

*Issues in Eucharistic Praying
in East in West*

Essays in Liturgical and
Theological Analysis

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XI. The Moment of Eucharistic Consecration in Byzantine Thought

The problem of the epiclesis, its meaning, and its importance—or, alternatively, expendability—for the consecration of bread and wine during a Eucharistic prayer has long been a highly polemical issue.¹ Despite their differences, scholars and theologians have often taken for granted that it was the Byzantine Church that always believed in a consecratory power of the epiclesis. Indeed, from the fourth century on (i.e., from the very starting point of the development of the Byzantine liturgy), the Byzantine Eucharistic prayers contained explicit epicleses with strong consecratory statements.

In this article I will demonstrate, however, that, while the Byzantines undoubtedly were very concerned about the epiclesis read during their Eucharistic liturgy,² its mere existence did not always signify the importance it is ascribed in late- and post-Byzantine theological literature. For the Byzantines often pointed to some other elements of the rite as “consecratory,” and were in nowise strangers to the idea of a Eucharistic consecration without an epiclesis.

1. Very useful overviews of the history of the debates and of the problem in general can be found in: Sévérien Salaville, “Épiclese eucharistique,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 5, part 1a (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1924), 194–300; Сурпrian Kern, *The Eucharist* [original title in Russian: архимандрит Киприан, Евхаристия] (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1947), 245–72; Παντελεήμων Ροδόπουλος (μητροπολίτης), *Ὁ καθάγιασμος τῶν δῶρων τῆς θείας Εὐχαριστίας* (Λειτουργικά Βλατάδων 3; Thessaloniki, 2000²); John McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis: A Detailed History from the Patristics to the Modern Era*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Hildenbrand Books, 2009), 70ff.

2. And because of this Byzantine concern I will start my article with a brief discussion of the relevant liturgical texts themselves, i.e., of the epicleses of the Byzantine liturgies of St. Basil the Great (BAS) and St. John Chrysostom (CHR), but without any intention to trace their origins.

THE EPICLESIS

The origins of the epiclesis are obscure and much debated. The earliest extant Eucharistic prayers from the *Didache* contain no explicit epicletic petition³ (though some scholars identify the acclamation “Maranatha” from Did. 10.6 with a proto-epiclesis⁴). In pre-Nicaean Christian liturgical usage the words ἐπικαλεῖν / ἐπικαλεῖσθαι and ἐπίκλησις, as has been demonstrated,⁵ referred more to “naming/applying the name” than to “calling forth in prayer.”⁶ It is, therefore, tempting to suggest that the epiclesis in

3. The literature on the *Didache* and its Eucharistic prayers is extensive; I would suggest to start reading with Kurt Niederwimmer, *Die Didache*, Kommentar zu den Apostolischen Vätern 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993²); Jonathan A. Draper, ed., *The Didache in Modern Research*, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Willy Rordorf and André Tuilier, *La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres (Didachè): Introduction, Texte Critique, Traduction, Notes, Appendice, Annexe et Index*, Sources Chrétiennes 248 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1998); Huub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Assen: Fortress Press, 2002).

4. See Rudolf Stählin, “Der Herr ist Geist,” in *Kosmos und Ekklesia: Festschrift für Wilhelm Stählin zu seinem siebenzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Heinz Dietrich Wendland (Kassel: J. Stauda-Verlag, 1953), 40–54; Karl Bernhard Ritter, “Bemerkungen zur eucharistischen Epiklese,” in *ibid.*, 163–73; John A. T. Robinson, “Traces of a Liturgical Sequence in 1 Corinthians 16:20–24,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 4 (1953): 38–41. See a criticism of this view in Palle Dinesen, “Die Epiklese im Rahmen altkirchlicher Liturgien: Eine studie über die eucharistische Epiklese,” in *Studia Theologica: Nordic Journal of Theology* 16 (1962): 42–107.

5. See R. Hugh Connolly, “On the Meaning of ‘Epiclesis,’” *Downside Review* (January 1923): 28–43, written in reply to John Walton Tyrer, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis* (Liverpool: Longmans, Green, 1917); R. Hugh Connolly, “The Meaning of ἐπίκλησις: A Reply,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1924): 337–64, written in reply to John Walton Tyrer, “The Meaning of ἐπίκλησις,” *ibid.*, 139–50. The two latter articles present a very detailed list of the contexts of the usage of ἐπικαλεῖν / ἐπικαλεῖσθαι and ἐπίκλησις in early Christianity. See also Odo Casel, “Zur Epiklese,” *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 3 (1923): 100–2; and *idem*, “Neue Beiträge zur Epiklese-Frage,” *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 4 (1924): 169–78; and Johannes Betz, *Die Eucharistie in der Zeit der griechischen Väter*, Bd. I/1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1955), 320–42.

6. It is noteworthy that in the Byzantine Eucharistic liturgies of BAS and CHR the verb ἐπικαλεῖσθαι is used in both senses. In the ekphonesis before

its later sense of “a call to God/Spirit/Logos to come and show / sanctify the bread and wine” is a result of the development of the early epicletic “naming the divine Name” formulae. This possibility comes to light when one compares Origen’s commentary on 1 Corinthians 7:5, where he describes the Eucharistic bread as the one “over which the Name of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit has been invoked” (FragmCor 34),⁷ with a baptismal and a Eucharistic prayer from *Acta Thomae*:

Come, holy name of the Messiah; come, power of grace, which is from on high; come, perfect mercy; come, exalted gift; come, sharer of the blessing; come, revealer of hidden mysteries; come, mother of the seven houses, whose rest was in the eighth house; come, messenger of reconciliation; and communicate with the minds of these youths; come, Spirit of holiness. (§ 27)⁸

Come, gift of the Exalted, come perfect mercy; come, holy Spirit; come, revealer of the mysteries of the chosen among the prophets; come, proclaimer by his Apostles of the combats of our victorious Athlete; come treasure of majesty; come beloved of the mercy of the Most High; come, (you) silent (one), revealer of the mysteries of the Exalted; come, utterer of hidden things, and shewer [*sic*] of the works of our God; come, Giver of life in secret, and manifest in your deeds; come, giver of joy and rest to all who cleave to you; come, power of the Father and wisdom of the Son, for you are one in all; come, and communicate with us in this Eucharist which we celebrate and in the

Our Father it has the sense of “naming”: “And make us worthy, Master, with confidence and without fear of condemnation, to dare call You [ἐπικαλεῖσθαι], the heavenly God, *Father*,” while in the prayers of the clergy before the Great Entrance (i.e., in the so-called “prayers of the faithful,” though the actual prayer of the faithful is a litany read simultaneously with these) and after it (after the Great Entrance—only in CHR, before—in both BAS and CHR) it has the sense of “calling forth.”

7. Greek text in Claude Jenkins, “Origen on I Corinthians, [part] III,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 9 (1908): 502. On Origen as a witness to the Eucharistic theology and practice of his time see Harald Buchinger, “Early Eucharist in Transition? A Fresh Look at Origen,” in *Jewish and Christian Liturgy and Worship: New Insights into Its History and Interaction*, ed. Albert Gerhards and Clemens Leonhard (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 207–27, and the literature indicated there.

8. ET from Albertus Frederik Johannes Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 77.

offering which we offer, and in the commemoration which we make.
(§ 50)⁹

In an article published in 1949 Friedrich Nötscher attempted to explain the “mechanism” of the consecration via invoking the divine Name: as in the Bible, naming something by a person’s name results in this person’s taking possession of this thing.¹⁰ Indeed, the notion of God “accepting” the gifts (in this or that way), sanctifying them in return, is well known in both the Christian East and the West. In the Roman Canon, for example, the idea is explicitly mentioned not even once.

Still, one should also remember that in the biblical tradition revealing the Name of God meant revealing God himself and that in earliest Christian thought the divine Name theology was closely related to Christology.¹¹ This could be the key to understanding the use of naming formulae in early Christian worship and also give a viable explanation for the fact that in some anaphoras God is asked “to manifest”

9. ET from *ibid.*, 125. See Heinz Kruse, “Zwei Geist-Epiklesen der syrischen Thomasakten,” *Oriens Christianus* 69 (1985): 33–53; Reinhard Meßner, “Zur Eucharistie in den Thomasakten: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte der eucharistischen Epiklese,” in *Crossroad of Cultures: Studies in Liturgy and Patristics in Honor of Gabriele Winkler*, ed. Robert F. Taft, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 260 (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2000), 493–513. Cf. also the anaphora of the East Syrian liturgy of Theodore of Mopsuestia: “And we beseech you, O my Lord, and supplicate you, and worship you, and petition you, that your worshipful Godhead and your mercifulness may be well-pleased, O my Lord, and there may come upon us and upon this oblation the grace of the Holy Spirit. May He dwell and rest upon this bread and upon this cup, and may He bless, consecrate, and seal them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. By the power of your Name may this bread become the holy body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this cup the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (ET by M. J. Birnie, from *Takhsa d’Kahaneh d’Adta d’Madinkha—Priestly Liturgical Manual of the Church of the East* [s.l., s.a.]).

10. Friedrich Nötscher, “Epiklese in biblischer Beleuchtung,” *Biblica* 30 (1949): 401–4.

11. See Jarl E. Fossum, “Jewish-Christian Christology and Jewish Mysticism,” *Vigilae Christianae* 37 (1983): 260–87; *idem*, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism*, WUNT 1/36 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985); Charles Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); *idem*, “The Divine Name in Ante-Nicene Christology,” *Vigilae Christianae* 57 (2003): 115–58.

or “to show,” rather than “to convert” or “to make,” the offered gifts the Body and Blood of Christ:¹² if *the* Name is Christ himself, then the application of the Name to the gifts should result in a manifestation of Christ in them.¹³ The best known anaphora with such word usage is the anaphora of Basil (in its various versions), which in its epiclesis has the verb “to show” (ἀναδείκνυμι). Another interesting example is the anaphora from the Barcelona papyrus, the oldest extant manuscript of a Christian Eucharistic prayer, where for the same purpose the verb σωματοποιέω is used, meaning (among other things) “to make more solid, to depict, to represent [in art].”¹⁴

Another source for the epiclesis could be a petition for the unity of the Church, much accented already in the Eucharistic prayers of the *Didache* and presumably originating in the Jewish grace after meals.¹⁵

12. See Joseph Höller, *Die Epiklese der griechisch-orientalischen Liturgien* (Wien: Mayer & Company, 1912), 110–34; Erik Peterson, “Die Bedeutung von ΑΝΑΔΕΙΚΝΥΜΙ in den griechischen Liturgien,” in *Festgabe für Adolf Deismann zum 60. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1927), 320–26; E. G. Cuthbert F. Atchley, *On the Epiclesis of the Eucharistic Liturgy and in the Consecration of the Font*, Alcuin Club Collections 31 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), 114–15; Martin Jugie, “De epiclesi Eucharistica secundum Basilium Magnum,” *Acta Academiae Velehradensis* 19 (1948): 202–7; Sévérien Salaville, “ΑΝΑΔΕΙΚΝΥΝΑΙ, ΑΠΟΦΑΝΕΙΝ: Note de lexicologie à propos de textes eucharistiques,” in *Mémorial Louis Petit: Mélanges d’histoire et d’archéologie byzantines* (Bucarest: Institut Français d’études byzantines, 1948), 413–22.

13. And this could intimate the idea of the Logos-epiclesis, which I will not discuss further. See McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis*, 107–9; Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Prayers of Sarapion of Thmuis: A Literary, Liturgical and Theological Analysis*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 249 (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995), 233–53; Robert F. Taft, “From Logos to Spirit: On the Early History of the Epiclesis,” in *Gratias Agamus. Studien zum eucharistischen Hochgebet: Für Balthasar Fischer*, ed. Andreas Heinz and Heinrich Rennings (Freiburg e. a.: Herder, 1992), 489–502.

