

Is He the Rider of the Quadriga?
Ephrem the Syrian on Julian's Apotheosis

di

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In *Oration* 5,14, Gregory of Nazianzus narrates Julian's supposed attempt at 'apotheosis by drowning'¹. As he was lying mortally wounded on the bank of the Tigris, the Apostate recalled examples of others who had resorted to trickery in order to achieve deification. Vain and full of ambition even at those final hours of his, Julian conceived the plan of throwing himself into the river that his body might disappear, that he might be regarded as miraculously vanished and that he himself might thus come to be counted among the gods. When one of the emperor's eunuchs became aware of that horrifying plan, he decided to thwart it. In order to compose his succinct narrative, Gregory draws on accounts of Pseudo-Callisthenes² and Arrian³ concerning Alexander's alleged attempt at 'apotheosis by drowning'. Aware of the central place that Alexander occupied in the emperor's imagination as he was setting out on his Persian expedition, Gregory models the narrative about Julian's attempt on that regarding Alexander's own⁴. Around the time when Gregory was composing his invectives against Julian, Libanius praised the dead emperor and referred to the fact that, in many cities, images of his had been erected in temples next to those of the gods, receiving prayers and responding to those prayers⁵. Writing in the first half of the fifth century, Socrates Scholasticus saw through Libanius's ploy: τὸν Ἰουλιανὸν ἀπεθέωσε⁶. Libanius had not been alone in presenting Julian in such terms: Eutropius, who had taken part in the emperor's Persian campaign, also claimed that Julian *inter divos relatus est*⁷, and in Tarsus, where the Apostate had been buried, his grave had apparently turned into a place of worship, as Gregory's diction in *Oration* 5,18 implies⁸. Finally, in a fragment of his ἱστορικὰ ὑπομνήματα, preserved in the *Excerpta de Sententiis*⁹, Eunapius (fr. 29) handed down a prophecy foretelling Julian's apotheosis:

* An early version of this article was read as a lecture at the Center for the Study of Christianity, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in March 2018. I should like to thank Professor Oded Irshai for his kind invitation and generous hospitality, and the anonymous reviewers of *Adamantius* for their helpful suggestions. This study represents my current research on the treatment of the Ascension by Syriac authors in Late Antiquity; see also my «United in the strife that divided them»: *Narsai and Jacob of Serugh on the Ascension of Christ*, *Δελτίο Βιβλικῶν Μελετῶν* 32/1-2 (2017) 45-77, and *Romanos the Melodist and the Syriac Literary Tradition: The Case of the Kontakion On the Ascension*, forthcoming in *Δελτίο Βιβλικῶν Μελετῶν* 33/2 (2018). Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this article are mine. References to the editions of homilies of Jacob of Serugh are as follows:

JSB + volume + page + line: *Homiliae Selectae Mar-Jacobi Sarugensis*, I-V, ed. P. BEDJAN, Paris/Leipzig 1905-1910
JSSahd + page + line: *S. Martyrii qui et Sahdona, quae supersunt omnia*, ed. P. BEDJAN, Paris/Leipzig 1902, 603-685
JSAS + volume + page + line: *160 Unpublished Homilies of Jacob of Serugh*, I-II, ed. R. AKHRASS and I. SYRYANY, with a Foreword by S. BROCK, Damascus 2017.

1 Ed. J. BERNARDI (SC 309), Paris 1983.

2 *Historia Alexandri Magni* 32, 4-7, ed. G. KROLL, Berlin 1926.

3 *Alexandri Anabasis* VII 27, 3, ed. A.G. ROOS – G. WIRTH, Leipzig 1967.

4 J. STRAUB, *Die Himmelfahrt des Julianus Apostata*, in his *Regeneratio Imperii. Aufsätze über Roms Kaisertum und Reich im Spiegel der heidnischen und christlichen Publizistik*, Darmstadt 1972, 159-177 (first published in *Gym*. 69 [1962], 310-326), at 163-165. See also S. ELM, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church. Emperor Julian, Gregory of Nazianzus, and the Vision of Rome*, Berkeley 2012, 455.

5 *Oration* 18,304, ed. R. FOERSTER, Leipzig 1904. On this passage see also the interpretations of A.D. NOCK, *Deification and Julian*, in his *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, edited by Z. Stewart, Cambridge, MA 1972, II, 833-846 (originally published in *JRS* 47 [1957] 115-123), and G.W. BOWERSOCK, *The Imperial Cult: Perceptions and Persistence*, in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, edited by B.F. MEYER – E.P. SANDERS, London 1982, III, 171-182, at 180-182.

6 *Ecclesiastical History* III 23,40-41, ed. G.CH. HANSEN (GCS NF 1), Berlin 1995.

7 *Breviarium ab urbe condita* X 16, ed. H. DROYSEN, Berlin 1879.

8 The sources have been brought together by J. STRAUB, *Die Himmelfahrt des Julianus Apostata*, cit. (n. 4), 165-167. On the implication of the adjective in the phrase ναός ἀπόπτυστος (*Oration* 5,18), see M. PΑΡΟΥΣΑΚΗΣ, *Vicarious Kingship: A Theme in Syriac Political Theology in Late Antiquity*, Tübingen 2017, 129-131.

9 Ed. U. BOISSEVAIN, Berlin 1906.

Ἄλλ' ὅποτε σκήπτροισι τεοῖς Περσῆιον αἶμα
 ἄχρι Σελευκείης κλονέων ξιφέεσσι δαμάσσης,
 δὴ τότε σὲ πρὸς Ὀλυμπον ἄγει πυριλαμπὲς ὄχημα
 ἀμφὶ θυελλεῖησι κυκώμενον ἐν στροφάλιγξι,
 λυσάμενον βροτέων βεθέων πολύτλητον ἀνίην.
 Ἦξεις δ' αἰθερίου φάεος πατρώιον αὐλήν,
 ἐνθεν ἀποπλαγῆεις μεροπήιον ἐς δέμα ἦλθεσ.

In R.C. Blockley's translation, the λόγια run as follows¹⁰:

But having driven the Persian race headlong with your sceptre
 back to Seleucia conquered by your sword,
 a fire-bright chariot whirled amidst storm-clouds
 shall take you to Olympus freed from your body
 and the much-enduring misery of man.
 Then you shall come to your father's halls
 of heavenly light, from which you wandered
 into a human frame of mortality.

