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## THE CHURCHES OF SYRIAC TRADITION An Actual Survey

For many Catholics of the western tradition, even in our days, Eastern Church [*Église orientale; Ostkirche*] (singular!) continues to be the vis-à-vis of the Catholic Church seen also as a monolith block. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has the merit to have brought to evidence that such a vision is not correct. The Catholic Church is not identical with the Roman Catholic Church, which is but one of the Churches *sui iuris*. She is the only Church of western tradition and is commonly spoken of in the East as the Latin Church. The Christian East also is not limited to the Orthodox Church that follows the Byzantine tradition and accepts the first seven ecumenical councils as the basis of her faith and discipline. We ought not to overlook that the apostolic patrimony was handed down as well to Rome as to Byzantium by the messengers of Christ who were Semitic and whose mother language was Aramaic (Syriac). We can rightly say that Christianity is based on three columns: Syriac, Latin, and Byzantine.

It is not our intention to delve into the corners of history. By these introductory remarks we wish only to elucidate the diversity existing in the Church of Christ and her traditions. Therefore the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches underlines that the Churches of the East arise from five traditions or rites: the Alexandrian, Antiochene, Armenian, Chaldean (Syro-oriental) and Constantinopolitan (Byzantine)<sup>1</sup> Our attention concentrates on the present Churches of Antiochene or West-Syriac and those of the Chaldean or East-Syriac (Syro-oriental) traditions. With the exception of the Maronite patriarchal Church of Antioch and All the East that is hundred per cent in full ecclesial communion with the primatial See of Rome, all the other Churches are having, due to the vicissitudes of Church and political history, a branch that is not yet in communion with Rome and another that is in communion with Rome.

### 1. *The Maronite Church*

Although this Church belongs to the Syro-Antiochene tradition, we deal with it separately, because she has no non-Catholic counterpart. Her head-

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<sup>1</sup> Canon 28 § 2.

quarters is based in Lebanon, the traditional homestead of the Maronites since centuries. They found refuge in this mountainous country when they had to leave the region of origin near Apamea in Syria (*Qal'at al-Madīq*) during the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

The *Father and Head* (Pater et Caput) of this Church holds the title of *Patriarch of Antioch and All the East*. He resides at Bkerké and, as the head of the largest confessional community, is playing a great role also in the life of the Lebanese society. The present patriarch is Mar Nasrallah Butros Sfeir, cardinal of the Holy Church<sup>2</sup> The eparchies, of which the patriarch is the Ordinary, are Joubbé, Sarba and Jounieh. Three patriarchal vicars who are his auxiliary bishops and syncelli administer them<sup>3</sup>

In Lebanon, there are four Archeparchies of Antelias, Beirut, Tripoli and Sūr (Tyrus) as well as the eparchies of Baalbek – Deir-el-Ahmar, Batrun, Jbeil (Byblos), Saïda (Sidon), and Zahleh. According to the *Annuario Pontificio 2002* in Lebanon there are 1,373,590 Maronites.

In the Holy Land, the archeparchy of Haifa and the Holy Land was established in 1996 with Mar Bulos Nabil Sayah as its archpastor. Under his personal jurisdiction are also the two patriarchal exarchates of Jerusalem and of Jordan. In the whole region, there live 8,710 Maronites.

The most ancient settlement of Maronites outside the Asian continent is that of Cyprus. It goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and got bishops from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The headquarters of the eparchy is Nicosia. There are 10,000 faithful.

In the other countries of the Middle East, there are eparchies in the greater centres. In Syria we find the archeparchies of Aleppo and Damascus and the eparchy of Lattaqiya (Laodicea), founded in 1977. According to the number of faithful the last is the strongest. In all the three eparchies, we have about 40,200 Maronite faithful. In Egypt the eparchy of Cairo consists of some 5,000 faithful.

The total of Maronites in the historical territory of the Patriarchate of Antioch is 1,437,410.