14. See my critical edition of this anaphora, Michael Zheltov, “The Anaphora and Thanksgiving Prayer from the Barcelona Papyrus: An Underestimated Testimony to the History of the Anaphora in the Fourth Century,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008): 467–504. I disagree with the analysis of this anaphora presented by Paul Bradshaw at the NAAL Annual Meeting in 2010 in Milwaukee (a revised version of which appears in this volume, pp. ●●●–●●● above).

15. See Jules Souben “Le canon primitive de la messe,” *Les Questions ecclésiastiques* 1 (1909): 326; Paul Cagin, *L’Anaphore apostolique et ses témoins* (Paris:

While in the Jewish prayer God is asked to gather his people in a concrete place—in the land of Israel—in the Christian perspective this petition was modified to an appeal to unite the Church in the Holy Spirit. Later this idea could have been transformed into a petition for sanctifying the congregation and, further on, to a Spirit-epiclesis.

Yet another possible explanation for the origins of the epiclesis could be sought in a petition concerning the unworthiness of the celebrant and the clergy and/or the worshiping community. It is precisely in this sense that Johannes de Turrecremata—the key Latin theologian at the Council of Florence—understood the epiclesis, i.e., as a prayer only and exclusively concerning the unworthiness of the celebrants (because a consecratory interpretation of an epiclesis following the words of institution, as in the Byzantine anaphoras, would shed doubt on the consecratory power of Christ's words).¹⁶ The same view can also be found in a number of works of subsequent Catholic authors, though there were also many criticisms of it by Anglican, Protestant, and some Catholic writers, and in the twentieth century the Catholic perspective has substantially shifted.¹⁷ Despite the confessional coloring of this “unworthiness” idea, Ivan Karabinov, an outstanding Russian liturgical scholar of the early twentieth century, explained the origins of the epiclesis in the same way.¹⁸

The latter of the abovementioned hypotheses concerning the origins of the epiclesis actually seems to me to be the least likely. In this ar-

Lethielleux, 1919), 234–36; Fernand Cabrol, “Épiclèse,” in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, vol. 5, part 1a (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1924), 142–84, here 174; Louis Bouyer, *L'Eucharistie: Théologie et spiritualité de la prière eucharistique* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1966), 176–84, 301–3; McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis*, 117–19.

16. See Éphrem Boularand, “L'épiclèse au concile de Florence,” *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 60 (1959): 241–73.

17. See a review of the problem: Robert F. Taft, “Ecumenical Scholarship and the Catholic-Orthodox Epiclesis Dispute,” *Ostkirchliche Studien* 45 (1996): 201–26.

18. It is unfortunate that his book *The Eucharistic Prayer (or Anaphora): An Historical-Liturgical Investigation* [original title in Russian: *Карабинов Евхаристическая молитва (анафора): Опыт историко-литургического исследования*] (Saint-Petersburg, 1908), which contains many remarkable insights, remains largely unknown to Western scholars. This liturgical scholar died a martyr's death, having been killed by the Communists in 1937 solely because he was a professor at a Spiritual Academy.

ticle, however, I intend neither to evaluate various theories on the origins of the epiclesis nor to enumerate them all. I shall rather turn my attention to the epicleses of the Byzantine anaphoras themselves.

The epiclesis of Basil (hereafter BAS) reads as follows (I have numbered the logical blocks to facilitate reference):

Therefore, Master all-holy,

<I.> we also, your sinful and unworthy servants, who have been held worthy to minister at your holy altar, not for our righteousness, for we have done nothing good upon earth, but for your mercies and compassions which you have poured out richly upon us, with confidence approach your holy altar.

<II.> And having set forth the representations (ἀντίτυπα) of the holy Body and Blood of Your Christ,

<III.> we pray and beseech You, O holy of holies, in the good pleasure of Your bounty, that Your [all-]Holy Spirit may come upon us and upon these gifts set forth, and bless them and sanctify and show (ἀναδείξαι) this bread the precious Body of our Lord and God Jesus Christ, [Amen,] and this cup the precious Blood of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, [Amen,] which was shed for the life of the world, [and salvation – Amen, amen, amen,]

<IV.> and unite with one another all of us who partake of the one bread and the cup into communion with the one Holy Spirit;

<V.> and make none of us to partake of the holy Body and Blood of Your Christ for judgment or for condemnation, but that we may find mercy and grace with all the saints who have been well-pleasing to You . . .¹⁹

It is extraordinary that the compiler of this anaphora was able to interweave nearly all of the abovementioned contexts of epicletic prayer into one text. Here we have: I. and V. Prayers concerning the unworthiness of the celebrants and the partakers; II. A petition for the acceptance by God of the gifts that have been brought; III. An appeal to God the Father for the Holy Spirit to come, and an expression of the

19. ET from: Ronald C. D. Jasper, Geoffrey J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed*, 3rd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Pueblo, 1990), 119–20 (with some corrections of mine). Greek text in Frank Edward Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, vol. 1: *Eastern Liturgies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), 329–30 and 405–6; Michael Orlov, *The Liturgy of St. Basil the Great* [original title in Russian: *Олов М., прот. Литургия св. Василия Великого*] (Saint-Petersburg, 1909), 200–210.

concept that by his coming the Holy Spirit will “show” the bread and wine to be the Body and Blood of Christ; IV. A prayer for the unity of the Church.

Compared with the epiclesis of BAS, the epiclesis of St. John Chrysostom (hereafter CHR) does not contain any of these ideas, except a mention of the offering.²⁰ In its petition for the sanctification of the gifts it follows a different—and more simple—scheme: God the Father is asked (1) *to send* down his Holy Spirit on “us” and the gifts and (2) *to make* bread and wine the Body and Blood, converting them with his Holy Spirit, (3) *so that they would be to the benefit* of the communicants:

We offer You also this reasonable and bloodless service,
and we pray and beseech and entreat You, send down Your Holy Spirit
on us and on these gifts set forth;
and make [ποίησον] this bread the precious Body of Your Christ itself,
[converting (μεταβαλὼν) it by Your Holy Spirit, Amen,] and that which
is in this cup the precious Blood of Your Christ itself, [Amen,] convert-
ing (μεταβαλὼν) it by Your Holy Spirit, [Amen, amen, amen,]
so that they may become to those who partake for vigilance of soul,
[for forgiveness of sins,] for communion of [Your] Holy Spirit, for the
fullness of the Kingdom of Heaven, for boldness toward You, [and] not
for judgement or condemnation.²¹

The terminology of this epiclesis is more direct than that of BAS (“make” and “convert” instead of “sanctify” and “show”), and the theology is less balanced—here we have the Father sending the Holy Spirit and converting the gifts himself, using the Holy Spirit in some

20. On the offering motive in CHR, see Robert F. Taft, “Reconstituting the Oblation of the Chrysostom Anaphora: An Exercise in Comparative Liturgy,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 59 (1993): 387–402; idem, “Some Structural Problems in the Syriac Anaphora of the Twelve Apostles I,” *ARAM* 5 (1993): 505–20; idem, “Understanding the Byzantine Anaphoral Oblation,” in *Rule of Prayer, Rule of Faith: Essays in Honor of Aidan Kavanagh, OSB*, ed. Nathan Mitchell and John Baldovin (Collegeville, MN: Pueblo, 1996), 32–55; the latter article discusses both CHR and BAS.

21. ET from Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 133 (with some corrections of mine). Greek text in Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 329–30 and 386–37; Stefano Parenti and Elena Velkovska, *L’Euclologio Barberini gr. 336*, Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae,” “Subsidia” 80, 2nd ed. (Roma: CLV—Edizione Liturgiche, 2000), 78.

unspecified way, while in BAS it is the Holy Spirit who is coming and sanctifying the gifts on his own.

As has been convincingly shown, the wording of the anaphora of the Jerusalem liturgy of James (JAS) is closely related to that of the Constantinopolitan BAS.²² The epiclesis of the Greek JAS²³ reads as follows:

Have mercy on us, [Lord,] God the Father, almighty; [have mercy on us, God, our Saviour. Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy,]
and send out upon us and upon these [holy] gifts set before You Your [all-]Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life, Who shares the throne and the kingdom with You, God the Father and Your [only-begotten] Son, consubstantial and coeternal, Who spoke in the Law and the prophets and in Your New Testament, Who descended in the likeness of a dove upon our Lord Jesus Christ in the river Jordan [and remained upon Him,] Who descended upon Your holy apostles in the likeness of fiery tongues [in the Upper Room of the holy and glorious Zion on the day of the holy Pentecost; send down, Master, Your all-Holy Spirit Himself upon us and upon these holy gifts set before You,]
that He may descend upon them, [and by His holy and good and glorious coming may sanctify them,] and make (ποιήσῃ) this bread the holy Body of Christ, [Amen,] and this cup the precious Blood of Christ, [Amen,]
that they may become to all who partake of them [for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life,] for sanctification of souls and bodies, for bringing forth good works, for strengthening Your holy, [catholic and apostolic] Church, which You founded on the rock of faith, that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, rescuing it from every heresy, and from the stumbling-blocks of those who work lawlessness, [and from the enemies who rose and rise up,] until the consummation of age, [Amen.]²⁴

22. See John R. K. Fenwick, *The Anaphoras of St. Basil and St. James: An Investigation into Their Common Origin*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 240 (Roma, 1992); see also John V. Witvliet, "The Anaphora of St. James," in *Essays on Early Eastern Eucharistic Prayers*, ed. Paul F. Bradshaw (Collegeville, MN: Pueblo, 1997): 152–72.

23. On this epiclesis see André Tarby, *La prière eucharistique de l'Église de Jérusalem*, Théologie Historique 17 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 152–82; Bryan D. Spinks, "The Consecratory Epiclesis in the Anaphora of St. James," *Studia Liturgica* 11 (1976): 19–38; Fenwick, *The Anaphoras*, 167–91.

24. ET from Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 93. Greek text in Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 53–54; B.-Ch. Mercier, *La liturgie*

One can note that behind the loquacity of this text there stands the simple scheme: (1) *send down* the Spirit; (2) *make* bread and wine the Body and Blood; (3) *that they may be beneficial* in various ways. In following this scheme the epiclesis of the Greek JAS (the Syriac JAS being different in this point) is closer to the tradition reflected in CHR than to the one we find in BAS. On the other hand, the theology of the Greek JAS is more balanced than that of CHR in regard to the role of the Holy Spirit: in the Greek JAS it is the Holy Spirit who actually sanctifies (as in BAS), and he is not treated as some sort of instrument used in the process of sanctification (as in CHR).

The cited text of the Greek JAS is a late form of the liturgy presumably being interpreted by the author of the *Mystagogical Catecheses*,²⁵ ascribed by tradition to Cyril of Jerusalem, who writes:

Then, having sanctified ourselves with these spiritual hymns,

we beseech God, the lover of man, to send forth the Holy Spirit upon the (gifts) set before Him,
that He may make (ποιήσῃ) the bread the Body of Christ, and the wine the Blood of Christ;
for everything that the Holy Spirit has touched, has been sanctified and converted (μεταβέβληται). (Cat. 5, § 7)²⁶

Since the author of this text is clearly basing his words on a liturgical prayer, he is, in essence, reflecting an earlier form of what would become the epiclesis of JAS²⁷ in its early form. The cited piece is by no means a theology of consecration; it is simply a summary of the euchological text presented to the newly baptized. With time, though, these

se Saint Jacques: édition critique du texte grec avec traduction latine, Patrologia Orientalis XXVI, fasc. 2, No. 126 (Paris: Brepols, 1946), 204 [90]–206 [92].