This prophecy should have been composed soon after Julian's death and have been disseminated by his adherents (such as Oribasius)¹¹. Johannes Straub suggested that, with his narrative about Julian's disgraceful attempt at 'apotheosis by drowning', Gregory of Nazianzus aims at unmasking the myth associated with this oracle¹². If this is so, Gregory's response is only indirect. By contrast, in his own polemic against Julian, Ephrem the Syrian appears to react *directly* at the contents of the oracle that has come down to us in the Eunapian fragments.

The third *madrāšā* against Julian is the shortest of the compositions which make up Ephrem's polemical cycle¹³. It has been suggested that Ephrem had studied Gregory's *Oration 5* in the Greek original and that, as he was composing his anti-Julianic poems, he drew on it¹⁴. *Oration 5* was written in the end of 365 or in the early months of 366¹⁵: allowing for sufficient time for the dissemination of the Gregorian invective and for Ephrem's study of it, *HcJul 3* should not have been composed much earlier than 370. To my mind, stanzas 3-6 and 17 of the poem suggest that Ephrem is well informed, through whatever channels of transmission, about the prophecy in question, and that he discredits its contents and aim by sharply contrasting Julian's purported *apotheosis* and his wretchedness to the Ascension of Christ and his *sessio ad dexteram* in glory. This would accord well with the connection which Straub tentatively drew between the establishment of the feast of the Ascension in the end of the fourth century and Christian reactions such as that of Gregory of Nazianzus in *Oration 5* in the end of 360s: both may be read as responses by the Church with a view as much to undermining pagan assumptions related to apotheosis as to consolidating Christian faith in the singularity of the Ascension of Christ¹⁶. Despite the repeated annotated translations and occasional discussions of Ephrem's anti-Julianic cycle, *HcJul 3, 3-6* and 17 have not been considered before in the light either of the Ascension narrative and its exegesis, or of the prophecy regarding Julian's *apotheosis*, let alone in the light of an antithetical juxtaposition of the two. Having said so, I was heart-

10 R.C. BLOCKLEY, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus. Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes*, Liverpool 1983, II, 45.

11 J. STRAUB, *Die Himmelfahrt des Julianus Apostata*, cit. (n. 4), 172, n. 59.

12 J. STRAUB, *Die Himmelfahrt des Julianus Apostata*, cit. (n. 4), 172.

13 For a general introduction to this cycle of poems, see S. GRIFFITH, *Ephraem the Syrian's Hymns Against Julian: Meditations on History and Imperial Power*, VigChr 41 (1987) 238-266. Specific aspects of them are discussed in R. MURRAY, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition*, London 2006 (revised edition), and M. PAPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. (n. 8), 71-137.

14 M. PAPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. (n. 8), 135-137.

15 S. ELM, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church*, cit. (n. 4), 342-343.

16 J. STRAUB, *Die Himmelfahrt des Julianus Apostata*, cit. (n. 4), 176. Of course, the introduction of a new liturgical celebration on the fortieth day after Easter cannot be understood by reference to a single explanation; see now H. BUCHINGER, *Pentekoste, Pfingsten und Himmelfahrt. Grunddaten und Fragen zur Frühgeschichte*, in *Preaching after Easter: Mid-Pentecost, Ascension, and Pentecost in Late Antiquity*, ed. by R.W. BISHOP – J. LEEMANS – H. TAMAS (with the assistance of L. VAN DER SYPT), Leiden 2016, 15-84.

ened, when I chanced upon a casual one-line comment which John Matthews added to his citation of the prophecy in an endnote to *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*: «The lines [scil. of the prophecy] form a fine pendant to those of Ephraim the Syrian with which this book began»¹⁷. Matthews' book opens with the citation of *HcJul* 3,4, translated below.

Here, I shall try to bring out details of *HcJul* 3,3-6 and 17 which suggest to me that Ephrem, as opposed to Gregory, responds *directly* to the contents of the prophecy transmitted in the Eunapian fragments. In doing so, I shall necessarily limit myself only to some of the problems involved in the study of these stanzas. I shall begin with my translation of *HcJul* 3,3-6 and 17, where solutions to problems that will be addressed in the course of this article are retrospectively incorporated:

3

It was for thirty years that Persia fought (against it) in every (possible) manner,
but was unable to cross the border of that stronghold:

even when it was breached and downcast,
the Cross descended and delivered it.

It was there that I saw a most hideous sight:
the captor's banner, which had been set up on the tower,
the persecutor's corpse, which had been cast into a coffin¹⁸.

4

Believe (me)! It is in a (plain) "Yes" and in a (plain) "No" that the declaration [lit. 'word']
of the trustworthy man (consists):

I did walk and reach, my brothers, the coffin of the impure one
and I did stand over him and deride his paganism.

And I said: "Is he the one who haughtily rose
against the Living Name? Because he forgot he is *soil* [*daḥḥihā*],
He made him return [*ahpkeh*] *into his dust* [*l-gaw 'apreh*] so that he know that *of dust* [*'aprānā*] he is!"

5

I stood and was astonished at him whose humiliation I lingered long to observe:

Is he the one who is endowed with majesty? Is he the one who is possessed of stateliness?

Is he the king? Is he the rider of the quadriga?

He is (only) a *clod of earth* [*qulā'ā*] that has crumbled away!

And I kept debating with myself: why, at the peak of his power,
did I not foresee that his end would be such as this?

6

I was astonished at the many who, in order to please

the crown of the mortal one, renounced Him who gives Life to all.

I looked above and below, and was filled with wonder, my brothers,

for our Lord (was seated) *in that glorious height* [*b-haw rawmā mšabbhā*],

and the accursed one (was lying) *within (that) wretched state* [*b-gaw šepilā*]. And I said: "Who would be
afraid of that carcass and would (come to) renounce the True One?"

[...]

17

Because he mocked and called (our) brothers "Galileans" [*glilāye*],

behold [*hā*] *the Wheels of the Galilean King* [*gigle d-malkā glilāyā*] are in the air:

17 J. MATTHEWS, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, with a new Introduction, Ann Arbor, MI 2007, 506, n. 94.