Due to historical reasons, the majority of the faithful of the Maronite Church, in total about 1,600,000, are living in the diaspora. The Roman Apostolic See has therefore established for them eparchies in several countries: the eparchy of St. Sharbel of Buenos Aires in Argentine (700,000 faithful), the eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon in São Paulo in Brazil (463,000), for the eastern part of the United States of America the eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn (30,000), for the western part the eparchy of Our Lady of Los Angeles, California (25000), the eparchy of St. Maron of Montreal in Canada (80,000), the epar-

<sup>2</sup> Patriarchs who are cardinals belong to the Order of Cardinal Bishops. They are not „of the Holy Roman Church“ with a titular Church in the Roman Metropolitan Province, but retain the title of the See.

<sup>3</sup> A „syncellus“ corresponds to a „vicar general“ in a Latin diocese.

chy of St. Maron of Sydney in Australia (150,000), and the eparchy of Our Lady of the Lebanese Martyrs in Mexico (150,000).

## **2. The Churches of the Syro-Antiochene Tradition**

### **2.1. Churches, which are not in communion with Rome**

#### **2.1.1. The Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East<sup>4</sup>**

This Church is rooted in the old tradition of the Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch. Its liturgy has ties with the ancient Jewish Berakah and is usually called Syro-Antiochene or West-Syriac. The Syriac people have been known as the „Arameans” who were from the Biblical countries of Aram near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and their language is known as Aramaic or Syriac since the majority belonged to the province of „Syria” This is valid also for the Syriac Catholic Church described below, i. e., that portion, which restored formally and officially the communion with Rome in 1781. The Syriac Orthodox Church belongs to those Churches, which did not accept the council of Chalcedon and are called the „Oriental Orthodox Churches”

In contrast to the Latin Church and the Churches following the Byzantine tradition, in this Church the institution of „titular bishops” is not known. Alone the patriarchal vicar in Damascus is a „simple” bishop (we do not know whether he was widowed before embracing monasticism). All the bishops having a particular function are called „metropolitans”

The present Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, head of the Universal Syriac Orthodox Church, is Mar Ignatios Zakka I Iwas. He is assisted by an Indian Malankara Syriac Orthodox hierarch, Mar Julios Kuriakose Kochupurackal, the First Secretary of the Patriarchate and Metropolitan for the Indian Church Affairs in the Patriarchate. The patriarchal eparchy is Damascus, the capital of Syria.

In Syria there are further three archeparchies (Aleppo, Jazirah and Euphrates, Homs and Hama) each having a metropolitan as archpastor. There are also three archeparchies in Iraq. The Metropolitans of Baghdad and Basrah, of Mar Matta Monastery (Niniwa), and of Mosul are on the top of these ecclesiastical circumscriptions. In addition, there is another metropolitan in Mosul who is the Superior of the major seminary. In Lebanon we find the archeparchies of Beirut, of Mount Lebanon, and (since 1992) of Zahleh, also headed by metropolitans. In Atchaneh, Bikfaya, resides the „Metropolitan of the patriarchal Benevolent Institutions in Lebanon”. He is not an eparchial bishop. The place be-

<sup>4</sup> A few years ago this Church has adopted the name „Syriac Orthodox Church” in order to avoid confusion with the political State of Syria and its institutions.

longs to the archeparchy of Mount Lebanon. The Holy Land forms the patriarchal vicariate of Jerusalem and Jordan. The metropolitan-patriarchal vicar has his residence at the famous St. Mark's Syriac Orthodox monastery in Jerusalem. In Turkey, only a small number of faithful have remained after the great exodus of the Aramaic Christians during the latest decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is still a metropolitan at the head of the archeparchy of Tur Abdin (Mor Gabriel Monastery) and another metropolitan is the patriarchal vicar in Istanbul. An abbot looks after the patriarchal vicariate of Mardin.

As in the case of the Maronite Church, there is a large emigration of Syriac Orthodox faithful. The Metropolitan of Central Europe and the Benelux States is residing at St. Ephrem Monastery in Glane-Losser, The Netherlands. There are parishes in Austria, Belgium, France, and the Netherlands. The parishes of Germany have been detached a few years ago to form a separate patriarchal vicariate, headed by Metropolitan Mar Dionysios Isa Gürbiz. There is also a parish in London. The situation seems to be a little complicated in Sweden, probably for ethnic reasons. The town of Södertälje is the headquarters of the Archeparchy of Sweden and at the same time of the Patriarchal Vicariate of Sweden. Both have their own metropolitans and parishes. After the death of Metropolitan Mar Athanasios Yeshue Samuel of the United States and Canada, the Holy Synod divided this archeparchy into three patriarchal vicariates appointing for each a metropolitan. In the United States, there are now the patriarchal vicariates of the Eastern USA with headquarters in Teaneck, New Jersey, and the patriarchal vicariate of the Western USA with headquarters in Burbank, California. The Patriarchal Vicariate of Canada has got its headquarters in St-Laurent, Québec. In South America, monk-priests administer the two patriarchal vicariates of Argentina and of Brazil. The Patriarchal Vicariate of Australia and New Zealand (6 parishes) continues to be vacant. Formerly it was headed by a metropolitan residing at Lidcombe, NSW Sydney.