25. See Emmanuel Joseph Cutrone, "Cyril's Mystagogical Catecheses and the Evolution of the Jerusalem Anaphora," *Orientalia Christiana* 44 (1978): 52–64; Kent J. Burreson, "The Anaphora of the Mystagogical Catecheses of Cyril of Jerusalem," in Bradshaw *Essays on Early Eastern Eucharistic Prayers*, 131–51.

26. ET from Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 85–86. Greek text in Cyrille de Jerusalem, *Catéchèses Mystagogiques*, introd., texte critique et notes de Auguste Piédagnel, trad. de Pierre Paris, Sources Chrétiennes 126 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1966), 154.

27. And, as we see, his witness corresponds to the Greek JAS and not the Syriac (which has in its epiclesis "to show" instead of "to make," etc.).

words were to become the quintessence of the Orthodox view on the theology of consecration.

But this was not to happen soon. The first Byzantine author after the *Mystagogical Catecheses* to choose this line of argument, that bread and wine become Body and Blood exactly when—and because—the priest invokes the Holy Spirit, asking “to make” and/or “to convert” the bread and wine, was Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople († 828). He writes:

These [gifts] are supernaturally converted (μεταβάλλεται) to the Body and Blood of Christ because of the celebrant’s invocation (ἐπικλήσει τοῦ ἱερεῦοντος), through the descent of the Holy Spirit. For this is what is exactly said in the priestly prayer. And [after this] we do not consider them [bread/wine and Body/Blood] to be two [different] things, but believe that they become one and the same. So, even if they [the gifts] are somewhere called representatives (ἀντίτυπα), this name is applied to them not after, but before consecration. (Antirrhet. II)²⁸

The last sentence of this text betrays Nicephorus’ dependence on John Damascene; I will return to this below. Another author of the same period²⁹—and, like Nicephorus, an opponent to the heresy of the Iconoclasts—namely, Theodorus Abu-Qurrah († 820), writes:

The priest places bread and then wine unto the holy altar, and, when he makes a supplication with the holy invocation (δεόμενος ἐπικλήσει ἁγία) the Holy Spirit comes, and descends on the [gifts] that are set forth, and by the fire of His Divinity, converts (μεταβάλλει) the bread and the wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. (Dial. cum Sar.)³⁰

The same reasoning as in Nicephorus appears in the *Protheoria* of Nicholas and Theodor of Andida, composed between AD 1055 and 1063 or 1085 and 1095.³¹

28. Greek text in PG 100, 336; ET is mine.

29. A description of the moment of consecration from another document of roughly the same time, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, will be discussed below (see the section on the words of institution).

30. Greek text in PG 97, 1553; ET is mine.

31. See René Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VII^e au XV^e siècle*, Archives de l’Orient chrétien 9 (Paris: Institut Français d’études

After reciting the prayer [of anamnesis] the bishop points at the holy [gifts], saying: *And make this bread the precious Body of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ itself, and that which is in this cup the precious Blood of Your Christ itself, converting [them] by Your Holy Spirit.* And we know and believe that [bread and wine] are converted, according to what is said in the epiclesis (ὡς ἡ ἐπίκλησις ἔχει). But Basil the Great instead of *converting by Your Holy Spirit* gives *which was shed for the life of the world.* Yet there is no contradiction between the two [BAS and CHR]. . . . After the manifestation (ἀνάδειξις) of the Divine Gifts the prayer continues. (§ 27)³²

This text has been thereafter “cut and pasted” into another Byzantine liturgical commentary, falsely attributed to Sophronius of Jerusalem.³³

An emergence of this line of argumentation—namely, that the gifts are made Body and Blood just because and exactly when the prayer says so—in ninth- through eleventh-century Byzantine texts must have had something to do with the process of the replacement of BAS, as the primary Eucharistic rite of the Constantinopolitan Church, with CHR.³⁴ As was shown above, BAS contains neither an explicit petition to “make” the gifts the Body and Blood, nor a petition that the gifts be “changed” (μεταβαλόν).³⁵ The process of the replacement of BAS with

byzantines, 1966), 181–206; Jean Darrouzès, “Nicolas d’Andida et les azymes,” *Revue des études byzantines* 32 (1974): 199–203.

32. Greek text in PG 140, 452–53; ET is mine.

33. See Bornert, *Les commentaires*, 210–11. The Greek text of Pseudo-Sophronius’ commentary has been edited by Angelo Mai (= PG 877, 3981–4001), but from an incomplete manuscript, lacking about a half of the whole commentary. An edition of the full text is now in preparation by a student of mine, Alexey Cherkasov.

34. See Stefano Parenti, “La ‘vittoria’ nella Chiesa di Constantinopoli della Liturgia di Crisostomo sulla Liturgia di Basilio,” in *Comparative Liturgy Fifty Years after Anton Bumstark: Acts of the International Congress*, ed. Robert F. Taft and Gabriele Winkler, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 265 (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2001), 907–28.

35. In the course of time the words Μεταβαλόν τῷ Πνεύματι σου τῷ Ἁγίῳ from CHR began to be sporadically added to BAS. This addition, despite its incompatibility with the Greek syntax and the sense of the phrase, became the norm from the fifteenth century on, first among the Greeks and then, under their influence, among the Russians, Georgians, and the other Orthodox nations. But after the rigid criticisms of this addition by Nicodemus Hagoreta (Pedalion, commentary on canon 19 of the Council of Laodicea) the Greeks

CHR also took place in the ninth (or the ninth to tenth) century. This was probably a part of a complex reaction of the Orthodox party to the theology of the Iconoclasts (with which BAS, unlike CHR, could be more easily harmonized).³⁶ In any case, the authors of the *Protheoria* were clearly aware of the difference between BAS and CHR in relation to the epiclesis, despite their claim that it is not substantial. And when they call the consecration an ἀνάδειξις, this betrays their intention to reconcile BAS with CHR.

The opinion of the authors of the *Protheoria*, however, cannot be considered to be the general position of the Byzantine Church under the Komnenoi and even later. Almost until the end of Byzantium there was a persistent belief that the consecration takes place at the moment of the precommunion elevation, i.e., after the Eucharistic prayer (see below). The logic of Eucharistic consecration at the moment of the corresponding petition of the Eucharistic prayer (i.e., at the moment of the epiclesis) will reach its bloom at the very end of Byzantium, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when Byzantine theologians, being reproached by the Latins, had to give an Orthodox answer to the Latin idea of consecration by the words of institution.

The best, and, as it seems, the first, of these answers was given by Nicholas Cabasilas († after 1392), who studied the problem of the epiclesis at length.³⁷ Much has been written about this, and I will not repeat it here.³⁸ I would just mention that Cabasilas, defending the

gradually removed these words from their editions of BAS. The Russians, among others, still have them; see Nicholas Desnov, "Some More Words in the Well-Known Greek-Russian Differences with Regard to the Liturgies of Sts. Basil the Great and John Chrysostom" [original title in Russian: *Деснов Н., порт. Еще несколько слов об известных расхождениях между русскими и греками в литургиях святителей Василия Великого и Иоанна Златоуста*], *Богословские труды* 31 (1992): 86–96.

36. See Stefanos Alexopoulos, "The Influence of Iconoclasm on Liturgy: A Case Study," in *Worship Traditions in Armenia and the Neighbouring Christian East*, ed. Roberta R. Ervine, AVANT Series 3 (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2006), 127–37.

37. See § 27–32 of his Commentary on the Divine Liturgy: Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explication de la Divine liturgie*, trad. et notes de S. Salaville, texte grec par R. Bornert, J. Gouillard, et P. Périchon, Sources Chrétiennes 4bis (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 172–206.

38. See Markus Biedermann, "Die Lehre von der Eucharistie bei Nikolaos Kabasilas," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 3 (1954): 29–41; Bornert, *Les commentaires*

consecrative power of the epiclesis, is at the same time holding the words of institution in no less regard:

The priest recites the story of that august Last Supper . . . repeating those words [of Christ,] the celebrant prostrates himself and prays, while applying to the offerings these words of the Only-Begotten, our Saviour, that they may, after having received His most Holy and all-powerful Spirit, be transformed (μεταβληθῆναι)—the bread into His holy Body, the wine into His precious and sacred Blood. (Expl. Div. lit. 27)³⁹

According to Cabasilas, the consecration is, therefore, impossible without both the words of institution and the epiclesis, the latter being interpreted as the only possible way of “applying” the former to bread and wine.

Besides trying to combine the beliefs in the consecratory power of the words of institution and in the epiclesis, Nicholas Cabasilas was also at pains to demonstrate that not only on a theological but also on a ritual level the Latin and the Byzantine Eucharists were substantially the same. In chapter 30 of his commentary he identifies the prayer “Supplices te rogamus” of the Roman Canon as the epiclesis of the Latin Mass.⁴⁰ Actually, this choice seems a bit odd; why did he not choose the “Quam oblationem” instead, since it contains a more explicit consecratory petition?⁴¹ First of all, Cabasilas’ choice was due to the plain fact that “Supplices te rogamus” comes *after* the

byzantins, 233–37; Gouillard’s article in Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explication*, 31–36; McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis*, 76–78; Lambert Mellis, *Die eucharistische Epiklese in den Werken des Nikolaos Kabasilas und des Symeon von Thessaloniki (Doktoraldissertation)* (Roma: Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1977), 148–96; Παντελεήμων (Ροδόπουλος), ‘Ο καθάγιασμος . . . , 50–59; Costel Habelea, “Die Erklärung der Göttlichen Liturgie nach Nikolaos Kabasilas,” *Ostkirchliche Studien* 51 (2002): 249–93, here 276–83.

39. ET from Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty, with an introd. by R. M. French, 5th ed. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2002), 69–70. Greek text in Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explicatio.*, 172–74.

40. See Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explication*, 190–98.

41. Characteristically, the Catholic authors who sought an epiclesis in their Mass pointed exactly at the “Quam oblationem”; see Salaville, “Épiclèse,” 273–74.

words of institution and “*Quam oblationem*” is read *before* them. Then, Cabasilas supplies a theological interpretation, arguing that if in the “*Supplices te rogamus*” a priest prays for the intervention of an angel, who should transfer the gifts onto the heavenly altar, this necessarily means that they are still unconsecrated—since this does not belong to an angel, to offer the heavenly sacrifice (although angels can offer the Church some help when still preparing the sacrifice).⁴² Finally his choice could have something to do with the ritual that was performed during the “*Supplices te rogamus*.” Since the Carolingian times a practice had begun to spread whereby a priest would bless the bread and the wine respectively while mentioning these elements in the course of the “*Supplices te rogamus*”; by the fourteenth century this practice became ubiquitous.⁴³ The Byzantines, in their turn, were used to the practice of a priest blessing the gifts during the epiclesis; this is prescribed already in the earliest extant manuscript of CHR, *Vatican Barberini gr.* 336.⁴⁴ Already in Cabasilas’ times, if not earlier, this blessing came to be understood as a substantial part of the consecration itself. Thus, Theodore Meliteniotes († 1393), Cabasilas’ contemporary, writes that at the moment of consecration the priest lends God “his tongue and his hand.”⁴⁵ Cabasilas could have equated the blessing of the Byzantine epiclesis with the blessing of the Latin “*Supplices te rogamus*.” He mentions neither, though, so, if my assumption is true, this ritual logic is only implied by Cabasilas.

It was Symeon of Thessalonica († 1429) who explicitly accented—and not just once—the role of a priestly blessing in the Eucharistic consecration. He writes:

We firmly believe that bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ on the grounds of the priestly prayers, and this is fulfilled

42. It is quite clear that Cabasilas was unaware that the Latin commentators of the Mass, beginning with Ivo of Chartres († 1116; cf.: PL 162, 557), often identified the “angel” in “*Supplices te rogamus*” with Christ himself. See Bernard Botte, “L’ange du sacrifice et l’épiclesse de la messe romaine au Moyen Age,” *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 1 (1929): 285–308. See also Taft, “Ecumenical Scholarship,” 213.

