this diversity [over the form or moment of consecration] there was formerly no dispute over this subject. The Greeks and Latins were convinced that the species [of bread and wine] were changed into the body and blood of our Savior in virtue of the words of the Canon of the Mass, without examining the precise moment at which this change occurred, nor just which of the words [of the anaphora] effected it as over against other [words]. One side said the change was effected by the prayer and invocation of the priest; the others said that it was the result of the words of Our Lord when he instituted this august sacrament. And they in no way believed that these different ways of expressing themselves were opposed to each other (and indeed they are not, as would be easy to show). But we shall leave that to the theologians to treat ...⁴⁵

Since that time a steady stream of Catholic theologians have moved toward the view that the formula of eucharistic consecration comprises the prayer over the gifts in its entirety⁴⁶. I do not have space to list these theologians here – those interested can find their teaching in John McKenna's thorough review of the question⁴⁷. The most recent study by Dom Burkhard Neunheuser, OSB, monk of Maria Laach and professor emeritus of Sant'Anselmo, furnishes not only the most explicit and emphatic justification of this return to the original tradition of the undivided Church, but

⁴⁴ J.-B. Bossuet, *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la messe à un nouveau catholique*, ed. F. Lachat, *Oeuvres* 17 (Paris: L. Vives, 1864) 74–75, trans. in R. Cabié, *The Eucharist* = A.G. Martimort (ed.), *The Church at Prayer*, vol. II (new edition, Collegeville 1986) 147.

⁴⁵ I translate it from the re-edition of J.-P. Migne, *Theologiae cursus completus*, 28 vols. (Paris 1839–1843) 20:249.

⁴⁶ See esp. Congar, *Je crois en l'Esprit Saint* III, 309ff.

⁴⁷ McKenna, *Eucharist and Holy Spirit*; also id., “Eucharistic Prayer: Epiclesis”, in A. Heinz, H. Rennings (eds.), *Gratias agamus. Studien zum eucharistischen Hochgebet. Für Balthasar Fischer* (Pastoralliturgische Reihe in Verbindung mit der Zeitschrift “Gottesdienst”, Freiburg/Basel/Vienna 1992).

does so with full respect for traditional Catholic teaching on the centrality of the Words of Institution within the anaphoral context⁴⁸.

As Neunheuser is also careful to point out, this renewal is already found reflected in official Catholic texts in the aftermath of Vatican II. Paragraph 54 of the 18 November 1969 *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani*, the reformed Roman Missal, says of the eucharistic prayer: "Now begins the summit and center of the whole celebration, namely the Eucharistic Prayer itself, that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification ..." ⁴⁹ "Sanctification" of course means in this context "eucharistic consecration". The 25 May 1967 Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium* reflects the same return to tradition. And although Paul VI continues to use the outdated scholastic terminology of matter and form of the sacrament in his 18 June 1968 Apostolic Constitution *Pontificalis Romani recognitio*, he does so in a broad, non-scholastic context: the "matter" of the sacrament is the imposition of hands⁵⁰; the "form" is the entire ordination prayer and not some isolated formula it contains: "the form ... consists in the words of the very prayer of consecration"⁵¹.

This renewal found ecumenical agreement in Part I no. 6 of the July 1982 Munich Statement of the Orthodox-Catholic Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue: "... the eucharistic mystery is accomplished in the prayer which joins together the words by which the word made flesh instituted the sacrament and the epiclesis in which the church, moved by faith, entreats the Father, through the Son, to send the Spirit ..." ⁵²

As we have seen, both before and after the scholastic interval and its epiclesis dispute between Byzantines and Latins, reputable Catholic theologians said and say the same thing, rejecting theologies that would isolate the institution narrative from its essential setting within the anaphora. So if the classic Latin doctrine on the Words of Institution as the "words of consecration" can be traced back to Ambrose, who states the teaching unambiguously (though not restrictively – i.e., *sensu aiente*, not *sensu negante*) in his *De sacramentis* IV, 4.14–17, 5.21–23, and *De mysteriis* IX, 52–54⁵³, not until the twelfth century do the scholastics formulate the thesis that the

⁴⁸ "Das Eucharistische Hochgebet als Konsekrationsgebet", in Heinz, Rennings, *Gratias agamus* 315–326.