As mentioned above, the Syriac Orthodox Church is having metropolitans who are not eparchs, but are endowed with special functions. This is also the case in the Malankara Syriac Orthodox Church. The Patriarch has reserved the supervision of these metropolitans to himself, so the archeparchy for the ethnic group of the Knanaya<sup>5</sup> people exercising personal jurisdiction all over India. It has its headquarters in Chingavanam near Kottayam, Kerala, India. Its archpastor, Mar Climis Abraham, Chief Metropolitan of the East, died in 2002. So far a successor has not yet been elected. The two other prelates have the title „Metropolitan of the Simhasana Churches and Institutions of the Holy Apostolic See in India” (Residence in Mathoor, Pathanamtitta, Kerala) and „Metropolitan of the Evangelistic Association of the East” (Residence: Iringole, Perumbavoor, Kerala). In the emigration, the Malankara Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese of the

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<sup>5</sup> This ethnic group claims its origin (in the first millennium) in the Middle East.

United States and Canada with headquarters in Carteret, New Jersey, headed by a metropolitan, is under the spiritual supervision of the patriarch, too.

It was impossible to obtain exact statistical information. One speaks of about 180,000 faithful throughout the world.

### 2.1.2. Malankara Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church

This Church enjoys full ecclesiasal and sacramental communion with the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch whom she accepts as her supreme head. Her own hierarchical head is the 73 years old *Mafryônô*<sup>6</sup> or Catholicos of the East, His Beatitude Mar Baselios Thomas I (formerly known as Thomas Mar Dionysios, Metropolitan of Ankamaly). He was ordained *mafryônô* and installed by the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch. Because of the, sometimes even violent, tensions with that part of the Malankara Church that has declared itself autocephalous and has adopted the name *Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church* (or „Indian Orthodox Church”), the Malankara Jacobite Church has been unable to elect the catholicos and other hierarchs until recently. Officially this Church is registered as the *Jakobaya Suriani Christiani Association Church* (Jacobite Syrian Christian Association Church. It is like a trust of parishes. So the split in the Malankara Orthodox Church has become a reality

The quarrel between the Jacobite and Orthodox factions continues without any solution. „The relationship between the Jacobites and the Orthodox is very tense. It is acute on occasions of funerals. Now the Orthodox Catholicos declared that on the 31st August he would enter the ancient church of Manarcad near Kottayam, which is under the Jacobites. There are daily conflicts between the two factions in their attempt to possess the parishes. The Government is trying their level best to pacify the quarrelling factions. It is tragic and contrary to all Christian principles.”<sup>7</sup>

The information service *suryoyo-online.org* commented on this state of things on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2002, as follows: „The newly consecrated Catholicos of the (Malankara) Jacobite Syrian Church, Baselios Thomas I, said the church does not want to continue with its litigations with the Malankara Orthodox Church. The church wants to serve the people and not continue with the litigations, which are 'anti-Christian'... On whether there was any possibility of a rapprochement between the two factions, he said it was unlikely. He said instead of entering into unending litigations, it was time that both the factions –

<sup>6</sup> This title („Fructifier”) had the hierarchical head of the ancient Catholicate of the East, the second in rank after the patriarch. Residing outside the Roman Empire, he had the right of convoking a Holy Synod for the episcopal elections and of enthroning them.