43. See Johannes Brinktrine, *Die heilige Messe*, 2nd ed. (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1934), 299.

44. Cf. Parenti and Velkovska, *L’Euclologio*, 78. BAS in this manuscript lacks its epiclesis.

45. See PG 149, 957.

with the sign of the cross and the invocation (τῆ ἐπικλήσει) of the Holy Spirit—so that the Master’s words, namely, “Take, eat,” and “Drink ye all of it,” and “Do ye this in commemoration of Me,” which once were entrusted to the apostles and the heirs of their grace, [now] can be enacted through the prayers. That’s why the priest, having addressed the Father and hymned the [deeds] of the oeconomia, begins with crying out the divine verbs of Christ, and [thus confirms] that He Himself instituted this, and [then says:] “Because of this we offer You [*i.e.*, the Father] these [gifts] on behalf of everything, in accordance with His [*i.e.*, the Son’s] commandment, and we beseech You, [so that] You will send Your Spirit onto me [*sic*] and onto the gifts set forth. And make them His Body and Blood, as He declared, converting [them] with Your Holy Spirit.” And while the priest pronounces [the last sentence,] he makes the sign [of the cross.] And after he made the sign [of the cross] three times, the priest believes that the bread and the cup are the Body and Blood [of Christ] themselves. . . . In order to explain all this more clearly, I will emphasize [the fact,] that the priest does not bless the gifts, when he is saying: “Take, eat” and “Drink ye all of it.” (Exp. de div. templ. 88)⁴⁶

In the same chapter Symeon criticizes those who think that particular words are alone sufficient for the sacrament to happen. He strongly emphasizes that since all the sacraments are performed by the special grace of the Holy Spirit, which lives only in the bishops and priests, a priestly prayer and a blessing are necessary for this grace to be enacted. The words of institution are “from the beginning the foundation (θεμέλιος) of the sacred rite,”⁴⁷ and “the sacred words, which were pronounced by the Saviour Himself when He celebrated [the first Eucharist],”⁴⁸ but seemingly they do not have an active role in the subsequent Eucharistic consecrations. Therefore, Symeon’s theology of the epiclesis⁴⁹ differs significantly from that of Cabasilas.

46. Greek text PG 155, 736–37; ET is mine.

47. Exp. de div. templ. 88. Greek text PG 155, 737; ET is mine.

48. *Ibid.*, 86. Elsewhere Symeon calls them “the sacred words, which were pronounced by the Saviour Himself when He celebrated [the first Eucharist]” (Exp. de div. templ. 86); Greek text PG 155, 732; ET is mine.

49. See Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins*, 258–59; Mellis, *Die eucharistische Epiklese*, 230–47; Παντελεήμων (Ῥοδόπουλος Ὁ καθάγιασμος . . . , 45–49; E. Σκούμπου, *Λατινικές καινοτομίες στήν περί ἀγίης Τριάδος καί ἱερῶν μυστηριῶν διδασκαλία τοῦ Συμεῶν Θεσσαλονίκης* (Athens, 2003), 77–89.

Honestly, Symeon's reasoning concerning the necessity of the epiclesis is not that convincing: for instance, it is unclear why the divine grace of the priesthood should act through the epiclesis and not through the words of institution, or why the manual act of blessing with a hand is so extremely important. But Symeon was obviously more concerned about defending the liturgical practice of his Church, than about conducting a proper theological dispute.

Such a dispute did, nonetheless, occur at the Council of Florence in 1439. The question of the epiclesis was posed in a discussion between Pope Eugene IV (and his theologian, Johannes de Turrecremata) and the Greek party, consisting of metropolitans Isidore of Kiev, Bessarion of Nicaea, Dorotheus of Trebizond, and Dorotheus of Mitylene. At first the Greek hierarchs stuck with Cabasilas' line of argumentation, without mentioning him by name. They compared the Byzantine epiclesis with "Supplices te rogamus" of the Roman Canon, like he did, and stated that the epiclesis is an actualization of the power of the words of institution. Isidore of Kiev called the words of institution a seed that becomes a fruit through the epiclesis: "Dominicae voces habent operationem ut semina, quia sine semine non potest effici fructus."⁵⁰ But this was not enough for the Latins, and they made the Greek metropolitans confess that consecration is achieved through the words of institution only.⁵¹ Looking back from our time it is quite obvious that this happened not because of any particular solidity of the Latin argument but because the Byzantine theological training of the time could not withstand the sophisticated terminology and logic techniques of the Scholastics.

The capitulation of the four leading metropolitans was unacceptable for another key figure of the Council, Mark Eugenikos, metropolitan of Ephesus, who did not take part in the dispute itself. Instead he wrote a brief treatise titled "That Not Only as a Result of Recitation of the Words of the Lord the Divine Gifts are Sanctified, but Because of a Prayer [Read] after These [Words] and of a Blessing of a Priest, by the Power of the Holy Spirit."⁵² Here Mark is giving a synthesis

50. Joannes Dominicus Mansi, *Sacrosanctum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Supplementum ad Tomum XXXI, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1901), 1687.

51. See Salaville, "Épiclèse," 197–99; Boularand, "L'Épiclèse."

52. Greek text in Louis Petit, *Documents relatifs au Concile de Florence, II: Œuvres anticonciliaires de Marc d'Éphèse*, *Patrologia Orientalis* XVII, fasc. 2, No. 83 (Paris: Brepols, 1923), 426 [288]–434 [296]. See a review of this work in Παντελεΐμων (Ροδόπουλος), 'Ο καθάγιασμος, 40–44.

of liturgical texts,⁵³ citations from John Chrysostom and *Corpus Areopagiticum*, and the reasonings of Nicholas Cabasilas and Symeon of Thessalonica. He recognizes that the words of institution “put in the [gifts—or the prayers] which are being celebrated the sanctifying power (τὴν ἁγιαστικὴν δύναμιν ἐνιᾶσι τοῖς τελουμένοις),” but states that it is the epiclesis that “fits [these words to bread and wine] and completes the [gifts] set forth, and makes them the Body and Blood of the Lord.”⁵⁴ This is the line of thought of Cabasilas. Then, having confirmed the importance of the words of institution and the need for the epiclesis and (NB!) a priestly blessing, Mark confronts the Latins with a critical observation. He notices that when a Latin priest consumes his personal host and drinks the whole cup alone, this contradicts the words “Take . . .” and “Drink ye all . . .,” which the Latins claim to be so important. In general, he does not hesitate to show his contempt for Latin liturgical practice, and in this respect his position differs from Cabasilas’ approach significantly.⁵⁵

After the council it was the position of Mark Eugenikos—and not that of the metropolitans who entered into the union with Rome—that became the rule of the Orthodox faith. Still, the problem of the epiclesis persisted. Even Georgios Scholarios (who later became a monk, and thereafter the patriarch of Constantinople, taking the name Gennadios), a close friend and a follower of Mark Eugenikos, while supporting Mark’s line of rejecting the union with the Latins, took a purely Latin position in the question of Eucharistic consecration. In fact, he plainly stated in his homily, “On the Sacramental Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ,” and in the treatise “What is Needed for [a Celebration of the] Sacrament of the Eucharist,” that the consecration is accomplished by the proclamation of the words of institution.⁵⁶

53. It is noteworthy that Mark is the first author who calls BAS and CHR an abbreviation of JAS (he has no doubt as to the purely apostolic origin of JAS and the liturgy of the eighth book of the “Apostolic Constitutions”); cf. Petit, *Documents*, 428 [290]. About a century later Constantine Paleocappa will produce a long-lasting forgery out of this idea, ascribing it to Proclus of Constantinople (see François J. Leroy, “Proclus, ‘De traditione divinae Missae’: un faux de C. Paleocappa,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 28 (1962): 288–99).

54. Petit, *Document.*, 430 [292].

55. *Ibid.*, 433 [295]–434 [296].

56. Georges (Gennade) Scholarios, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. L. Petit, X. A. Sidéridès, M. Jugie, 1 (Paris: Maison de la bonne presse, 1928), 124; *ibid.*, 4 (1935), 309.

The epiclesis, according to Scholarios, is merely a way to express the priest's "intention" to commemorate the Last Supper and to confess that it is God and not a man who is actually performing the sacrament.⁵⁷

It is only in the course of the seventeenth century that the Orthodox dogma of the epiclesis was finally formulated and officially proclaimed⁵⁸—but this story exceeds the scope of my essay. I would simply note that in most of the official Orthodox documents of the modern era the epiclesis is mentioned along with the blessing of a priest. Therefore, it is somewhat inaccurate—to say that the Orthodox Church officially believes in the epiclesis (as the "form" of the Eucharist). *Officially*, she believes in the epiclesis *and* the blessing of a hand and that the words of institution should also be present in the Eucharistic prayer.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The collision between the Scholastic and the Late Byzantine theologies concerning the epiclesis reveals an important difference in their approaches to the Eucharistic prayer as a whole. Whereas the Latins insisted on consecration by the words of institution only, many of the Byzantines, while defending the epiclesis as the moment of consecration, still considered the words of institution extremely important. This was not so just by accident or because of an imitation of the Latin theology. The belief in the consecratory power of the words of institution had its own story in the Christian East.

57. See Martin Jugie, "La forme de l'Eucharistie d'après Georges Scholarios," *Échos d'Orient* 33 (1934): 289–97. A new study on Scholarios' Eucharistic theology is currently being prepared by Michael Bernatski.

58. See Martin Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientalium ab Ecclesia catholica dissidentium* 3 (Paris: Sumptibus Letouzey et Ané, 1930), 288–301; Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453–1821): Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens* (München: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1988); Παντελεήμων (Ροδόπουλος), Ὁ καθάρισμος, 34–39; Michael Bernatski, "Orthodox Eucharistic Theology in the 16–18th Centuries" [original title in Russian: *Бернацкий М. М. Православное богословие Евхаристии в XVI–XVII вв.*], in *Православная энциклопедия* 17 (Moscow: ЦНЦ "Православная энциклопедия," 2008), 638–54 (a part of the huge article "Eucharist" from the *Orthodox Encyclopedia*, currently being published in Moscow).

Among the Greek fathers of the fourth century it is Gregory of Nyssa († about 394) who states that in the Eucharist

the bread, as says the apostle, “is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer” . . . it is at once changed into the Body by means of the Word, as the Word itself said, “This is My Body.” (Or. catech. 37. 105-7)⁵⁹

But while contending that the Eucharistic transformation happens “at once,” Gregory does not explain at which moment exactly. It could be that this happens at the words of institution, since Gregory is talking about them, but it could be another moment as well. Likewise, in another of his writings he says that

bread . . . is at first common bread, but when the sacramental action consecrates it, it is called, and becomes, the Body of Christ. So with the sacramental oil; so with the wine: though before the benediction they are of little value, each of them, after the sanctification bestowed by the Spirit, has its several operation. (Or. de Bapt. Christ.)⁶⁰

Is this, again, a description of a Spirit-epiclesis, or just a statement that it is the Holy Spirit Who is operative in the Eucharist? This operation could occur through the epiclesis, but this can also be through the words of institution, etc. Therefore, while Gregory of Nyssa obviously holds in high regard both the words of institution and the operative power of the Holy Spirit, his witness is ambiguous.⁶¹

The same ambiguity is found in the works of John Chrysostom († 407). One of his sayings eventually became the most cited in the polemics over the epiclesis. It is referred to in the works of John

59. Greek text in James Herbert Srawley, *The Catechetical Oration of Gregory of Nyssa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), 149–51. ET from Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Second Series*, 5 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1893), 163–64.