18 The term *glosqmā* (for Julian's 'coffin') is used at John 12:6 and 13:29 for another wooden case, that is, Judas' 'money-box': Ephrem's choice of word was deliberate (on the double meaning of *glosqmā*, see *CNis* 42,3, where the denotations 'coffin' and 'money-box' are used contrastively: the passage is discussed in M. PΑΡΟΥΤΣΑΚΙΣ, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. [n. 8], 35-36). The same term is used by the author of the *Julian Romance*, who is known to have drawn on Ephrem, cf. *Julian Romance* 194:21, ed. J.G.E. HOFFMANN. Here, Michael Sokoloff's translation of *glosqmā* with 'sarcophagus' is rather unfortunate, see *The Julian Romance*, edited and translated by M. SOKOLOFF, Piscataway, NJ 2016, 394: the sarcophagus is a stone coffin, which would have been impossible to carry around, not a θήκη ξυλίνη, as clearly meant here. For the θήκη ξυλίνη constructed by 'the son of the carpenter' especially for the Apostate, see Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* VI 2, 8-9, ed. J. BIDEZ – G.C. HANSEN (GCS NF 4), Berlin 1995, = γλωσσόκομον in Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* III 23, ed. L. PERMENTIER – G. CH. HANSEN (GCS NF 5), Berlin 1998.

He thunders [rā'em]¹⁹ in His Quadriga [b-markabteh], the Cherubs carry Him.
The Galilean [glilāyā] rejected [gālāh]²⁰ the herd of the consultor of oracles and handed it over
 to the wolves in the heart²¹ of the wilderness,
 but *the Galilean flock* [gzārā glilāyā] grew mighty and filled the oecumene.

1. A CLOUD OF EARTH: JULIAN'S EARTHLINESS

'Believe (me)!' (*haymen(w)*): Ephrem opens stanza 4 by urging his audience (cf. 'my brothers' at 4,2a) that they should trust his declaration, by which stanza 3 ends, regarding the death of the Apostate: he saw the corpse with his own eyes. I find good guidance in interpreting the rest of the line (*b-(*)ēn wa-b-lā melltā d-sarrirā*), which alludes to Matth 5:37, in Jacob of Serugh's homily on Matth 5:33-37 (JSB 3:375-395). JSB 3:393:16-21, where the formula attested at *HcJul* 3,4,1 (*b-(*)ēn wa-b-lā*) is reproduced (cf. also JSB 3:393:8-9), reads as follows:

ṭar puqdānā w-lā time sāk 'ō pārošā
d-hi ḥerutā rabbā (h)y kullāh men mawmātā
mdawwdā yāme w-()aynā da-šgiš ba-'bidāteh*
pārošā dēn šarrir wa-bhil kad lā yāme
ṣut pārošā l-qālā d-makrez 'al mawmātā
d-lā nime sāk da-b-()ēn wa-b-lā šrārā qā'em*

Keep the commandment, oh *discerning one* [pārošā], and do not swear at all (cf. Matth 5:34):
 the freewill is altogether greater than oaths.

It is a *deeply confused person* [mdawwdā], *someone who, in his actions, is perturbed*
 [aynā da-šgiš ba-'bidāteh], that swears:

by contrast, a *discerning person* [pārošā], not swearing, is *reliable and serene* [šarrir wa-bhil].

Give heed, *discerning one* [pārošā], to the utterance that proclaims about oaths
 that one should not swear at all (cf. Matth 5:34) for it is in a (plain) "Yes" and in a (plain)
 "No" that truth consists [b-(*)ēn wa-b-lā šrārā qā'em].

Now, at *HcJul* 3,4,4-5a, Christ ('the Living Name') is antithetically juxtaposed and assumed to have delivered a fatal blow to Antichrist, namely, Julian ὁ Ἀποστάτης / *mārodā* (cf. 2 Thess 2:3, ἀποστασία / *mārodutā*)²². We are dealing with a recurrent theme of Christian polemic, Syriac as well as Greek, against Julian,

19 On the form, see my discussion below.

20 On the form, see Appendix.

21 "in the heart": lit. 'in the midst.'

22 On the connotations of the title ὁ Ἀποστάτης as applied to Julian, whom Ephrem unmistakably portrays as 'the lawless man' of 2 Thess 2, see M. PAPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. (n. 8), 119-137. For a recent broad discussion of 'apostasy' see CH. HORNUNG, *Apostasie im antiken Christentum. Studien zum Glaubensabfall in altkirchlicher Theologie, Disziplin und Pastoral (4.-7. Jahrhundert n.Chr.)*, Leiden 2016. A clarification should be made regarding the terms that denote ἀποστασία in Syriac, seeing that *mardutā* (in the double signification of παιδεία, which denotes both 'education' and 'discipline, chastisement') from the root *r-d-y* is often confused with the homonymous *mardutā* from the root *m-r-d*, a rare parallel form of the standard *mārodutā* (for ἀποστασία at 2 Thess 2:3). In his edition of Jacob of Serugh's verse-homily *On Ephrem*, PO 47/1 (1995), Joseph Amar mistranslated l. 128 (*bnay mardutā lā tem'un lkon b-(*)arrikātā*) as follows: «Rebellious children, do not grow weary with lengthy accounts», and annotated his rendering: «"rebellious children": Lit. "sons of rebellion"». Jacob's *bnay mardutā* does not mean 'rebellious children' (or 'sons of rebellion'); rather, *bnay mardutā* means 'students who submit themselves to the discipline (of the Lord)' (lit. 'sons of education/discipline'). Jacob's verse alludes to Proverbs 3:11 as contextualized in Hebrews 12:4-11. The four-syllable title, whether in the singular or in the plural, constitutes a common Jacobean formula used, as a vocative, in exhortations, cf., e.g., JSB 3:33:4 (*bar mardutā*), JSB 1:157:7 (*bar mardutā*), JSAkhress-Syryany 1:99:278 (*bnay mardutā*) and JSAkhress-Syryany 1:398:40 (*bnay mardutā*). *Thesaurus Syriacus* II, 2218, where *mardutā* (from the root *m-r-d*) is recorded as the rendering of ἀποστασία at 2 Thess 2:3, may have contributed something to the confusion of the two homonyms. With good reason, C. BROCKELMANN, *Lexicon Syriacum*, 403a, s.v. *mardutā*, drew attention to the citation of 2Thess 2:3 in *Thesaurus* and pointed to his own lemma on *mārodutā*. Jacob of Serugh *always* distinguishes between *mardutā* (παιδεία) and *mārodutā* (ἀποστασία): one can easily bring many examples, but JSB 5:64:21-22, from the first homily *On Sodom*, should be sufficient: «It is with compassion that He strikes as pity flows from His rod; / it is for the purpose of admonishing against ἀποστασία [*mārodutā*] that He rouses *discipline* (or *punishment*) [*mardutā*]»