<sup>7</sup> Private correspondence (summer 2002) from Kerala. See also page 7 of the journal „The New Indian Express”, Thiruvananthapuram, September 19, 2002, where letters of faithful of both the factions are published.

the Malankara Orthodox Church and the Jacobite Syrian Church hold talks to settle their long-standing dispute over the ownership of various churches, properties and matters relating to the acceptance of the holy Patriarch of Antioch as their supreme patron. He also urged the political parties and the state government to take initiative to settle their dispute." According to Mar Baselios Thomas I, the reunion of the Church with the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church was very remote. Addressing a „meet the press" programme he said he was ready to renounce his post and recognise the Orthodox faction head, if the Orthodox faction was ready to accept the Patriarch of Antioch as its supreme spiritual head. The Malankara Orthodox faction had filed 353 cases in various courts in the last 27 years to establish that their Catholicos Baselios Marthoma Mathews II was the supreme head of the Church and independent of the Holy See of Antioch. Replying to queries, the Jacobite Catholicos said the Jacobite faction would not opt for violence to protect its faith and its churches, which were under the custody of the rival faction.

This is the reason why the number of hierarchs is very limited. As it is the practice in the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch, the eparchs are all metropolitans. Under the Holy Synod of the Malankara Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church are ten eparchies. The following indications are of early 2002. The present catholicos who was the Metropolitan of Ankamaly administered at the same time the eparchies of Kandanad, Thrissur, Kollam, Thumpamon and Puthencruz. He is assisted by one of the two *Tibelôyô* (general) bishops ordained in Damascus in 2001 by the patriarch himself. The eparchy of Kottayam is administered by the metropolitan of the Outside Kerala eparchy. The eparchy of Kollam, Thumpamon and Niranam is for the time being vacant. Only the eparchies of Kochi and of Malabar have their regular metropolitans. In the above-mentioned press conference the new catholicos, being asked on the appointment of new metropolitans, said the final decision has to be taken by the patriarch. The election, ordination, and instalment of new hierarchs has been certainly an urgent issue. At last, four bishops were elected and ordained in Damascus on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2002.

### 2.1.3. Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church<sup>8</sup>

This Church comprises that part of the Malankara Church that separated from the Syrian Orthodox Church and declared herself autocephalous. She claims to be the only legitimate orthodox Church in India. So her attitude towards the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church is hostile. Her hierarchical head is the 87 years old Baselios Marthoma Mathews II who resides at the

<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. MADEY, Background and History of the Present Schism in the Malankara [Orthodox] Church: „Oriens Christianus" 60(1976) 95-112.

Catholicate Palace of Devalokam, Kottayam. His title is also *Catholicos of the East and Malankara Metropolitan*. Before becoming the catholicos, he has been the metropolitan of Kollam from 1953 to 1991. Claiming to be the only successor to St. Thomas the Apostle, he adds to his title „89<sup>th</sup> Successor of the Throne of St. Thomas the Apostle” to emphasise his equality with all the other patriarchs. He is also addressed as „His Holiness”. His successor will be the Catholicos Designate Thomas Mar Timotheos, Metropolitan of the eparchy of Malabar. The catholicos has not replied to the proposal for reconciliation of the Jacobite catholicos. It seems that he is sharing the Moscow patriarch’s understanding of a „canonical territory”. So the ecumenical climate in view of the Malankara Catholic Church has also worsened.

Under the Holy Synod of this Church come 21 eparchies inside and outside India. The eparchy of the Catholicos is Kottayam Central. All the other eparchies have a metropolitan as their respective head. In Kerala there are the eparchies of Malabar, Niranam, Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Thumpamon, Chennannur, Kottayam, Kunnamkulam, Sultan’s Battery, Kochi, Kandanad, Idukki and Aluva. The Knanaya eparchy is not functioning at present. Those faithful who belong to this jurisdiction within the catholicate of Kottayam are administered by the catholicate itself. Outside Kerala there are today the eparchies of New Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, and Chennai. For the faithful in the emigration, the eparchy of Canada and Europe was established whose metropolitan still resides in Buffalo, New York. Another eparchy is that of North America with headquarters in Bellrose, New York.

The membership of the autocephalous Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church is also estimated as about 1,000,000.