60. Greek text in PG 46, 581; Schaff e. a., NPNF, second series, vol. 7, 175.

61. See Andrew Kirillov, *The Dogmatic Teaching on the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the Works of Two Catechizators of the Fourth Century, Saints Cyril of Jerusalem and Gregory of Nyssa* [original title in Russian: Кириллов А. А. Догматическое учение о таинстве Евхаристии в творениях двух катехизаторов IV века, святых Кирилла Иерусалимского и Григория Нисского] (Novocherkassk, 1898); Betz, *Die Eucharistie*, Bd. I/1, 97ff.

Damascene, Michael Glykas (who limits his reasoning with this quote—Cap. theol. 84 ad Joannic. monach.), Nicholas Cabasilas, Symeon of Thessalonica, Mark Eugenikos, documents of the Florentine Council, etc. It reads as follows:

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 as that sentence "increase and multiply," once spoken, extends through all time and gives to our nature the power to reproduce itself; even so that saying "This is My Body," once uttered, does at every altar in the Churches from that time to the present day, and even till Christ's coming, make the sacrifice complete. (De prodit. Jud. 1. 6)⁶²

Based on this quote, the Latins pointed out over and over again that, according to Chrysostom, the consecration happens when the words of institution are read. But elsewhere Chrysostom himself depicts the liturgy in this way:

The priest stands before an altar, raising his hands to heaven, calling the Holy Spirit to come and touch the [gifts] set forth. . . . And when the Spirit gives the grace, when He descends, when He touches the gifts which are set forth . . . then you can see the Lamb, already slain and prepared. (De coemet. et de cruc. 3)⁶³

This citation, along with the proper text of CHR, rendered the references of the Latins to Chrysostom pointless in the eyes of the Orthodox.⁶⁴

62. Greek text in PG 49, 380; ET from McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis*, 54.

63. Greek text in PG 49, 398; ET is mine.

64. See further Andrew Kirillov, "The Dogmatic Teaching on the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the Works of St. John Chrysostom" [original title in Russian: Кириллов А. А. Догматическое учение о таинстве Евхаристии в творениях св. Иоанна Златоуста], *Христианское чтение* 1 and 3 (1896): 26–52 and 545–72; August Nägler, *Die Eucharistielehre des heiligen Johannes Chrysostomus des Doctor Eucharistiae*, Straßburger theologische Studien 3, Heft 4-5 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1900); Anne-Marie Malingrey, "L'eucharistie dans l'oeuvre de saint Jean Chrysostome," *Parole et Pain* 52 (1972): 338–45; Frans van de

But it was the leading Syrian theologians who unambiguously proclaimed that the consecration is accomplished through the words of institution and happens exactly at their recitation. Thus, Severus of Antioch († 521) writes:

It is not the offerer himself who, as by his own power and virtue, changes the bread into Christ's Body, and the cup of blessing into Christ's Blood, but the God-befitting and efficacious power of the words which Christ, Who instituted the mystery, commanded to be pronounced over the things that are offered. The priest who stands before the altar, since he fulfills a mere ministerial function, pronouncing His words as in the person of Christ, and carrying back the rite that is being performed to the time at which He began the sacrifice for His apostles, says over the bread, "This is My Body which is given for you: do this in remembrance of Me;" while over the cup again he pronounces the words, "This cup is the New Covenant in My Blood, which is shed for you." Accordingly it is Christ Who still even now offers, and the power of His divine words perfects the things that are provided so that they may become His Body and Blood. (Letters III. 3)⁶⁵

In another place he confirms his position, saying that "Christ completes it [the Eucharistic sacrifice] through the words uttered by the offerer"—and this did not prevent him from adding that "[Christ] changes the bread into Flesh and cup into Blood, by the power, inspiration, and grace of His Spirit."⁶⁶ James of Edessa († 708) and John of Dara (ninth century) held the same views.⁶⁷ From this I can conclude that for the authors of that period it was absolutely normal to talk about the operative power of the Spirit in the Eucharist and to use (as the Monophysites did and still do) an explicit epiclesis in the liturgical rite—but at the same time to teach about the consecrative power of precisely the words of institution.

Paverd, "Anaphoral Intercessions, Epiclesis and Communion-rites in John Chrysostom," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 49 (1983): 303–39.

65. English text taken from Ernest Walter Brooks, *The Sixth Book of the Select Letters of Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, in the Syriac Version of Athanasius of Nisibis*, vol. 2 (London: Williams & Norgate, 1904), 238 (the Syriac text in *ibid.*, vol. 1, 269).

66. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 234–35 (the Syriac text in *ibid.*, vol. 1, 265).

67. See Sévérien Salaville, "La consécration eucharistique d'après quelques auteurs grecs et syriens," *Échos d'Orient* 13 (1910): 321–24.

Therefore, when John Damascene († about 740) develops the following argumentation this does not necessarily mean that here we have the same reasoning as will be later developed by Nicholas Cabasilas (where the power of the “omnipotent” command contained in the words of institution is declared to be actualized only through a Eucharistic epiclesis):

If God the Word of His own will became man and the pure and undefiled blood of the holy and ever-virginal One made His flesh without the aid of seed, can He not then make the bread His body and the wine and water His blood? He said in the beginning, “Let the earth bring forth grass,” and even until this present day, when the rain comes it brings forth its proper fruits, urged on and strengthened by the divine command. God said, “This is My Body,” and “This is My Blood,” and “This do ye in remembrance of Me.” And so it is at His omnipotent command until He come: for it was in this sense that He said until He come: and the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit becomes through the invocation (διὰ τῆς ἐπικλήσεως) the rain to this new tillage. For just as God made all that He made by the energy of the Holy Spirit, so also now the energy of the Spirit performs those things that are supernatural and which it is not possible to comprehend unless by faith alone. “How shall this be,” said the holy Virgin, “seeing I know not a man?” And the archangel Gabriel answered her: “The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.” And now you ask, how the bread became Christ’s Body and the wine and water Christ’s Blood. And I say unto thee, “The Holy Spirit is present and does those things which surpass reason and thought.” (De fide Orth. 86 [IV. 13])⁶⁸

Crucial for reading the text in the way of Cabasilas would be understanding the word ἐπικλησις in the sense of a *terminus technicus* for the certain part of an anaphora. But there is no assurance that this word should be understood this way here; it could still mean the Eucharistic prayer in general—or even have the sense of “naming.” This is true despite the fact that the late- and post-Byzantine Orthodox theologians, naturally, understood ἐπικλησις exactly as an appeal for the

68. Greek text in Bonifatius Kotter, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos* 2, Patristische Texte und Studien 12 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972), 193–94; ET by Stewart Dingwall Fordyce Salmond from Schaff and Wace, *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 9 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 82–83 (second pagination).

Holy Spirit to come and therefore used this quote from Damascene as an unambiguous testimony to their position.

The general idea of the “Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith” of John Damascene seemingly was an attempt to harmonize the patristic sayings concerning various topics of Christian belief, and to organize them into a system, thus producing a synthetic picture of Orthodoxy itself. This is certainly true in regard to chapter 86 of the “Exact Exposition,” which is dedicated to the Eucharist, and a fragment of which I have quoted already. The sources that Damascene is trying to combine in this chapter include the anaphoras of JAS and BAS, *Corpus Areopagiticum*, famous passages from Gregory of Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom. In particular, the already quoted text of Damascene, is a harmonization of some sayings of the latter two authors. The most characteristic feature of John Damascene’s Eucharistic theology was exactly this talent of combining and harmonizing—and by no means any inventions of his own.⁶⁹

Among the other pieces Damascene used to create his mosaic of patristic theology were the works of Anastasius Sinaita († after 701). It was this dependency—and especially the passage cited above—that left the idea of consecration through the words of institution no chance in Byzantine theology. It concerns the usage of the word ἀντίτυπα. Damascene writes:

If some persons called the bread and the wine antitypes (τὰ ἀντίτυπα) of the Body and Blood of the Lord, as did the divinely inspired Basil, they said so not after the consecration but before the consecration, so calling the offering itself (αὐτήν τὴν προσφοράν). (De fide Orth. 86 [IV. 13])⁷⁰

The word ἀντίτυπα as a designation of the holy gifts has been quite traditional in the early Church.⁷¹ It is used with no qualms in the so-called *Apostolic Tradition*; in the Syriac *Didascalia*; in the writings

69. Contrary to the reasoning of Nicholas Armitage, “The Eucharistic Theology of the ‘Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith’ of Saint John Damascene,” *Ostkirchliche Studien* 44 (1995): 292–308.

70. Greek text in Kotter, *Die Schriften* 2, 197; ET by Stewart Dingwall Fordyce Salmond from Schaff and Wace, *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* 9, 84 (second pagination).

71. See D. A. Wilmart, “Transfigurare,” *Bulletin d’ancienne littérature et d’archéologie chrétiennes* 1 (1911): 282–92; Kenneth John Woollcombe, “Le sens de ‘type’ chez les Pères,” *La Vie Spirituelle: Supplementa* 4 (1951): 84–100; Betz,

of Irenaeus of Lyon, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzen, and Eustathius of Antioch; and in the *Corpus Macarianum*. But beginning with the sixth century it becomes undesirable. The last author to “lawfully” use it is Eutychius of Constantinople († 582), while already in the Greek *Apophthegmata Patrum* (compiled in the last decades of fifth or the first decades of sixth century) there is given a story, the moral of which is to prohibit an application of this word to the holy gifts.⁷² It is unclear which specific schism or heresy the author of this story was targeting. Leslie MacCoull suggests⁷³ that it could be the followers of Julian of Halicarnassus, but it is unlikely, since Anastasius Sinaita witnesses that the Julianites (whom he calls the Gaianites) agreed with him in a refusal to apply the term to the holy gifts. It is more probable that this had something to do with a reaction to Nestorian Eucharistic theology, but I will not discuss this further here.

Be that as it may, Anastasius Sinaita placed rejection of symbolic language in application to the Eucharist in general,⁷⁴ and of the word ἀντίτυπα in particular, into the foundations of his Christology (see his *Viae Dux* 23. 1⁷⁵). John of Damascus, in his turn, was relying on Anastasius. He had, therefore, to reconcile Anastasius’ rejection of the word with the text of the anaphora of BAS where this word is plainly used.⁷⁶ He solved the problem by claiming that the word is actually acceptable—but only as a designation of the unconsecrated bread and wine. And since this word is used in BAS *after* the words of institution,

Die Eucharistie Bd. I/1, 223–26; Taft, “Understanding the Byzantine Anaphoral Oblation,” 48–55.

72. PG. 65. Col. 156–60.

73. See her “John Philoponus, ‘On the Pasch’ (CPG, N 7267): The Egyptian Eucharist in the Sixth Century and the Armenian Connection,” *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 49 (1999): 2–12.

74. It is noteworthy that in the last book (which remained unpublished for a long time) of *Hexaameron*, ascribed to Anastasius Sinaita, there is, on the contrary, a strongly symbolic understanding of the Eucharist (see Anastasius of Sinai, *Hexaameron*, ed. and trans. Clement A. Kuehn and John D. Baggarly, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 278 [Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2007], 474–78); this alone casts serious doubts on Anastasius’ authorship.

75. Greek text in Karl-Heinz Uthemann, ed., *Anastasioi Sinaitae Viae Dux*, *Corpus Christianorum: Series Graeca* 8 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981), 307–8.

76. See Martin Jugie, “L’épiclese et le mot antitype de la messe de saint Basile,” *Échos d’Orient* 9 (1906): 193–98.

Damascene's solution eliminated for these words an opportunity to be understood as consecratory.