⁴⁹ "Prex eucharistica. Nunc centrum et culmen totius celebrationis habet, ipsa nempe Prex Eucharistica, *prex scilicet gratiarum actionis et sanctificationis* ...": EDIL 1449 (emphasis added), cf. 1450; DOL 1444, cf. 1445; Neunheuser 321.

⁵⁰ EDIL 1084 = DOL 2608.

⁵¹ EDIL 1085-6 = DOL 2609-11: "forma ... constat verbis eiusdem precationis consecratoriae".

⁵² *The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity Information Service* no. 49 (1982/II-III) 108; *Origins* 12 (April 12, 1982) 158; French text in *La documentation catholique* 79 (1982 = No. 1838, 17 oct.) 942; *Episkepsis* no. 277 (juillet-août 1982) 13.

⁵³ SC 25bis, 110, 114, 186-88 = CSEL 73:51–53, 55–56, 112-13.

Words of Institution are the essential "form of the sacrament" which *alone* effect the consecration of the bread and wine⁵⁴.

I believe this renewed liturgical expression of Catholic eucharistic doctrine to be fully reconcilable with the Orthodox view. This does not mean the two *theologies* are the same⁵⁵. They are rather two irreducible if equally ancient and legitimate ways of expressing what everyone agrees is the same underlying reality. (By "irreducible" I mean that one cannot simply be identified with, or combined with, the other without eroding the two distinct and proper systems that are neither identical nor reducible to a least common denominator without distortion). But I do not think there can be any doubt about the reconcilability of the eucharistic doctrine of the two traditions as expressed in their liturgies and interpreted by their moderate exponents.

Nonetheless, it is equally clear that we are dealing with two distinct liturgical traditions both then and now. Following long Catholic tradition, the prayers of the "split" or "double" epiclesis in which the traditional Roman anaphoral structure embeds the institution narrative – prayers which, in Cabasilas' words, "apply" the words of Jesus to the gifts – place the overtly consecratory petition *before* the institution narrative, giving a more explicit "formularly" character to Jesus' words. This cannot be said of the Byzantine anaphoras, which tell the story and *then* ask for the consecration of the gifts. Hence when Orthodox authors like Cabasilas (ch. 29.22) assert that the institution account of CHR and BAS is pronounced *narratively*, not *significatively*⁵⁶, they are simply affirming what is clear from the text of their prayers, as H.-J. Schulz's serenely objective Catholic commentary, devoid of all polemics, admits, *pace* earlier Catholic apologists on the issue⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ Geiselman, *Abendmahlslehre* 192-94, 144–47; J.J. Hughes, "Eucharistic Sacrifice. Transcending the Reformation Deadlock", *Worship* 13 (1969) 540; J.A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* cited above, note 32.

⁵⁵ Cf. R. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VII^e au XV^e siècle* (Archives de l'Orient chrétien 9, Paris 1966) 237: "Les deux traditions mettent l'accent sur des points de vue différents mais complémentaires."

⁵⁶ SC 4bis:190.

⁵⁷ H.-J. Schulz, *Ökumenische Glaubenseinheit aus eucharistischer Überlieferung* (Konfessionskundliche u. kontroverstheologische Studien, Bd. 39, Paderborn 1976); id., "Liturgischer Vollzug und sakramentale Wirklichkeit des eucharistischen Opfers," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 45 (1979) 245–266; 46 (1980) 5–19. Cf. also id., "Ökumenische Aspekte der Darbringungsaussagen in der erneuerten römischen und in der byzantinischen Liturgie", *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 19 (1978) 7–28; id., "Orthodoxe Eucharistiefeyer und ökumenisches Glaubenszeugnis", *Der christliche Osten* 34/1 (1979) 10–15; id., "Das frühchristlich-altkirchliche Eucharistiegebet: Überlieferungskontinuität und Glaubenszeugnis", *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 70 (1980) 139–153; id., "Patterns of Offering and Sacrifice", *Studia liturgica* (1982) 34–48. On BAS see also the recent study of R. Meßner, "Prex Eucha-

euchology roll *Stavrou 109* omits the formula entirely,³⁶ but this is an eleventh-century manuscript and all earlier witnesses I have examined contain it. So from the manuscript tradition alone the reading cannot be challenged.³⁷