whom Ephrem here identifies with fallen Adam: his death was by no means accidental, but surely ‘caused by God’ (θεόθεν)²³. At *HcJul* 3,4,5b-6b («Because he forgot *that he is soil* [*d-daḥḥihā* (h)w], / *He made him return* [*āhpkeh*] *into his dust* [*l-gaw āpreh*] so that he know that *of dust* [*āprānā*] he is!»), Ephrem crafts his stichs by reference to a cluster of interrelated Biblical verses: *Sira* 17:1, *Ps* 104:29²⁴, and *Ps* 145:4²⁵, all three going back to the theme of *Gen* 3:19²⁶. Apparently, the primary allusion is to *Sira* 17:1: «God created Adam out of earth and *will surely make him return into it* [*māhpāku nahpkiw(hy) l-gawwāh*]. It is the *causative* rendering *māhpāku nahpkiw(hy)* (*‘He surely made him return’*), emphatically pointing to divine agency, that sharply distinguishes *Sira* 17:1 from the *intransitive* formulations of *Gen* 3:19 (*tehpok l-(‘)arā*), *Ps* 104:29 (*l-āprhon hāpkin*) and *Ps* 145:4 (*hāpek l-(‘)ar’eh*). Another detail of *Sira* 17:1 which caught the eye of Ephrem is the composite preposition ‘into’ (*l-gaw*). Its main component is suggestive of ‘internal parts’ (*gawwā*) and thus of ‘maternal womb’ and ‘ultimate source.’ An Adamite, Julian was a native of *āprā*, the offspring of ‘dust.’ This last point brings us to the recasting of *Gen* 3:19 in the Psalms, with emphasis on Adam’s *origin*: ‘*their* [i.e. humanity’s] *dust*’ (*āprhon*) (so *Ps* 104:29), ‘*his* [i.e. the (human) prince’s] *earth* (*ar’eh*)’ (so *Ps* 145:4). We are accustomed to describing the suffix in *āprhon* and *ar’eh* as *possessive*, but it is not so much *ownership* as *origin* that it suggests in this case: Adam was *literally* a native of earth, dust, soil. The punishment of Julian the Apostate, i.e. Adam II, aimed at reminding him of his earthliness: «Because he forgot he is soil, // He made him return into his dust so that he know that of dust he is!»

In the second half of the fourth century, the contrast between the Ascension of Christ and the ascent of Elijah starts being apologetically formulated with increasing clarity so that the divinity of Christ be defended²⁷. In the aftermath of the Christological controversies of the fifth century, that early antithetical juxtaposition comes to be exploited once again²⁸. Surely, neither in the fourth century nor in the fifth, is the contrast between Christ (and his Ascension) and Elijah (and his ascent) put forth in order to disparage the prophet. Rather, it is advanced in order to set Christ apart as the Son of God. Now, as the contrast starts being formulated, it is moreover emphasized that, although he was by no means *divine* as Christ indeed is, Elijah should nevertheless be distinguished from Adam, a broken man. When fifth-century homilists elaborate *specifically* upon Elijah’s ascent, they come to emphasize that, though an Adamite himself²⁹, the prophet (like Enoch before him) did not die, but moved directly to Paradise instead. With those homilists, the point is suitably couched in language which is characteristic of the Biblical verses underlying *HcJul* 3,4,5b-6: as opposed to Adam and despite his very nature, Elijah ‘did *not* return to dust.’ Thus, when Jacob of Serugh writes about the ascent of Elijah, he negates that very formula in which the divine condemnation of Adam is expressed at *Gen* 3:19 (*tehpok l-(‘)arā*: «you shall return to earth»), cf. *JSB* 4:232:14: «[Let us then speak]³⁰ about *the one made of dust* [*āprānā*] who *did not* return to earth [*lā hpak l-(‘)arā*] to become dust [*d-nehwe āprā*]» (*al āprānā d-lā hpak l-(‘)arā d-nehwe āprā*)³¹. Ultimately, the negation of that for-

(*b-raḥme māhe kad men šabteh ḥnānā rāsem / wa-l-kuwwānā d-mārodutā m’ir mardutā*).

23 Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* VI 2,8-9, ed. BIDEZ - HANSEN).

24 *Ps* 104:29: «You turn away your face and they are dismayed; you take away their breath and they die, and *it is to their dust that they return* [*l-āprhon hāpkin*].»

25 *Ps* 145:3-4: «Do not put your trust in a prince, or in (any) human being, for there is no salvation through him: his breath departs and *he returns to his earth* [*hāpek l-(‘)ar’eh*].»

26 *Gen* 3:19: «And by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until *you return to earth* [*tehpok l-(‘)arā*], out of which you were taken, because you are dust and *to dust you will return* [*l-āprā tehpok*].»

27 N. RAMBAULT, *La fête de l’Ascension à Antioche d’après l’homélie de Jean Chrysostome* In *Ascensionem Christi, in Preaching after Easter*, cit. (n. 16), 141-157, at 151.

28 M. PAPOUTSAKIS, «*United in the strife that divided them*»: *Narsai and Jacob of Serugh on the Ascension of Christ*, *Δελτίο Βιβλικῶν Μελετῶν* 32/1-2 (2017) 45-77.

29 The *earthliness* of Elijah is stressed upon throughout the tradition, cf., e.g., Ephrem, *HdPar* 6,23,3, *arānā*, and 24,3, *b-(‘)ādamtā thar(w) (h)waw* (transl. S. BROCK: «[The Watchers stood] in wonder at *one formed of earth* [*ādamtā*, lit. ‘earth’]»); *JSB* 4:254:15, *bar daḥḥihā*. It is in this vein that, in *JSB* 4:253:5-254:4, *mother Earth* addresses ascending Elijah as she sees him off, proud of her offspring and acknowledging that she was unworthy of his saintly steps.