It could have happened that Damascene's judgment concerning ἀντίτυπα would not be the last. Indeed, he himself did not consider the above conclusion to be the only possibility, giving in the end of the same chapter 86 another explanation of this term, this time clearly applied to the already consecrated gifts.⁷⁷ But eventually it was the first of the two explanations of Damascene that became the undisputed and exclusive one in the Greek East. This happened very soon, in the course of polemics over the Eucharistic theology of the Iconoclasts. This theology, which in Damascene's time had not yet been developed (at least, he shows no acquaintance with it), was proclaimed already in 754, at the iconoclastic Council of Hieria.⁷⁸ The Iconoclasts were very much concerned with the iconic and symbolic notion of the Eucharist. Besides other matters, they considered the presence of ἀντίτυπα in the text of BAS to be a strong argument in their favor.⁷⁹ On the other hand, John Damascene was a famous polemicist against early Iconoclasm, and his judgment concerning ἀντίτυπα gave the Iconodules a key to interpret BAS in an anti-iconoclastic way.

As a result, the cited passage of John Damascene was read at the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787,⁸⁰ and thereafter repeated by Nicephorus, a leader of the anti-iconoclastic party and Patriarch of Constantinople.⁸¹ Events surrounding the Iconoclasm controversy became for the Byzantines a strong inoculation against the use of any symbolic language in relation to the already consecrated Eucharistic gifts. Therefore the Damascene's passage concerning the use of ἀντίτυπα in BAS was to be quoted unceasingly. One can find it in a number

77. Kotter, *Die Schriften* 2, 198: Ἀντίτυπα δὲ τῶν μελλόντων λέγονται οὐχ ὡς μὴ ὄντα ἀληθῶς σῶμα καὶ αἷμα Χριστοῦ, ἀλλ' ὅτι νῦν μὲν δι' αὐτῶν μετέχομεν τῆς Χριστοῦ Θεότητος.

78. See Stephen Gero, "The Eucharistic Doctrine of the Byzantine Iconoclasts and Its Sources," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 68 (1975): 4–22.

79. And, as has been noted above, the possibility of conforming BAS to the iconoclastic views on the Eucharist was a possible reason for the "victory" of CHR over BAS right after the victory of the Iconodules (see Alexopoulos, "The Influence").

80. Mansi, *Sacrosanctum* 13 (1767), 265.

81. See the passage that I have already quoted in the section on the epiclesis.

of authors, including Euthymius Zigabenus,⁸² Theodore Meliteniotes,⁸³ Symeon of Thessalonica,⁸⁴ and Mark Eugenikos.⁸⁵ And since in the light of this interpretation no one can claim the words of institution to be sufficient for the consecration, the Byzantines accordingly did not consider them to be consecratory.⁸⁶

Before completely dying out in Byzantine theology, however, the idea of consecration by the words of institution seems to have infiltrated no less than the most popular Byzantine liturgical commentary, the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Pseudo-Germanus of Constantinople. Here is the description of the moment of consecration from this commentary:

The priest expounds on the unbegotten God, that is the God and Father, the womb [which is] before the morning star, which bore the Son before the ages, as it is written: "Out of the womb before the morning star have I begotten you." [It is God] Whom [the priest] asks to accomplish the mystery of His Son—that is, that the bread and wine be changed into the very Body and Blood of Christ and God—so that it might be fulfilled that "Today I have begotten You." Then (ὄθεν) the Holy Spirit, invisibly present by the good will of the Father and volition of the Son, demonstrates the divine operation and, by the hand of the priest, testifies, and seals (ἐπισφραγίζει), and completes the holy gifts set forth into the Body and Blood of Christ and our Lord, Who says: "For their sake I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified," so that "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him."⁸⁷

82. See PG 129, 665.

83. See PG 149, 952.

84. See PG 155, 737.

85. See Petit, *Documents*, 430 [292].

86. Jugie tried to show that the belief in the consecratory power of the words of institution was quite common among the Byzantines even after Damascene (see Jugie, *Theologia dogmatica* 3, 277–84), but his confidence in this is based solely on his interpretations of the texts he quotes, while actually none of them contends that during an ordinary Byzantine liturgy (i.e., not at the Last Supper or in apostolic times) the gifts are consecrated exactly through the words of institution.

87. Greek text in Frank Edward Brightman, "The *Historia Mystagogica* and the Other Greek Commentaries on the Byzantine Liturgy," *Journal of Theological Studies* 9 (1908): 248–67 and 387–97, here 395. ET (with some corrections

At a first glance this is just a traditional Eastern description of a Spirit-epiclesis. But the author of the commentary immediately continues:

Thus (ὁθεὶν) becoming eye-witnesses of the divine mysteries, partakers of eternal life, and sharers in divine nature, let us glorify the great, and immeasurable, and unsearchable mystery of the oeconomia of the Son of God. Therefore (ὁθεὶν), glorifying, let us cry: “We praise You”—the God and Father, “We bless You”—the Son and Word—“We give thanks to You”—the Holy Spirit—“O Lord our God”—the Trinity in a Monad and the Monad in a Trinity, consubstantial and undivided.

This is really striking: the acclamation “We praise You, we bless You, we thank You, O Lord, and we pray to You our God” is sung in the Byzantine liturgy after the *words of institution* and *not* after the epiclesis, and, since the author interprets it as a glorification *after* the consecration, he apparently hints that the consecration is accomplished through the words of institution.⁸⁸

This accent on the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist together with a confidence in the consecratory power of the words of institution closely resembles the Eucharistic theology of Severus of Antioch and the Syrian authors. This fact, along with the presence of some Palestinian features in the commentary,⁸⁹ points at some Oriental influence on Byzantine Eucharistic theology, reflected in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*.⁹⁰

Yet there could be another explanation. The words “We praise You, we bless You, we thank You, O Lord, and we pray to You our God” are actually sung by the choir simultaneously with the recitation of the epiclesis by the priest, and the author of *Historia Ecclesiastica* could have placed these words after his description of the consecration because they were sung *not after*, but *at the same time* as it. But this is actually quite odd as well (especially in comparison with the other

of mine) from Paul Meyendorff, *St. Germanus of Constantinople: On the Divine Liturgy* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1984), 97–99.

88. See Martin Jugie, “De sensu epicleseos iuxta Germanum Constantinopolitanum,” *Časopis katolíckého duchovenstva*, Slavorum 2, 3, 4 (1908): 385–91.

89. These have been already noted by Nikolay Krasnoseltzev; see his work “On the Ancient Liturgical Commentaries” [original title in Russian: *Красносельцев Н. Ф. О древних литургических толкованиях*] (Odessa, 1984), 227.

90. I owe this idea to Alexey Pentkovsky.

Eastern rites)—that in Byzantine usage the words of institution are chanted aloud and the people answer “Amen” after them,⁹¹ while the epiclesis is read in a low voice and its “Amens” are pronounced only by a deacon.⁹² And since even the oldest extant manuscript of CHR, *Vatican Barberini gr. 336*, cannot be taken as a genuine witness to the pre-iconoclastic practice (because this manuscript, dated by the late eighth century, already contains a prayer, ascribed to Germanus of Constantinople,⁹³ and some features of the rites here could be a sort of reply to Iconoclasm⁹⁴), this usage could have originated at roughly the same time as the *Historia Ecclesiastica* and could reflect the same possible influence.

Another influence, this time unquestionable, resulted in the appearance in the Byzantine rite of a ritual of elevating the discos (paten) and the chalice during the ekphonesis “Offering You your own” after the words of institution and before the epiclesis. This ritual is an imitation of the Latin elevation of the host and the chalice, performed after the priest has pronounced the words of institution. It was instituted in order to give the Catholic believers a chance to participate in the sacrament with their eyes.⁹⁵ In the Orthodox milieu this ritual emerged in early seventeenth-century Ukraine. The rubrics of the printed

91. Besides these “Amens,” people also sing “Amen” after the final doxology of the anaphoras of BAS and CHR: “And grant that with one voice and one heart we may glorify and praise Your most honored and majestic Name, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages—Amen.” This doxology, by the way, is not only an ending of the whole prayer (and, therefore, the “Amen” after it is referred to the anaphora as a whole, cf.: 1 Cor 14:16) but also the “epiclesis” in the early Christian sense of “naming the Name” (see above).

92. The current practice of some Orthodox parishes, especially in the West, for the people to say solemnly, “Amen,” “Amen,” “Amen, amen, amen,” at the epiclesis, is a pure innovation, which has nothing to do with the Byzantine tradition.

93. See Parenti and Velkovska, *L’Euclologio*, 240.

94. Cf. Marie-France Auzépy, “Les Isauriens et l’espace sacré: l’église et les reliques,” in *Le sacré et son inscription dans l’espace à Byzance et en Occident*, sous la dir. de M. Kaplan, *Byzantina Sorbonensia* 18 (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne, 2001), 13–24.

95. See Godefridus J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 54–60.

Ukrainian *Leitourgika* of this time⁹⁶ have undergone some reworking. In particular, the revised rubrics instructed the priest to point at the bread and the wine during the words of institution, holding his fingers in a blessing gesture (or just to bless the gifts at this moment), and to elevate the discos and the chalice thereafter (i.e., precisely during the ekphonesis “Offering You your own”). This was a clear sign of a strong influence of Catholic theology, including the belief in the consecration through the words of institution. In 1655 these “crypto-Catholic” Ukrainian rubrics found their place in the revised Moscow edition of the *Leitourgikon*, and the editions of 1656, 1657 (the first), 1657 (the second), 1658 (the first), 1658 (the second), 1667, 1668, 1676, and 1684, as well as the 1677 edition of the *Archieratikon*, also contain them.⁹⁷ The obvious contradiction between the views held by the Ukrainian editions and the late- and post-Byzantine Greek theological thinking concerning the moment of consecration resulted in a controversy, which emerged in Moscow in the last third of the seventeenth century and which ended only in 1690, when an official refutation of the belief in the consecratory power of the words of institution was promulgated.⁹⁸ In the 1699 Moscow edition of the *Leitourgikon* the appropriate rubrics were reworked, and the prescription to bless the bread and the wine during the words of institution was omitted.⁹⁹

96. Namely, the editions: Stryatin 1604, and Kiev 1620, 1629, etc.

97. See Alexey Dmitrievsky, *The Correction of the Liturgical Books in the Times of Patriarch Nikon and His Successors* [original title in Russian: *Дмитриевский А. А. Исправление книг при патриархе Никоне и последующих патриархах / Подготовка текста и публикация А. Г. Кравецкого*] (Moscow: Языки славянской культуры, 2004).

98. See Gregory Mirkovich, *Concerning the Time of Transubstantiation of the Holy Gifts: Polemics which Took Place in Moscow in the Second Half of the Seventeenth Century* [original title in Russian: *Миркович Г. Г. О времени пресуществления Св. Даров: Спор, бывший в Москве во второй половине XVII века (Опыт исторического исследования)*] (Viĭno, 1886); Alexander Prozorovskij, *Sil'vestr Medvedev: His Life and Activities* [original title in Russian: *Прозоровский А. А. Сильвестр Медведев: Его жизнь и деятельность (опыт церковно-исторического исследования)*] (Moscow, 1896); Michael Smentzovsky, *The Brothers Lichud* [original title in Russian: *Сменцовский М. Н. Братья Лиухды: Опыт исследования из истории церковного просвещения и церковной жизни конца XVII и начала XVIII века*] (Saint-Petersburg, 1899).

99. In the Russian *Archieratikon* the instruction to bless the bread and the wine during the words of institution—an action performed by no one since the

Still, the ritual of pointing at the bread and the wine during the words of institution (without holding the fingers in a specific gesture) remained—as did the ritual elevation after their recitation, which is now performed by Orthodox everywhere, including Greece, Georgia, etc., although its original meaning is totally forgotten.