#### 2.1.4. Independent Syrian Church of Malabar

This is a small community, that has the same origin as the Malankara Churches described above. It is neither in communion with the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Orthodox nor with the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. Its headquarters is at Thozhiur, Kerala. It professes the same faith and has the same liturgy as the Malankara Syrian Orthodox and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Churches. Under one metropolitan there are about 6,000 faithful belonging to six churches. Actually the apostolic succession of the metropolitan is doubtful, because he was ordained by bishops of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, which has widely adopted Protestant theology and belief. Like the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, the Independent Syrian Church of Malabar enjoys the communion with the Anglican Communion.

## 2.2. Churches in communion with Rome

### 2.2.1. The Syrian Catholic Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East

It is a rare fact that three patriarchs<sup>9</sup> of a Church *sui iuris* are still alive. The ruling patriarch is Mar Ignatios Butros VIII (Abdel-Ahad). His predecessor was Mar Ignatios Mussa I (Dawood) who resigned from his post in 2001 on the request of the Roman Pontiff and was subsequently appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and received into the college of cardinals. The predecessor of Mar Ignatios Mussa I was Mar Ignatios Antoon II (Hayek) who resigned in 1998 at the age of 88 and is now living in a convent of St. Ephrem Sisters in Lebanon. The residence of the Patriarchate is at Beirut or, in summer, at Sharfeh Monastery in the mountains.

When we dealt with the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate, we pointed out to the losses this Church had to endure in the past. The same is the case of the Syrian Catholic Patriarchate that numbers today only about 115,000 faithful throughout the world.

The patriarch's eparchy, which covers the whole of Lebanon, is Beirut. In this country, the number of faithful is but 4,500. Under the jurisdiction of the patriarch are also the patriarchal exarchates of Jerusalem, of Turkey and of Iraq and Kuwait. The exarch of Jerusalem is Mar Gregorios Butros Melki who had served before his Episcopal ordination in 2002 in Canada to organise Syrian Catholic pastoral centres. The Archbishop of Baghdad is also responsible for Iraq and Kuwait, and the Eparch of Cairo for the 55 faithful living in Sudan. In Syria, there are two metropolitan sees – Damascus; Homs, Hama and Nabh) and two archeparchies (Aleppo; Hassakeh-Nisibis). There is total of Syrian Catholics of about 30,000. Two archeparchies (Baghdad; Mossul) are in Iraq where the number of faithful belonging to the Syrian Catholic Church is about 55,000. For the faithful living in the emigration, the Roman Apostolic See has established the eparchy of Our Lady of Deliverance of Newark, New Jersey, USA, which has seven parishes in the United States and two in Canada, and the *Apostolic Exarchate*<sup>10</sup> in Venezuela.

### 2.2.2. The Malankara Catholic or Syro-Malankara Church<sup>11</sup>

This Church is the youngest Church *sui iuris* within the Catholic communion. It came into being in 1930. Today, according to the *Annuario Pontifici-*

<sup>9</sup> See *Annuario Pontificio* 2002, 3 and 43\*.

<sup>10</sup> An „Apostolic Exarchate“ in a Church of Oriental tradition corresponds to an „Apostolic Vicariate“ in the Roman Catholic Church. Its hierarch is always appointed by the Roman pontiff.

<sup>11</sup> See my article *Die Katholische Syro-Malankarische Kirche*, „*Studia Oecumenica*“ (2001)1, 155-169, esp. 162-165.

cio 2002, she has a membership of 450 460 faithful living in the metropolitan eparchy of Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum) and the eparchies of Tiruvalla, Sultan's Battery, Marthandom and Moorattuguzha. In contrast to the Malankara non-Catholic Churches, the Malankara Catholic Church forms only one metropolity with suffragan eparchies. According to the CCEO, she is a Metropolitan Church *sui iuris*. There are two assistant or auxiliary bishops at Thiruvananthapuram who are titular bishops. What is striking is the liveliness of this Church. The religious orders and communities are flourishing. Each eparchy has a minor seminary where vocations to the priestly ministry are fostered. In the inter-eparchial St. Mary's Malankara Seminary, more than 180 seminarians are preparing themselves for the service in their eparchies through the study of philosophy and theology. In 2002, 20 deacons were ordained to the presbyterate.