30 Cf. *JSB* 4:232:11 (*nimar mekkil*).

31 Integrated, in its negated form, into narratives of the ascent of the prophet, *Gen* 3:19 was subsequently retrojected upon other incidents in his life. So with Basil of Seleucia: stunned at Elijah’s vivification of the dead child in Zarepath, Death wonders whether benevolent God might not abolish the condemnation of humanity altogether, cf. *Homily on*

mula becomes an ingredient of descriptions not only of the ascent of Elijah, but also of the possibilities which the Ascension of Christ opened up for humanity later: so, for example, with Basil of Seleucia, cf. PG 28,1092CD (CPG 2280), Οὐκέτι, «Ἦ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύση», ἀκούω, ἀλλ' εἶ καὶ γῆ εἶ, πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀπελεύση διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀνάγοντος ἀγαθότητα. («I do not hear any longer: “You are earth and it is to earth that you will depart,” but rather: “Although you are earth, it is to heaven you will depart because of the benevolence of Him who takes (you) up”»). Thus, the negated version of Gen 3:19 is purposefully predicated to Elijah upon his ascent and, following the Ascension of Second Adam, to humanity in general: such predication becomes standardized when the feast of the Ascension is established in the end of the fourth century and when homilies celebrating it are heavily composed in the course of the fifth and sixth century. Thus, it should not be surprising if now the affirmative statement in its causative form, suitably predicated, in *HcJul* 3,4,5b-6, to the fallen emperor, the second παραβάτης³², anticipates a reference to the Ascension and the *sessio ad dexteram*: it does so by means of a sustained and contrastive emphasis on Julian's *earthliness*. We are dealing with yet another attestation of the broader polemic which Straub reconstructed. Before we turn to look at the way in which Ephrem polemically utilizes Acts 1 in stanza 6 and, conclusively, in stanza 17, we should study his direct response to the prophecy regarding Julian's deification in stanza 5.

Stanza 5 opens with an expression of surprise:

I stood and was astonished at him whose humiliation I lingered long to observe:
Is he the one endowed with majesty? Is he the one possessed of stateliness?
Is he the king? Is he the rider of the quadriga?
He is (only) a clod of earth that has crumbled away!
And I kept debating with myself: why, at the peak of his power,
did I not foresee that his end would be such as this?

In ll. 2-3, a problem arises. We are dealing with four semantically self-sufficient and identically structured statements, which are allocated to four well-balanced stichs. All of them are predicative: a) *hānā(h)w d-rabbuteh*; b) *hānā(h)w d-gayuteh*; c) *hānā(h)w d-malkuteh*; d) *hānā(h)w d-markabteh*. They may be read either as affirmative (this is how Beck understood them), or as interrogative (this is my understanding of them)³³. Before we consider this question, we should first look at the syntactical pattern according to which the very predicates are formed: a) *hānā d-rabbuteh*; b) *hānā d-gayuteh*; c) *hānā d-malkuteh*; d) *hānā d-markabteh*. The peculiarity of this pattern lies in that it involves a 'genitive' construction (e.g., *d-rabbuteh*) in which the noun following *d-* takes a reflexive suffix (e.g. *rabbuteh*) that refers back to the substantive, or the substantival demonstrative pronoun (here *hānā* throughout), or the substantivized adjective that happens to precede *d-*. Though not uncommon, this idiomatic construction is occasionally misunderstood. Let us then look at some examples.

The Peshitta renders ὁ δαιμονιζόμενος at Mark 5:15 as *haw d-šedaw(hy)* (lit. 'that one [masc.] of his demons'), cited by TH. NÖLDEKE, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik*, § 224*, and ὁ τὰ δύο τάλαντα at

Elijah, ed. J.M. TEVEL, *De Preken van Basilius van Seleucië. Handschriftelijke overlevering – Editie van vier preken*, Utrecht 1990, 228, ll. 147-151: Τάχα κατὰ μέρος ἰκετευόμενος λύση καὶ τὸ Ἦ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύση; Εἰ γὰρ ἐνὸς δικαίου φωνὴν αἰδεσθεὶς ἔξω με τῆς τῶν νεκρῶν δεσποτείας εἰργάσατο, φοβοῦμαι μὴ φιλανθρωπία νικώμενος ὑπὸ μᾶς σάλπιγγος ἅπαντας τοὺς νεκροὺς ἀπολύση, φοβοῦμαι μὴ ἄνθρωποι καθ' ἡμῶν ἐξορχούμενοι εἰπωσιν· Ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ νίκος; Ποῦ σου, ἄδη, τὸ κέντρον; («Might [God], if supplicated to by each one individually, abolish even (his former) utterance, *You are earth, and to earth you shall return?* For if he has shown regard for the voice of a single righteous man and has driven me out of (my) sovereignty of the dead, I am afraid that, should he, in his love of humanity, give in to one (blow of the) trumpet, he might (then) let all the dead go; I am afraid that men might (then) dance and frolic (out of their tombs), saying to our face, *Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Hades, is your sting?*»). Enoch's translation and Elijah's ascent are traditionally paired and contrasted to the return of their forefather to earth. The fact that Enoch's translation is alluded to in l. 144 strengthens my suggestion that, here, the use of Gen 3:19 was retrojected from the context of 2 Kings 2:1-18 upon that of 1 Kings 17:8-24.

32 On ὁ Παραβάτης as a title of Julian, see M. PAPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. (n. 8), 132-133.

33 On the ambiguity, see TH. NÖLDEKE, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik. Anhang: Die handschriftlichen Ergänzungen in dem Handexemplar Theodor Nöldekes und Register der Belegstellen bearbeitet von Anton Schall*, Darmstadt 1966, § 331A.