THE ELEVATION

One might ask: since in Byzantine thought the interpretation of the epiclesis as *the* moment of consecration began to be more or less clearly formulated after Iconoclasm, achieving its final form only in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the belief in the consecratory power of the words of institution alone has never felt itself at home in Byzantium, were the Byzantines—till the late-Byzantine epoch—ever concerned about the precise moment of the Eucharistic consecration? They actually were, though their particular choices of this moment may seem unusual for the modern reader. A number of sources witness that quite often the Byzantines associated the consecration with the elevation of the Eucharistic bread at the ekphonesis “Τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις” (“The holy [things] to the holy”). This ekphonesis is an ancient call to communion,¹⁰⁰ so that such association withdraws the consecration—or, rather, its final accomplishment—from the anaphora entirely.

It is due to the peculiarity of this idea that modern scholars and theologians failed to notice it altogether, though it is attested in a number of sources. It was Robert Taft who was the first to draw scholarly attention to this idea, showing that it is widely attested in the *Lives* of the Byzantine saints, where one can find the following topos: a saint is celebrating the Divine Liturgy, and when he is going to elevate the Eucharistic bread and/or proclaim “Τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις” the Holy Spirit comes and sanctifies the gifts. Taft lists the following *Lives* containing this topos: the *Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon* (probably written by his disciple George of Sykeon some time after 641), the *Life of St. Stephen the Sabaite* (written by his disciple Leontius after 794), Symeon

1690s—remained for three centuries, finally being omitted only in the 2009 (!) Moscow edition.

100. See Miguel Arranz, “Le ‘sancta sanctis’ dans la tradition liturgique des églises,” *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 15 (1973): 31–67; Robert F. Taft, *The Pre-Communion Rites: A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, vol. 5, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 261 (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2000), 231–40.

Metaphrastes' *Life of St. John Chrysostom* (written in the end of the tenth century), and the *Life of St. Bartholomew of Simeri* (written after 1130).¹⁰¹ To this list I would add yet another two instances of the same story: a miracle of St. Nicholas of Myra, known as the *Praxis de tributo*, composed sometime between the fifth and the tenth centuries,¹⁰² and the *Life of St. Sergius of Radonezh* (written by his disciple Epiphanius the Wise in 1417–1418).¹⁰³

At the same time, from hagiographic sources one cannot expect the precision of official dogmatic formulae. But a belief in the consecratory significance of the moment of elevation can also be found at the highest levels. *Response 9* of Constantinopolitan patriarch Nicholas III Kyrdanites Grammaticus (1084–1111) states:

It is fitting to elevate only one prosphora, as everyone does, when the "One [is] holy, one Lord, Jesus Christ," is proclaimed. The rest [of the gifts] set out [on the altar] are blessed by the descent of the Holy Spirit, which *we believe* happens at this time.¹⁰⁴

101. Taft, *The Precommunion*, 211, 214, 227–28. Strictly speaking, the first of these, the *Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon*, does not witness that the descent of the Holy Spirit takes place at the moment of elevation. Described here is not the consecration itself, but a Eucharistic miracle, when the Holy bread began to jump on the discos, "showing clearly that the sacrifice of the celebrant was acceptable" (§ 126; *ibid.*, 214), and elsewhere in this *Life* the descent of the Holy Spirit onto the gifts is explicitly linked to the Eucharistic prayer (§ 80).

102. BHG 1351. Publication: Gustav Anrich, *Hagios Nikolaos: Der heilige Nikolaos in der griechischen Kirche. Texte und Untersuchungen 1* (Leipzig-Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1913), 98–110. See also my article titled "The Liturgical Data Contained in the *Praxis de Tributo* of Saint Nicholas of Myra" [original title in Russian: Желтов М. С. Литургические данные, содержащиеся в "Деянии о подати" (Praxis de tributo) святителя Николая Чудотворца (к вопросу о возможной датировке)], in *Правило веры и образ кротости . . . Образ святителя Николая, архиепископа Мирликийского, в византийской и славянской агиографии, гимнографии и иконографии*. А. В. БУгаевский, ред. (Moscow, 2004), 111–24.

103. In § 31 here it is said that during a liturgy celebrated by the saint his disciple Simon saw the divine flames around the altar, which entered the chalice "when the saint was going to partake of it." Cf. also the eighth- to ninth-century *In vitam s. Basilii* of Ps.-Amphilochius [François Combéfis, SS. *Patrum Amphilochii Iconensis, Methodii Patarensis, et Andreae Cretensis opera omnia* (Paris, 1644), 176].

104. Greek text and ET in Taft, *The Precommunion*, 219.

Commenting on this text, Taft calls the belief in the consecration through elevation “seemingly unorthodox.”¹⁰⁵ This is true—but only from the post-Byzantine perspective. For it would be a mere projection of our own post-Byzantine mindset to evaluate the genuine Byzantine sources on the grounds of later confessional definitions. Since the seventh and eighth centuries this belief was embraced by the Byzantines, and it is witnessed not only in the hagiography and the rubrical casuistry concerning the actual performance of the Eucharistic elevation¹⁰⁶ (the quoted passage from *Response 9* of Nicholas III Kyrdanites Grammaticus belonging to this category of texts), but in the Byzantine liturgical commentaries as well.

When Taft wrote that “the classical Byzantine commentators are blissfully unaware of the problems in Eucharistic pneumatology raised by Nicholas III’s views,”¹⁰⁷ he was mistaken—unless the criterion of a differentiation between the “classical” and the “non-classical” Byzantine commentaries would be the presence of them in the well-known study by René Bornert.¹⁰⁸ For Bornert has ignored a whole family of the Byzantine and then Slavonic liturgical commentaries, which could be characterized by two distinct features: they follow a popular form of a dialogue, and their overall plot is built around a vision of angels taking a direct part in the liturgical celebration. The latter motif betrays a quite traditional nature of these commentaries, because the idea of the angelic concelebration is so ancient, that it is firmly established in the official liturgical prayers themselves—cf. the Byzantine prayer of the Little entrance or the Roman prayer “Supplices te rogamus.” But in the Byzantine and Slavonic commentaries I am talking about how this motif is developed into a whole story.

The first of these is a commentary in the form of a dialogue between Jesus and a certain John (either Chrysostom or the Theologian). The dialogue touches on a number of ethical and ritual themes, including the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, and it is literally connected to the apocryphal Apocalypse of St. John. Because of this François Nau, the

105. *Ibid.*, 227.

106. In the Byzantine era there was only one elevation during the liturgy, that is, the one at the ekphonesis “Τὰ ἄγια τοῖς ἀγίοις” as we already saw above. The other elevation of the modern liturgy “according to the Byzantine rite,” the one during the anaphora, has nothing to do with Byzantine practice.

107. *Ibid.*, 229.

108. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins*.

first editor of this text, called it “The Second Greek Apocryphal Apocalypse of St. John.”¹⁰⁹ Nau’s edition was made on the basis of the sixteenth-century manuscript *Paris gr. 947*. There is another manuscript of the same century;¹¹⁰ among the new Sinai finds there is yet another manuscript with this text, the eighth- to ninth-century ΜΓ 66.¹¹¹ The text is probably to be dated with the period of the controversy over Iconoclasm, i.e., between the 720s and AD 843.¹¹² The moment of elevation in this commentary is described as follows:

When a priest elevates¹¹³ the bread, and says: “Τὰ ἄγια τοῖς ἁγίοις,” then the Holy Spirit descends upon them [i.e., the bread and the cup—or the bread and the priest?]. (§ 39)¹¹⁴

This is exactly what we have in the *Lives* mentioned above.

Another commentary is a fictional dialogue between Gregory of Nazianzen and the “holy fathers.” It is extremely important for the history of theological thought among the Slavs, forming the core of the most popular Old-Russian liturgical commentary, *The Liturgy Interpreted* (Толковая служба),¹¹⁵ and having influenced a number of other Slavonic Eucharistic stories and tractates¹¹⁶ as well as post-Byzantine

109. François Nau, “Une deuxième apocalypse apocryphe grecque de Saint Jean,” *Revue biblique* 11, no. 2 (1914): 209–21. Nau’s Greek text is reproduced in John M. Court, *The Book of Revelation and the Johannine Apocalyptic Tradition*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 190 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 2000), 67–103. Court also offers an ET with his comments, but the translation is often erroneous and the comments, pointless.

110. See BHG 922i.

111. Τα Νέα ευρήματα του Σινά (Athens, 1998), 153.

112. See Alice Whealy, “The Apocryphal Apocalypse of John: A Byzantine Apocalypse from the Early Islamic Period,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 53 (2002): 533–40.

113. MS: νήψει instead of ὕψει.

114. Greek text in Nau, “Une deuxième apocalypse,” 220; ET is mine.

115. See Nikolay Krasnoseltzev, “The Liturgy Interpreted and Other Compositions Related to the Liturgical Interpretation in Old Rus’ before the Eighteenth Century” [original title in Russian: *Красносельцев Н. Ф. Толковая служба и другие сочинения, относящиеся к объяснению богослужения в древней Руси до XVIII века: Библиографический обзор*], *Православный собеседник* 5 (1878): 3–43.

116. See Nikolay Tunizky, “Ancient Tales about the Miraculous Appearance of Christ the Child in the Eucharist” [original title in Russian: *Туницкий Н. Л.*

Orthodox iconography. The Greek original of this commentary was considered unknown; I have prepared an edition of it according to a twelfth-century manuscript, *Paris Coisl. gr. 296*. Here Gregory is depicted describing in every detail the angelic participation in the liturgy. In particular, during the anaphora the angels brought a Child to the altar. But it was only at the moment of the elevation when Gregory

saw the angels with the knives, and they slaughtered the Child, and His blood poured out to the holy chalice, and they cut the body in pieces and put it above the bread, and the bread became the Body, and the chalice the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Fol. 67r)

Here we have quite a different story, in comparison with the previous one. Instead of a descent of the Holy Spirit the cup is being filled with blood, and the bread turns into a body because of a physical contact. This story is a continuation of the tradition of seeing the Child during the Eucharist and communicating of His flesh, present already in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (see above) and later in a similar tale attributed to Gregory Decapolites.¹¹⁷ Various combinations of the commentary of Pseudo-Gregory of Nazianzen, the account from the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, the tale of Gregory Decapolites, and even some Western accounts of the Eucharistic miracles¹¹⁸—including the history of the Holy Grail—generated quite a variety of apocryphal stories (partly known under the name of Ephrem the Syrian), preserved in many Slavonic manuscripts of the post-Byzantine period.¹¹⁹

The notion of Christ coming from heaven into the midst of the Eucharistic celebration and residing in the holy gifts finds its parallel

Древние сказания о чудесном явлении Младенца-Христа в Евхаристии], *Богословский вестник* 2, no. 5 (1907): 201–29.

117. Greek text PG 100, 1199–1212; ET in Daniel J. Sahas, “What an Infidel Saw that a Faithful Did Not: Gregory Dekapolites (d. 842) and Islam,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 31 (1986): 47–67.

118. On this theme see Peter Browe, *Die eucharistischen Wunder des Mittelalters* (Breslau: Müller & Seiffert, 1938); Snoek, *Meideval Piety*, 309–44.

119. See Alexander Yatzimirsky, “Concerning the History of the Apocryphs and Legends in South Slavonic Literature, IX: Stories about the Eucharistic Miracle” [original title in Russian: *Яцимирский А. И. К истории апокрифов и легенд в южнослав. письменности IX в.: Сязания о евхаристическом чуде*], *Известия Отделения русского языка и словесности Императорской Академии наук* 15 (1910): 1–25, and the literature indicated there.

in the prayer *Πρόσχες Κύριε*,¹²⁰ which is read during the Byzantine Divine Liturgy before the elevation and the ekphonesis “Τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις,” and in the early sources is placed between them. It reads as follows:¹²¹

Lord Jesus Christ our God . . . come to sanctify us, you who are seated on high with the Father, and yet are invisibly present here with us.¹²²

Therefore, there could be some connection between the prayer and the notion of Christ coming and entering the bread and the wine right after its reading.