The Malankara Catholic Church has also developed a flourishing educational system going from „kindergartens” to university colleges. There are pastoral and catechetical centres on diocesan and regional levels, so also hospitals and homes for mentally handicapped persons. The Pushpagiri Hospital of the eparchy of Tiruvalla has developed also into an institution of formation. The course for the diploma in nursing has already begun. After having obtained the State recognition as a Medical University, the first batch of young medical doctors has started their specialisation study in November 2002.

The eparchial Macfast College has started a new additional study course giving the possibility of obtaining the academic degree „Master in Business Management”<sup>12</sup>.

### 3. The Churches of the Syro-Oriental(Chaldean) Tradition

#### 3.1. Churches, which are not in communion with Rome

##### 3.1.1. The Assyrian Church of the East<sup>13</sup>

The Assyrian Church is the non-Catholic continuation of the Church of the East, which developed outside the Roman Empire. The major part of the faithful following the tradition of the ancient Church of the East has restored communion with the Church of Rome. They are forming the Chaldean Catholic Church. According to the periodical *Voice of the East* that belongs to the Indian Archbishopric of the Assyrian Church<sup>14</sup>, the Chaldean Church numbers today 800,00 and the Assyrian Church 400,000 faithful.

<sup>12</sup> Christmas Letter (2002) of Mar Timotheos, Eparch of Tiruvalla, to friends and benefactors of the eparchy.

<sup>13</sup> Detailed information about this church is available in [www.cired.org](http://www.cired.org).

<sup>14</sup> 48/10 (Thrissur 2001), 5.

The head of the Assyrian Church is Mar Dinkha IV Khanania, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East. He is residing in the United States and is the archpastor also of the Eparchy of Eastern USA. Because of the strong emigration to this country, there are two more eparchies: Western USA and Western California. The last is under Bishop Mar Bawai Soro<sup>15</sup> and comprises the English-speaking parishes. There is also an eparchy in Canada and in Australia. In Iraq, the traditional homestead, the three hierarchs are residing in Baghdad: one holds the title of Metropolitan of Iraq and Russia, one is bishop of Duhok residing in the seminary, the third is the Bishop of the Jelu tribe. In Iran, where the catholicos-patriarch was the eparch before his election to the patriarchal throne, the eparchy is directed by a chorbishop. In Lebanon, Beirut is the see of the metropolitan; in Syria, the Bishop of Hassakeh is responsible for the pastoral work; in Sweden is the residence of the Bishop of Europe at Norsborg. There are parishes under his jurisdiction in London, Wiesbaden (Germany), Braband (Denmark), Arnhem (The Netherlands), Vienna (Austria). The „Mission de France” is supervised from England. The metropolitan eparchy of India with headquarters at Thrissur belonged originally to the Ancient Church of the East (*see below*). The present metropolitan, Dr. Dr. Mar Aprem, restored the union in 1995. Most of its parishes are in Kerala, but there are also a few parishes and missions in the emigration. This eparchy counts about 15,000 faithful.

During the last decades, this Church has initiated large ecumenical initiatives. Her relations with the Catholic Church in general and her Chaldean sister-Church are excellent, so that recently partial *communicatio in sacris* between these two branches, daughters of the apostolic Church of the East, was approved also by the Apostolic See of Rome. As the anaphora that is generally used in the Church of the East does not quote the biblical words of institution of the Eucharist, this fact has provoked a massive protest from some circles in the Roman Catholic Church holding scrupulously to thomistic views.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.1.2. Ancient Church of the East

Because of the adoption of the Gregorian calendar and a more lenient fasting discipline, a small part of faithful separated from the Assyrian Church of the East and elected another Catholicos-Patriarch of the Ancient Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East, with headquarters in Baghdad. The present

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<sup>15</sup> This hierarch has recently obtained the doctorate in theology from a Pontifical University in Rome.

<sup>16</sup> H.-L. BARTH, *Wandlung ohne Wandlungsworte? Untersuchungen zur Anaphora des Ad-dai und Mari*, „Una Voce Korrespondenz” 32(2002), 191-218; D. BERGER, *Abschied von den exakten Konsekrationsworten? Oder: Besitzt die Kirche die Vollmacht, eine Liturgie ohne die Einsetzungsworte für gültig zu erklären?*, in: *ibid.* 350-370.

catholicos-patriarch is Mar Addai II. We find this Church mostly in Iraq where she has the patriarchal eparchy of Baghdad and the metropolitan eparchies of Kerkuk and Niniva/Mossul. There is still another metropolitan residing at Mainz-Kastel who joined Mar Addai in 1996. The other hierarchs have the title „episcopa”, the eparch of Modesto, California (USA), and the Assistant to the Patriarch who actually studies in the United States. There are no statistic data available. The estimated number of faithful belonging to this Church is certainly below 50,000.