Matt 25:22 as *haw d-tarten kakkraw(hy)*, cited by C. BROCKELMANN, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen*, Berlin 1913, II (Syntax), 21h. Similarly, the αἰμορροῦσα of Matt 9:20 is commonly referred to in Syriac writings as *hāy da-dmāh* (lit. 'that one [fem.] of her blood'), cf., e.g., *Ephraem Syri Opera omnia* 6,554E (ed. ASSEMANI; cited by TH. NÖLDEKE, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik*, cit.)³⁴, JSB 4:462:19 (cited by C. BROCKELMANN, *Grundriss*, cit.) and JSB 5:528:18, or *attā da-dmāh* (lit. 'the woman of her blood'), cf. JSB 3:534:9 (cited by C. BROCKELMANN, *Grundriss*, cit.), and JSB 5:550:1-2, where she is seen as a reflection of 'Creation with its wickedness' (*britā d-awlāh*, lit. 'Creation of its [i.e. Creation's] wickedness', according to the same pattern): *britā d-awlāh b-(')attā da-dmāh šār kad mase // da-l-hāy dakki wa-l-hāy ḥassi b-ḥaylā kasyā*, transl. S. BROCK: «Creation with its wickedness [*britā d-awlāh*] He depicted in the Woman with the (flow) of blood [*attā da-dmāh*] when He healed her; // the one He purified, for the other He made atonement by His hidden power»³⁵. Again, at JSB 5:528:12, Jacob refers to the paralytic of Matth 9:1-8 as *mšarryā d-ʿarseh* (lit. 'the paralyzed man of his bed'). Here belongs also *naššihā da-šmāhāteh* ('the excellent man of renown,' lit. 'the excellent one of his names') in *Life of Rabbula*, ed. J.J. OVERBECK, 160:4-5 (cited by TH. NÖLDEKE, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik*, cit.) and 167:20-22³⁶ (pl. *naššihē da-šmāhāthon*, *ibid.* 160:9, cited by TH. NÖLDEKE, *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik*, cit.). Apparently, the reflexive suffix may be omitted (often, it seems, though by no means exclusively, when it would otherwise refer back to proper names): next to *mār(y) Šemʿon d-(')eštoneh* ('St Simeon the Stylite,' lit. 'St Simeon of his pillar'), *mār(y) Šemʿon d-(')eštonā* ('St Simeon of the pillar') is also attested; cf. also *Bābel da-šmāhātā* (instead of *Bābel da-šmāhātāh*) at JSB 2:688:20; 'Urišlem da-šmāhātā (instead of 'Urišlem da-šmāhātāh) at JSB 3:669:14; *Malkizdeq da-šmāhātā* (instead of *Malkizdeq da-šmāhāteh*) at JSB 3:705:6; *haw rabbā da-šmāhātā* ('that master of reknown,' lit. 'that master of names,' an antonomasia for Melchizedeq, instead of *haw rabbā da-šmāhāteh*) at JSB 5:167:20; *gabbāre da-šmāhātā* ('the giants of renown,' lit. 'the giants of names,' instead of *gabbāre da-šmāhāthon*) at Gen 6:4.

The predicates in *HcJul* 3,5,2-3 are formed according to the above pattern and may be rendered: a) 'the one who is endowed with majesty' (*hānā d-rabbuteh*, lit. 'this one of his majesty'); b) 'the one who is possessed of stateliness' (*hānā d-gayuteh*, lit. 'this one of his stateliness'); c) 'the one who has been acclaimed 'king' or simply 'the king' (*hānā d-malkuteh*, lit. 'this one of his kingship'); and d) 'the rider of the quadriga' (*hānā d-markabteh*, lit. 'this one of his quadriga'). If a unit such as *hānā d-rabbuteh* is to serve as the predicate in a predicative statement, the enclitic, which reflects the grammatical subject, is placed immediately after the pronoun *hānā*: *hānā(h)w d-rabbuteh*. Are the predicative statements in *HcJul* 3,5,2-3 affirmative or interrogative?

34 *Paraenesis* 74, cols 545-555, is probably not by Ephrem.

35 Cited from S. Brock's translation of homily 170 (JSB 5:525-551) in *Jacob of Sarug's Homilies on Women whom Jesus Met*, Piscataway, NJ 2016, 230.

36 *Life of Rabbula*, ed. J.J. OVERBECK, Oxford 1865, 167:20-22 reads as follows: 'wsbys ṭubānā haw d-ʿabdeh (h)wā qaddišā Rabbulā ʿepisqopā b-Tellā mdittā naššihā da-šmāhāteh. This means: «[...] the blessed Eusebius, the one whom the holy Rabbula made bishop in the city of Tella, the excellent man of renown [*naššihā da-šmāhāteh*]». *naššihā* is the masculine singular emphatic of the adjective *našših* and, here, it is substantivized ('the excellent one', 'the excellent man'). The title 'the excellent man of renown' (*naššihā da-šmāhāteh*) refers back to Eusebius. In his *The Syriac Life of Rabbula and Syrian Hellenism* (in *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. by T. HÄGG – PH. ROUSSEAU, Berkeley 2000, 255-271, at 267), Glen Bowersock translated the formulation *haw d-ʿabdeh (h)wā qaddišā Rabbulā ʿepisqopā b-Tellā mdittā naššihā da-šmāhāteh* as follows: «the man whom the holy Rabbula made bishop in Tella, the victorious city». Apparently, he regarded *naššihā* here as a feminine form attributively qualifying the preceding *mdittā*, and he concluded that the supposed sequence *mdittā naššihā* reflects the Hellenistic name of Tella, that is, Νικηφόριον, now attested only in a fragment of Uranius which Stephanus of Byzantium preserves. Bowersock's interpretation is untenable: if the author of the *Life* had wished attributively to qualify the feminine noun *mdittā*, he would have to use the adjective in the feminine emphatic (*mdittā naššihā*); he would not have used it in the feminine absolute (*mdittā naššihā*), which is, of course, identical in form with the masculine emphatic, hence the confusion. Bowersock is followed by R. DORAN, *Stewards of the Poor: The Man of God, Rabbula, and Hiba in fifth-century Edessa*, Kalamazoo, MI 2006, 72 (English translation: «Tella, the well-known, victorious city»; see also footnote 30 there for the adopted misinterpretation), and by R. PHENIX – C. HORN, *The Rabbula Corpus*, Atlanta, GA 2017, 23 (English translation: «Tella, the victorious city of renown») and 22, n. 4 (for the adopted misinterpretation; the transliteration *naššihā* by Phenix and Horn is incorrect for *naššihā*).