On the other hand, I am quite certain that it was exactly the understanding of the elevation as *the* moment of consecration that resulted in surrounding this rite, from the thirteenth century on, with the prayers and hymns directed to the Holy Spirit, among them the Pentecost sticheron “Βασιλεῦ οὐράνιε,”¹²³ the troparion of the Third hour “Κύριε, ὁ τὸ πανάγιόν σου Πνεῦμα,”¹²⁴ etc.¹²⁵ There is no doubt that it was for the same reason that the elevation was prefixed with a rubric, instructing the priest to make three bows (and sometimes to incense the gifts),¹²⁶ and the bishop to put on his omophorion.¹²⁷ Some manuscripts even direct the celebrant to make a single or triple sign of the cross over (or with) the Holy bread,¹²⁸ thus resembling the triple bless-

120. Cf. Gabriele Winkler, “Anmerkungen zu einer neuen Untersuchung von R. F. Taft über die auf den Kommunion-Empfang vorbereitenden Ritus,” *Oriens Christianus* 86 (2002): 171–91, here 176–80.

121. Taft, *The Precommunion*, 225–26. Taft also points out that some sources instruct the priest to extend his arms while saying the prayer (*ibid.*, 208).

122. Greek text and ET in *ibid.*, 201.

123. Cf. Alexey Dmitrievsky, *A Description of the Liturgical Manuscripts* [original title in Russian: *Дмитриевский А. А. Описание литургических рукописей, хранящихся в библиотеках Православного Востока*] 2 (Kiev, 1901) 158, 174–75, 828.

124. Cf. *ibid.*, 175; Jacques Goar, *Εὐχολόγιον*, 2nd ed. (Venice, 1730), 89.

125. See Taft, *The Precommunion*, 248–56. It should be noted that Taft does not link these developments, despite his observation concerning the pneumatological character of some of them (*ibid.*, 254) with the understanding of the elevation as consecratory.

126. *Ibid.*, 258–59.

127. *Ibid.*, 209.

128. *Ibid.*, 347.

ing at the epiclesis, discussed above.¹²⁹ Finally, the strongly pneumatological character of the formulas accompanying the manual acts, which follow the elevation—the commixture and the rite of *zeon*¹³⁰—is, in my view, an outcome of understanding the elevation as the moment of the descent of the Holy Spirit onto the bread and the wine.

What could be the rationale for this understanding? In my view, this idea originated in a plain interpretation of the elevation as not only an invitation to communion but also the final accord of the “consecratory” part of the Liturgy of the Faithful. Being final, it should be decisive.¹³¹ And while being the conclusion of the “consecratory” part of the liturgy, it is at the same time the opening of the “communion” part of the liturgy. It is with the elevation that the breaking of the Eucharistic bread begins, and it is no accident that in the Acts of the Apostles and in a few other earliest Christian sources the expression “the breaking of bread” seems to be the *terminus technicus* for designating the Eucharist as a whole.¹³² The words of institution themselves were said when Christ was *giving* the bread and cup to his disciples. Therefore, the elevation should be interpreted as the turning point in the liturgical action, and this explains the meaning it acquired in Byzantium from the eighth century on.

The text of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy itself gives a hint that even after the epiclesis there is some need in the consecration. At the end of the anaphora of BAS there is the following petition:

Remember, Lord, also my unworthiness, according to the multitude of Your mercies: forgive me every offence, willing and unwilling; and

129. Three preliminary bows and putting on the omophorion also have their parallel in the Byzantine manner of the celebrant’s preparation to recite the epiclesis (cf. Παναγιότης Τρεμπέλας, Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις κώδικας [Athens, 1935], 113–14).

130. See Taft, *The Precommunion*, 381–502.

131. Yet, other explanations could also be suggested: the Byzantines could have heard some mystical overtones in the ekphonesis “Τὰ ἄγια τοῖς ἀγίοις,” or felt the need for the bread to be “shown” to the Father (cf. the anaphora of BAS: “He [Jesus] took the bread in His holy and undefiled hands and showed it to You, the God and Father”; Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 119), but these are less likely.

132. Cf. Theodor Schermann “‘Das Brotbrechen’ im Urchristentum,” *Biblische Zeitschrift* 8 (1910): 33–52, 162–83.

do not keep back, on account of my sins, the grace of Your Holy Spirit from the gifts set forth.¹³³

This petition is also present in a number of manuscripts of the anaphora of CHR.¹³⁴ The post-Byzantine commentators interpret this petition as pertaining solely to the question of a worthy/unworthy communion, but, still, on the grounds of the text as it reads (i.e., without turning to the extrinsic theological constructions) such interpretation is not that obvious.

The incompleteness of the anaphora seems to be once again intimated by a petition from the post-anaphoral litany, where a deacon calls the people to pray “for the precious gifts,”

that our loving God who has received them at His holy, heavenly, and spiritual altar as an offering of spiritual fragrance, may in return send upon us divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This petition resembles the “Supplices te rogamus” so much that it is even intriguing that Nicholas Cabasilas did not compare them with each other. But as Cabasilas finds the “Supplices te rogamus” to be a legitimate replacement of the Eastern epiclesis, so, in a more general sense, a petition to God to accept the gifts, giving his grace in return (sometimes called “an ascending epiclesis”), undoubtedly has a consecratory coloring. And in the quoted fragment of the post-anaphoral Byzantine litany we have precisely such a petition.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, it was none other than Nicholas Cabasilas who left the elevation with no consecratory value, interpreting it together with the ekphonesis “Τὸ ἄγια τοῖς ἁγίοις” as a mere invitation to communion.¹³⁶ Undoubtedly, the elevation lost its former relevance because of the polemics with the Latins by the fourteenth century. Symbolic of this was the transposition of the troparion of the Third hour from the moment of elevation (or the priestly communion that follows the elevation),

133. ET from Jasper and Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist*, 122 (with some corrections of mine). Greek text in Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 336 and 409; Orlov, *The Liturgy of St. Basil*, 246–48.

134. Cf. Τρεμπέλας, Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι 124.

135. Cf. Winkler, “Anmerkungen,” 179–80.

136. Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explication*, 222.

where it had once entered the Eucharistic liturgy, to the moment of epiclesis.¹³⁷

Still, liturgical practice and popular piety, as it often happens, retained some traces of the earlier understanding even after the theological reasoning has undergone major changes. The hymns directed to the Holy Spirit, surrounding the elevation, are attested in the manuscripts till the sixteenth century (i.e., till the beginnings of the era of printed liturgical books), and the formulae accompanying the manual acts that follow the breaking of the Holy bread remain strongly pneumatological until our own day. The elevation is also still preceded by three bows, which are indicated in all standard editions of the *Leitourgikon*.¹³⁸ Finally, the notion of consecration via elevation, being forgotten in application to the Eucharist, has survived in a secondary rite of the Elevation of the Panaghia.¹³⁹

THE PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

Another trace of an earlier belief in consecration via elevation is the rubrical legislation concerning the elevation of multiple Lambs, including a prohibition to elevate the commemorative particles.¹⁴⁰ In *Response 9* of patriarch Nicholas III Kyrdanites Grammaticus quoted above, as well as in some other similar clarifications,¹⁴¹ it is stated that if there is more than one Lamb, the elevation should be performed with only one of them. In contrast to this, in late- and post-Byzantine usage, all the Lambs, if there are several, are elevated. Such a situation

137. Cf. Τρεμπέλας, *Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι*, 113. In the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Greeks have abandoned the practice of reading this troparion before the epiclesis, but in Russian usage it is still read there, despite much criticism; see Desnov, "Some More Words."

138. Cf. Τρεμπέλας, *Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι*, 129–30. To this one could add the custom for laity to make a full prostration after the ekphonesis "Τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις," which is observed in some places; but this prostration is prescribed nowhere and seems to be a very late development.

139. On this rite, see John J. Yiannias, "The Elevation of the Panaghia," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972): 226–36.

140. Such a prohibition is made, for example, by Symeon of Thessalonica; see Steven Hawkes-Teeples, *The Praise of God in the Twilight of the Empire: The Divine Liturgy in the Commentaries of Symeon of Thessalonika* († 1429), Unpublished doctoral dissertation (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1997), 231.

141. See Taft, *The Precommunion*, 216–25.

normally occurs if a Presanctified Liturgy is to be celebrated the coming week.

The Presanctified Liturgy is the Byzantine Lenten liturgy, during which the wine is consecrated through an immersion of the consecrated Lamb into the chalice.¹⁴² As the eleventh-century Constantinopolitan patriarch Michael Kerularios wrote, during the Presanctified Liturgy

the preconsecrated and perfected Holy bread is dropped into the mystical cup, and in this way the wine therein is changed (μεταβάλλεται) and believed to have been changed (πιστεύεται μεταβάλλεται) into the Holy blood of the Lord.¹⁴³

Based on this and the other witnesses, Ivan Karabinov has shown at length that this was the proper belief of the Byzantine Church, while from the seventeenth century the Russian Church refused, under Catholic influence, to believe in the consecration of the chalice during the Presanctified Liturgy.¹⁴⁴ The current Greek and Russian usages still differ on this point.

Further discussion of this rite would extend the scope of my article. I should only mention that the Byzantine Presanctified Liturgy is an example of the Eucharistic consecration *without* an epiclesis. This is especially clear if we compare it with the Syrian Presanctified rites.¹⁴⁵ In these rites there is a separate prayer to be read over the chalice, while in Byzantine usage the chalice is consecrated with no prayer, solely through a manual action of putting the Lamb into it.

142. See a recent study of the Byzantine Presanctified Liturgy by Stefanos Alexopoulos, *The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite: A Comparative Analysis of its Origins, Evolution, and Structural Components*, Liturgia condenda 21 (Leuven: Peeters, 2009).

143. Greek text and ET in *ibid.*, 259.

144. See his article "The Holy Chalice of the Presanctified Liturgy" [original title in Russian: *Карабинов И. А. Святая Чаша на литургии Преждеосвященных Даров*], *Христианское* 6 (1915): 737–53; 7–8 (1915): 953–64. Karabinov's conclusions were reproduced in an article by Nikolay Uspensky, which was thereafter translated into English and is usually cited by Western authors, while the genuine study of Karabinov remains regrettably unknown.

145. See Humphrey William Codrington, "The Syrian Liturgies of the Presanctified," *Journal of Theological Studies* 4 (1903): 69–82; 5 (1904): 369–77 and 535–45.

Another interesting detail is a rubric forbidding the elevation of the Presanctified Lamb during this liturgy, which seems to be a possible trace of the belief in the consecratory power of the elevation itself.¹⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

By way of conclusion, I would repeat the statement I made in the beginning of this essay: considering a “moment” of the Eucharistic consecration, the Byzantines by no means limited themselves to the epiclesis. But the most distinct feature of their approach seems to be not their preference of one set of words to another but their reverence toward the manual acts of the Eucharistic celebration—be it the priestly blessing, the elevation, or the immersion of the Lamb into the chalice. However strange this attitude may seem, there is some logic behind it. It stresses the unity of the liturgical text and the ritual action, and, in the case of the elevation, the importance of experiencing the whole Divine Liturgy in its entirety—the gifts are not “complete” until they are needed for communion. Such a perception of the liturgy reveals its holistic and integral character and does not allow reduction of it to a recitation of a “sacramental formula.” Moreover, this approach also has important consequences for Christian anthropology—it stresses that not only the rational and spiritual aspects of human nature can participate in the divine mystery, but that sometimes even the bodily actions are of ultimate importance. For the Eucharist itself is, in the end, the sacrament of “real food” and of “real drink” (John 6:55), and not just of word and prayer.¹⁴⁷

146. See Alexopoulos, *The Presanctified*, 248–52.

147. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Sr. Vassa Larin for her invaluable help in improving the English language of my text.