### 3.2. Churches in Communion with the Church of Rome

#### 3.2.1. The Chaldean Church

Her hierarchical head is Mar Raphael I Bidawid, Catholicos-Patriarch of Babylon, who resides at Baghdad. The metropolitan eparchy of Baghdad is also the patriarchal eparchy. Two bishops of the patriarchal Curia are at the same time his auxiliary bishops, the (titular) Archbishop of Kaškar and the Bishop of Anbar. There are 2 metropolitan eparchies (Baghdad and Kerkuk), three archeparchies (Arbil, Bassorah, and Mossul), and five eparchies (Aqra, Alquosh, Amadiyah, and Zâkhô) in Iraq. The number of faithful in the individual eparchies reflects their history to some extent. In the present political circumstances, the existence of the Chaldean Church in particular and of Christianity in general is endangered. There are two eparchies today counting less than 1,000 faithful who are under the care of patriarchal administrators. The persecutions by Muslims and Kurds forced many faithful to emigrate to more peaceful regions, either in Iraq itself (e.g. to Baghdad) or to Europe and America.

The same can be said of the Chaldean Church in Iran (former Persia). In ancient days till the Middle Ages, the Church of the East was also described as the „Persian Church”. What is still there? The metropolitan sees of Teheran and Urmya remind us of a better past. The metropolitan of Teheran has less than 5,000 faithful under his jurisdiction, the metropolitan of Urmya who is, in personal union, also the eparch of Salmas, looks after less than 2,000 faithful. In the Holy Land, there are no Chaldeans at all now. The patriarchal protosyncellus in Jerusalem takes care of a real estate belonging there to the Patriarchate. There are Chaldean eparchies established in Beirut, Aleppo, Cairo and Diyarbakir (with residence in Istanbul) for the Chaldean faithful living in the respective political States.

The largest emigration is that of the United States of America. After having established the eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Detroit in 1985, the Roman Apostolic See created the new eparchy of St. Peter the Apostle of San Diego (California) in 2002. There are about 100,000 faithful in North America. The Chaldeans in other countries are under the jurisdiction of the competent Roman Catholic ecclesiastical authorities. There are e.g. a patriarchal vicar in

Paris and in Scandinavia and Chaldean missions in Vienna, Austria, and in the Bavarian capital Munich, Germany.

### 3.2.2. Syro-Malabar Church<sup>17</sup>

This is the oldest Church in India going back to the missionary activity of St. Thomas the Apostle. The Christians called themselves „Nazrani”, followers of Jesus of Nazareth. There was but one Church of Syro-oriental tradition till the arrival of the Portuguese who introduced the Roman Catholic (Latin) Church on Indian soil.

The first split of the „Syriac” Christians occurred in the 18th century, when the group opposing latinisation and the Latin bishops imposed on the St. Thomas or Nazrani Christians got the archdeacon ordained a bishop by bishops from the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate. Despite this tragic event, the Syro-Malabar Church, as this Church of Syro-oriental tradition in communion with Rome is called now, is numerically the strongest among all the Churches of Syriac tradition numbering about 3,500,000 faithful.

Pope John Paul II recognising her special status, established the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopate of Ernakulam-Angamaly on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1992. This major archiepiscopate comprises alone the four metropolies in Kerala. These are:

- Changanassery with suffragan sees: Kanjirappally, Kottayam, Palai, Thuckulay;
- Ernakulam-Angamaly with suffragan sees: Kothamangalam, Idukki;
- Thalassery with suffragan sees: Mananthavady, Thamarassery, Belthangady;
- Thrissur with suffragan sees: Irinjalakuda, Palghat.