The manner in which Edmund Beck translated *HcJul* 3,5,2-3 suggests that, in the first place, he probably misunderstood the pattern according to which the four predicates themselves are construed.³⁷ Moreover, he clearly took the predicative statements to be affirmative to the following effect: «Das ist (also) seine Majestät und Pracht, das sein Königtum und (Königs)wagen»³⁸. Beck's understanding of the four sentences as affirmative is certainly possible, but in that case, it has to be admitted, the effect would be weak. On the one hand, such flatness would not do justice to the sentiment of surprise expressed in the previous line: «I stood and was astonished at him». On the other hand, it would not accord with the sense of self-doubt and the articulation of self-criticism put forth in the last two lines of the stanza: «And I kept debating with myself: why, at the peak of his power, / did I not foresee that his end would be such as this?» Again, in the preceding stanza, at *HcJul* 3,4,4-5a, a similar, though not identically structured, statement occurs: «And I said: Is he the one who haughtily rose / against the Living Name?» (*w-(*)emret d-hānā (h)w kay d-(*)etrim / luqbal šmā ḥayyā*). The interrogative character of this statement is unambiguously indicated by the particle *kay*, which marks out questions. Encouraged by the expressions of surprise, self-doubt and self-criticism, attested in the opening and closing of stanza 5, as well as by the interrogative statement in stanza 4, I am inclined, contrary to previous interpretation, to read the four identically structured predicative sentences of st. 5, ll. 2-3 as interrogative statements: «Is he the one who is endowed with majesty? Is he the one who is possessed of stateliness? Is he the king? Is he the rider of the quadriga?» Now this series of rhetorical questions is abruptly and firmly answered by the statement in l. 4: «He is (only) a *clod of earth* [*qulāā*], which has crumbled away!»³⁹ Ephrem directly responds to the prophecy about Julian's purported *apotheosis* by disparaging attributes and symbols which that prophecy celebrates. He counterpoises them to the single fact which he professedly *witnessed* (cf. *HcJul* 3,4,1), that is, the fact of Julian's *earthliness*: *qulāā* ('clod of earth') here carries the theme of Adam's curse from stanza 4 over to stanza 5. The terms *qulāā*, *dahḥihā*, and *ʿaprā*, distributed in stanzas 4 and 5, make up a recurrent cluster in the oeuvre of Ephrem, pointing to the frail and transitory nature of man (cf. also *HdFid* 68,19-21). Given the insertion of such emphasis into early elaborations on Adam, the fallen king, as well as on Adam II, that is, Julian 'the Apostate', it is easy to understand how direct allusions to Gen 3:19 found their way into one of the earliest Byzantine *Mirrors of Princes*, cf. Agapetos' *Ekthesis*, ch. 71 (PG 86,1185), Ὁ σοβαρὸς καὶ ὑπέροφρος ἄνθρωπος, μὴ ὡς ταῦρος ὑψίκερος ἐπαίρεσθω, ἀλλ' ἐννοεῖτω τῆς σαρκὸς τὴν ὑπόστασιν, καὶ παυέτω τῆς καρδίας τὴν ἔπαρσιν. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ γέγονεν ἄρχων ἐπὶ γῆς, μὴ ἀγνοεῖτω ὑπάρχων ἐκ τῆς γῆς, ἀπὸ χόδς ἐπὶ θρόνον ἀναβαίνων, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν μετὰ χρόνον καταβαίνων («Der Mensch, der da stolz und hochmütig ist, soll nicht hoffärtig sein, so wie der Stier sich etwa auf seine großen Hörner einbinden mag, er soll vielmehr das Wesen seiner Fleischlichkeit bedenken; und dadurch soll er Stolz und Hochmut seines Herzens ein Ende setzen. Denn auch wenn dieser Mensch Herr ist auf Erden, darf er niemals vergessen, daß er aus eben dieser Erde herkommt, daß er vom Staub der Erde zum Thron hinaufsteigt, daß er aber auch nach einer gewissen Zeit wieder zu diesem Staub hinabsteigen muß»)⁴⁰. The practice of

37 The pattern according to which the predicates are built has been misunderstood by Judith Lieu (see her translation in S. LIEU, *The Emperor Julian. Panegyric and Polemic: Claudius Mamertinus, John Chrysostom and Ephrem the Syrian* [TTH 2], Liverpool 1989, second edition), Kathleen McVey (*Ephrem the Syrian, Hymns*, translated and introduced by K.E. McVEY, New York/Mahwah 1989) and Dominique Cerbelaud (*Éphrem de Nisibe, Hymnes contre les Hérésies; hymnes contre Julien*. Introduction, traduction, notes et index: D. CERBELAUD, II [SC 590], Paris 2017). Although he appears not to have cared for bringing out the balanced formulation of the original of *HcJul* 3,5,2-3, Gustav Bickell, as opposed to subsequent translators, certainly recognized that pattern: «Das war also der einst so majestätische und hochmütige Kaiser, der auf seinem Wagen einherfuhr [...]!»; see his *Die Gedichte des h. Ephräm gegen Julian den Apostaten*, ZKTh 2 (1878) 335-356, at 348.

38 E. BECK, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso und Contra Julianum* (CSCO 175, Scriptores Syri 79) 77.

39 Here, for *ʿestri*, '[that] has crumbled away', an excellent parallel is attested in Isaac of Antioch, *Homiliae*, ed. P. BEDJAN, Leipzig 1903, 364:4.

40 The translation is cited from *Byzantinische Fürstenspiegel: Agapetos, Theophylakt von Ochrid, Thomas Magister*, übersetzt und erläutert von W. BLUM, Stuttgart 1981, 79. Cf. also ch. 21 (PG 86,1172), [...] Χρῆ τοῖνον αὐτὸν καὶ ὡς Θεὸν μὴ ὀργίζεσθαι, καὶ ὡς θνητὸν μὴ ἐπαίρεσθαι· εἰ εἰκόνη θεϊκῆ τετίμηται, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰκόνη χροῖκῆ συμπέκεται [...] (transl. W. BLUM, cit., 65: «Daher darf sich der Kaiser, genauso wie Gott, nicht zum Zorn hinreißen lassen, und in seiner Eigenschaft als sterblicher Mensch darf er sich nicht in Hochmut und Stolz erheben. Denn mag er auch mit dem Abbild

placing the ἀκακία, a cloth pouch filled with earth, into the hand of the Byzantine emperor as a reminder of his lowly extraction from dust should have been encouraged in part by the discourse that developed around the exegesis of Gen 3:19⁴¹.