Nevertheless, this formula is clearly superfluous to the consecratory sense of the CHR epiclesis, being already adequately explicit in the “and make” petition. Furthermore, its variant form in APSyr shows it to be a later interpolation not found in UrAP. Since it does appear in NES,³⁸ a formulary, recognized as dependent on CHR, which dates from the first half of the sixth century, it had probably been interpolated into CHR at least by that time. The novel character of the expression is confirmed by the fact that it is not found in other anaphoras and is not part of the liturgical *Formelgut*, that common stock of vocabulary, phraseology, and set formulas used repeatedly in the Christian liturgical Greek of Late Antiquity.

Its presence in the Armenian anaphora of St. Athanasius³⁹ is doubtless the result of later Byzantine influence, commonly exerted on the Armenian Rite especially from around the tenth century, since it is not witnessed to in the commentary on the Armenian eucharist by Xosrov Anjewac'i (who died 965), written about A.D. 950.⁴⁰ Its presence in some Greek manuscripts of BAS, as well as in the *editio princeps* of Rome, 1526, and other early printed editions of the Basilian liturgy,⁴¹ is an obvious interpolation from

36. A. Grabar, “Un rouleau liturgique constantinopolitain et ses peintures,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), plate 15, following p. 166.

37. Indeed, even in *Stavrou 109* there is in the right margin an interpolation, visible but illegible to me in both Grabar's plate and in the microfilm, which may well be the copyist's or a later hand's correction of this oversight.

38. PE 395.

39. PE 323.

40. *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy by Xosrov Anjewac'i*, translated with an introduction by S. Peter Cowe (Armenian Church Classics, New York: St. Vartan Press, 1991), pp. 176-81 (nos. 103-105). On Xosrov and his commentary, see S. Salaville, “L'Explication de la Messe' de l'arménien Chosrov (950). Théologie et liturgie,” *Echos d'Orient* 39 (1940-42), pp. 349-82.

41. P. N. Trempelas, *Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις κώδικας* (Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie 15, Athens: Verlag der byzantinisch-neugriechischen Jahrbücher, 1935), p. 184 (apparatus); and esp. M. I. Orlov, *Liturgija sv. Vasilija Velikago* (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naja Tipografia, 1909), pp. xxiv-xxv, 208. The earliest manuscript listed by Orlov is *Grottaferrata Arsenii* (= *Cryptof.*

CHR. From there it entered the Slavonic recension,⁴² where it is still found in the *textus receptus* of the Slavonic Orthodox books, though it was rightly excised from the modern Roman editions,⁴³ and is not part of the Greek Orthodox *textus receptus*.⁴⁴ The 1927 Athens edition of the euchology even has a note to that effect.⁴⁵

5. The Chalice Petition [6]

The CHR text, “what is in this chalice,” instead of the surely more primitive “this chalice” of APSyr and BAS as well as *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII.12.39⁴⁶ and the Greek anaphoras of St. James, Sarapion, St. Mark, the Der-Balizeh fragment, etc.,⁴⁷ I take to be a later refinement.

V. Ecumenical Reflections

1. Two Liturgical Expressions of Two Liturgical Theologies

Since one must reject any attempt to press texts beyond what they can bear, the most one can say is that the anaphoral texts surrounding the institution and epiclesis in BAS and CHR neither confirm nor exclude any particular

Arsenii), A.D. 1001, a now lost roll of BAS described by Goar, *Εὐλογίον* 151 note Y. On this manuscript and its dating see A. Strittmatter, “Notes on the Byzantine Synapte,” *Traditio* 10 (1954), p. 89-90 and n. 18. Among other manuscripts Orlov notes with the variant are *Sinai Gr. 971* (13-14th c.) = A. Dmitrievskij, *Opisanie liturgicheskix rukopisej xranjashchixsja v bibliotekax pravoslavnago vostoka*, I-II (Kiev: Tipografia Imperatorskago Universiteta Sv. Vladimira N. T. Korchak-Novitskago, 1895, 1901), III (Petrograd: no press indicated, 1917; all 3 vols. reprinted Hildesheim: G. Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1965) 2:249; *Petersburg Imperial Public Library Gr. 558* (14-15th c.) and 561 (A.D. 1561); *Moscow Synod Gr. 264* (554) (A.D. 1602). On this question see also LEW, 406, note a.