Outside the Major Archiepiscopate, there are ten Syro-Malabar eparchies for the emigrants in the big centres of commerce and industry (e.g. Kalyan in the region of Mumbai) or in mission regions (Bijnor, Chanda, Adilabad, Gorakhpur, Jagdalpur, Rajkot, Sagar, Satna, and Ujjain). These eparchies find themselves within the frame of Roman Catholic ecclesiastical provinces. Their bishops are members of the Holy Synod as *aggregati*. The subordination to Roman Catholic ecclesiastical provinces is an anomaly, and, therefore, should be changed.

On 16<sup>th</sup> February 2001, Pope John Paul II established the first Syro-Malabar eparchy outside India for the numerous emigrants in the United States

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<sup>17</sup> The history of this church is described by many authors. Besides the „standard” works of Cardinal E. Tisserant and Placid J. Podipara, the following studies may be recommended: J. KOLLAMPARAMBIL, *The St. Thomas Christians' Revolution in 1653*, Kottayam 1981; J. PERUMTHOTTAM, *A Period of Decline of the Mar Thoma Christians (1712-1752, [= OIRSI 171])*, Kottayam 1994.

of America and in Canada. He nominated Mar Jacob Angadiath eparch of the Eparchy of St. Thomas of Chicago (60,000 faithful) and (permanent Apostolic Visitor for the Syro-Malabar faithful residing in Canada (50,000 faithful).

## Conclusion

We have given a rapid survey of the actual state of „Syriac” Christianity all over the world. Its aim was to show to which of the two traditions the individual Churches are belonging and with whom they are in communion. All these Churches, with the exception of the Independent Syrian Church of Malabar, are participating in the Syriac Consultations<sup>18</sup> organized by the Foundation Pro Oriente. The Malankara Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church being a part of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church is jointly represented by the Patriarchate.

## Kościół tradycji syryjskiej. Aktualny przegląd

### Streszczenie

Artykuł przedstawia aktualną sytuację Kościołów tradycji antiocheńskiej (zachodniosyryjskiej) i chaldejskiej (wschodniosyryjskiej). Z wyjątkiem Kościoła maronickiego, który w całości pozostaje w komunii z Rzymem, każdy z pozostałych dzieli się na dwie frakcje, z których jedna trwa w łączności z Rzymem, druga – jeszcze nie. Autor zaprezentował historyczne i teologiczne tło ukonstytuowania się każdego z Kościołów, jego obecną geograficzną lokalizację oraz dane dotyczące liczby wiernych.

Artykuł dzieli się na trzy części. W pierwszej części przedstawiono Kościół maronicki. Wprawdzie Kościół ten przynależy do tradycji antiocheńskiej, został jednak potraktowany odrębnie ze względu na brak swego niekatolickiego odpowiednika.

Druga część została w całości poświęcona pozostałym Kościołom tradycji antiocheńskiej. Najpierw omówiono Kościoły nie będące w jedności z Rzymem: Syryjski Kościół Ortodoksyjny, Syro-Jakobicki Kościół Ortodoksyjny, Syro-

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<sup>18</sup> The 6<sup>th</sup> Syriac Consultation on Eucharist, Priesthood/Holy Orders, and Penance is taking place from 7th March till 11th March, 2003.

Malankarski Kościół Ortodoksyjny i Niezależny Syryjski Kościół Malabaru. Następnie przedstawiono Kościoły zjednoczone ze Stolicą Apostolską: Syryjski Kościół Katolicki i Syro-Malankarski Kościół Katolicki.

W trzeciej części zaprezentowano Kościoły tradycji chaldejskiej. Analogicznie jak wyżej, w pierwszym podpunkcie skupiono uwagę na Kościołach, które nie zachowują jedności z Rzymem, tzn. na Kościele Asyryjskim i Starożytnym Kościele Wschodu. Natomiast w drugim podpunkcie ukazano sytuację Kościołów pozostających w łączności z Rzymem, tzn. Chaldejskiego Kościoła Katolickiego i Syro-Malabarskiego Kościoła Katolickiego.

Przedstawiciele wszystkich z przedstawionych Kościołów, z wyjątkiem Niezależnego Syryjskiego Kościoła Malabaru, uczestniczą w tzw. Konsultacjach syryjskich prowadzonych pod auspicjami *Pro Oriente*. Konsultacje te mają na celu doprowadzenie do jedności wszystkich Kościołów tradycji syryjskiej.

R. Porada