42. Orlov, *Liturgija* 209.

43. *Sluzebnik* (Rome: Grottaferrata Abbey Press, 1956), pp. 372-73.

44. For instance, see *Εὐλογίον τὸ μέγα* (Athens: M. I. Saliveros, 1927), p. 64; *Ἱερατικὸν* (Athens: Apostolike Diakonia, 1951), pp. 126-27; (1956), p. 186.

45. *Εὐλογίον τὸ μέγα* (see previous note).

46. Ed. Metzger, SC 336:198-200.

47. PE 92, 122, 126, 130, 236, 250, 267, etc.

theological thesis of when or by what particular part of the anaphoral prayer the consecration is effected.⁴⁸ My own view is that later precisions, in the sense in which they are sometimes posed today as the result of confessional disputes, are sterile and pointless. They were in no one's mind in the fourth century. Earlier liturgical language is metaphorical and evocative, not philosophical and ontological. Only later doctrinal problems will lead to the sorting out of what, exactly, this language meant in the more dogmatically precise terms of *theologia secunda*.

When that sorting out does occur, I think it fair to say that the overall flow, the thrust and sequence of idea and expression of the Roman Canon on the one hand and of BAS and CHR on the other are more patient of the distinct consecration theologies of the Latin and Byzantine traditions respectively. In short, what we are dealing with here, as in other dogmatic or theological issues that are thought to divide Catholic and Orthodox today are two distinct but complementary and *equally ancient* liturgical expressions of what the Church does in the eucharist. The eagerness with which some theologians, even today, attempt to magnify these issues into major doctrinal differences, even dire portents of defective dogma at the very heart of trinitarian faith, is reflective of little more than their need to bolster their self-identity by showing how different they are from everyone else.

For the Byzantines to denigrate the Roman view because it has no Holy Spirit epiclesis is simply untenable, for the Roman Canon is a prayer more primitive than any anaphora with an explicitly consecratory Spirit epiclesis. As we have seen above, the textual evidence for that is no earlier than the second half of the fourth century, and it would have been unthinkable before the developments in pneumatology in the third century, when we first see the sanctification of the eucharist attributed to the Holy Spirit in Christian writings. Anyone who would wish to argue that such an epiclesis is of the essence of a Christian eucharist must ineluctably conclude that no eucharist could have existed before the third or fourth century.

Equally fatuous would be any attempt to dismiss the consecratory epiclesis by arguing that it is a fourth-century innovation, whereas the institution narrative is found in the New Testament itself.⁴⁹ For the con-

48. I discuss these issues at greater length in Taft, "Understanding the Byzantine Anaphoral Oblation," cited in note 24.

49. However, this sort of thing caused problems for the sixteenth-century Reformers. See D. N. Power, "The Priestly Prayer: The Tridentine Theologians and the

secratory Spirit epiclesis simply makes explicit a theology already implicit in more primitive invocations and is a logical, indeed, perhaps inevitable development, given the later evolution of pneumatology and sacramental theology. Furthermore, today few reputable historians of the anaphora would hold it for certain that the earliest eucharistic prayers included, necessarily, an institution narrative.⁵⁰

Is there any way out of the impasse created by the later hardening of different liturgical systems into doctrinal disputes? It is not the task of the liturgical historian to sort such things out. It is the historian's duty, however, to draw attention to the *facts*, insofar as they can be attained. And on the basis of the facts, neither Latins nor Greeks can sustain, without being simply ridiculous in the face of their own history, a position that their view is the only legitimate one. In Christianity, tradition is the gauge of legitimacy. Both the Latin and Greek liturgical expressions of the eucharistic prayer of blessing over the bread and wine, and the implicit theologies that they unself-consciously expressed, coexisted peacefully for centuries not only in the liturgical celebrations of the one undivided Church. They were also explicitly formulated in the theologies of saints like Ambrose and John Damascene, still revered as saints and Fathers of the Church by both East and West. This means, I would think, that each Church must accept both expressions as legitimate, or render their pretense to orthodoxy untenable for having remained in communion for well over a millennium with a Church, and for continuing even today to venerate in their liturgical calendars its saints, that held, celebrated, and professed heretical views on so fundamental an issue as the eucharist.

In the less irenic past, as well, of course, as in our somewhat more ecumenical today,⁵¹ liturgical theologians with a modicum of historical

Roman Canon," in G. Austin (ed.), *Fountain of Life: In memory of Niels K. Rasmussen, O.P.* (NPM Studies in Church Music and Liturgy, Washington, D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1991), pp. 133-38.

50. See the discussion and relevant literature in R. F. Taft, "The Interpolation of the Sanctus into the Anaphora: When and Where? A Review of the Dossier," Part I, *OCP* 57 (1991), pp. 289-95.

51. Though the late Timothy S. Healy, S.J., former president of Georgetown University and Librarian of the New York Public Library, rightly said, "anti-Catholicism seems to be the one allowable bigotry," I remain sanguine that the anti-Roman hysteria rife at the moment in certain Orthodox circles is a transitory phenomenon provoked by recent traumas.

That precision is not seen in Greek theology until the dispute over, and ultimate rejection of, the primitive understanding of “antitype” and “symbol” by John Damascene (ca. 675–753/4)⁶⁴, and the iconodule Council of Nicea II in 787 which condemned the iconoclast Council of 754⁶⁵. But as I have shown elsewhere, John Damascene’s interpretation of the term “figures” or “antitypes” (ἀντίτυπα) for the gifts in BAS (text above no. 1) before the epicletic consecratory petition is simply wrong⁶⁶. Abundant textual evidence from the earlier Greek patristic sources proves beyond any doubt that “type” or “antitype” were originally used to designate the consecrated gifts⁶⁷. And the Nicea II definition was the fruit of the iconoclastic troubles, and not directly concerned with the later formula of consecration dispute between East and West in the fourteenth century.

⁶⁴ John Damascene, *Expositio fidei* 86:163–166, interprets BAS thus: “Moreover, although some may have called the bread and wine (antitypes) of the body and blood of the Lord, as did the inspired Basil, they did not say this as referring to after the consecration (τὸ ἁγιασθῆναι), but to before the consecration, and it was thus that they called the [unconsecrated] offertory bread (προσφοράν) itself”. Kotter 2: 197 = *De fide orthodoxa* IV, 13, PG 94:1152C–53B; trans. Saint John of Damascus, *Writings*, trans. by F. H. Chase, Jr. (The Fathers of the Church 37, Washington, D.C. 1981) 360–61. The glosses are mine; “prosphora (offering)” is the ordinary Byzantine Greek term for the unconsecrated eucharistic loaves used at the liturgy.

⁶⁵ Cf. the debate at Nicea II, Session 6, J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 53 vols. (1st ed. Florence, 1759–; repr. Paris-Leipzig 1901) 13:261E–268A, where the relevant texts of the Council of 754 are preserved because they were read into the Acts of Nicea II and condemned. A complete English trans. of these texts, with the sections from the Acta of 754 set off in italics, is conveniently provided in D.J. Sahas, *Icon and Logos: Sources in Eighth-Century Iconoclasm* (Toronto Medieval Texts and Translations 4, Toronto-Buffalo-New York 1986) 92–96. For the debate on the use of “antitype” for the eucharistic species, see Mansi 13:265C = Sahas 95.

⁶⁶ In my study “Understanding the Byzantine Anaphoral Oblation”, to appear in a Festschrift for Prof. Aidan Karanagh, OSB.

⁶⁷ On “antitypes” in BAS see also the discussion in Meßner, “Prex Eucharistica”, 123–125; M. Jugie, “L’épiclèse et le mot antitype de la messe de saint Basile”, *Echos d’orient* 9 (1906) 193–198, with references to later Greek authors on the topic, though Jugie exaggerates on the other side of the issue.