As opposed to Adam, whose παράβασις Julian replicated⁴², Elijah, like Enoch before him, ascended to Paradise and escaped death, that is, he escaped *turning into dust*. In the second part of the fourth century, the Ascension of Christ starts being apologetically contrasted to the ascent of Elijah that the divinity of Christ be defended. Against this set of ideas, the ground is subtly prepared, in *HcJul* 3, stanzas 4 and 5, for the antithetical juxtaposition, in stanza 6, of Christ's glorious *sessio ad dexteram* (cf. Mark 16:19 and 1 Peter 3:22) to the emperor's utter humiliation:

I looked above and below, and was filled with wonder, my brothers,
for our Lord (was seated) in *that glorious height* [haw rawmā mšabbhā]
and the accursed one (was lying) within (that) wretched state.
hāret l-'el wa-l-taht w-(')etdemret àhḥay
d-māran b-haw rawmā mšabbhā
w-ḥarmā b-gaw šēplā

In *HcJul* 3,3-6, the wretched *earthliness* (i.e. humanity) of slain Julian is progressively contrasted to the glorious divinity of Christ. Having seen the emperor's corpse with his own eyes and having testified to his death, Ephrem now puts forth a series of rhetorical questions in order to depreciate what the oracle, which Eunapius handed down, celebrated as the emperor's ascent on his περιλαμπές ὄχημα, i.e. his *markabtā*, and deification. This piece of polemic is presented within a contrastive framework which sets Julian's frustrated apotheosis specifically against Christ's Ascension. However, in st. 6, where Christ is pointed to in his glory in heaven, the Ascension is only presupposed: it is in the final stanza of the poem that it is explicitly spoken about. Conversely, it is against the background of stanzas 3-6 that, in st. 17, the divine Quadriga in heaven, a standard ingredient of Ascension formulations in the fifth and sixth centuries, is placed, by implication, in antithetical juxtaposition to Julian's 'fire-bright chariot.'

2. TOWARD A CONTRAST OF QUADRIGAE

Stanza 16 ends with the epithet *glilāye* («and [Julian] cunningly took off his armour to be wounded / to death, lest *the Galileans* [*glilāye*] see his disgrace»). It is with that same epithet that stanza 17 begins:

Because he mocked and called (our) brothers "Galileans" [*glilāye*],
behold [hā] *the Wheels of the Galilean King* [*gigle d-malkā glilāyā*] are in the air:
He thunders [rā'em] *in His Quadriga* [*b-markabteh*], the Cherubs carry Him.
The Galilean [*glilāyā*] *rejected* [*gālāh*] the herd of the consultor of oracles and handed it over
to the wolves in the heart of the wilderness,
but *the Galilean flock* [*gzārā glilāyā*] grew mighty and filled the oecumene.

glilāyā is variously repeated and echoed throughout the final stanza: Ephrem subverts Julian's abusive characterization in his *Against the Galileans*, where the epithet was suggestive of *limitation* and *provincialism*⁴³. In the line which concludes the stanza and seals the poem, Ephrem now responds to such scoffing with *accomplished facts* (note the perfect tenses in l. 6): the so-called 'Galilean' community has robustly expanded and filled the oecumene. The theme of progressive and confident expansion is elaborated upon in homilies on the Ascension, specifically in relation to Acts 1:8, which suggests the gradual broadening of the mission's geographical scope: «you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and

Gottes geehrt sein, so ist er doch auch mit dem Abbild des Lehms verbunden [...]).

41 On ἀκακία, see G. DAGRON, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le «césaropapisme» byzantin*, Paris 1995, 55, as well as his *From the mappa to the akakia: Symbolic Drift in From Rome to Constantinople. Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, ed. by H. AMIRAV – B.T.H. ROMENY, Louvain 2007, 203-219 (the French version, *De la mappa à l'akakia. Divagations symboliques*, can be found in G. DAGRON, *Idées byzantines* II, Paris 2012, 511-524).

42 See above n. 32.

43 S. ELM, *Sons of Hellenism, Fathers of the Church*, cit. (n. 4), 301.

to the ends of the earth». In his sermon *In ascensionem et in principium Actorum* 25⁴⁴, Severian of Gabala harmonizes Matth 28:18-20 to Acts 1:8:

Οὗτος εἶπε· Κηρύξατέ με πανταχοῦ. Τοῦτο δείκνυσι δύναμιν, εἰ ἐξέβη εἰς πρᾶγμα τὸ ῥῆμα. [...] Ζητεισθῶ οὖν τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ Σωτῆρος μὴ ἐξ ὧν ἐλάλησεν, ἀλλ' ἐξ ὧν ἐτέλεσεν. Εἶπε· *Μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη* (Matth 28:19)· εἰ μὴ προῆλθεν ὁ λόγος εἰς ἔργον, ἀλαζονεία ἦν καὶ οὐκ αὐθεντία θεϊκή. Εἶπε· *Κηρύξατε ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς* (Acts 1:8). Εἰ ἔστιν ἐσχατία τις ἀμοιροῦσα τοῦ κηρύγματος, ἐψεύσατο ἢ πρόρρησις· εἰ δὲ πρὸ τῶν ῥημάτων λάμπει τὰ πρᾶγματα, ἀληθεῖς οἱ μάρτυρες καὶ ἀληθὴς ὁ μαρτυρούμενος.

This one said: "Proclaim me everywhere." It is this that shows strength, that is, whether (his) saying turned out to become a concrete reality [...] Thus, the sayings of the Saviour should be investigated not on the basis of what he uttered, but on the basis of what he accomplished. He said: *Make disciples of all nations* (Matth 28:19). Had what he spoke not been realized, it would have been (indicative of) arrogance, not (demonstrative of) divine authority. He said: "Proclaim (me) to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8)." If there were any remote place devoid of the proclamation, the prediction would have been false. If, however, reality shines forth even before (his) sayings, the witnesses are truthful and so is the one about whom they give witness.

It is with pride that Ephrem turns around Julian's contemptuous usage:

Because he mocked and called (our) brothers "Galileans" [*glilāye*],
behold [hā] the Wheels of the Galilean King [gigle d-malkā glilāyā] are in the air:
He thunders [rā'em] in His Quadriga [b-markabteh], the Cherubs carry Him.

On one level, such demonstrativeness («*behold [hā] the Wheels of the Galilean King [gigle d-malkā glilāyā]* are in the air») alludes directly to Ezekiel 1:15: 'Behold the wheels... (*hā gigle*). Edmund Beck commented on those 'Wheels,' Ephrem's fourth class of angels next to the Watchers, the Seraphim and the Cherubim, in connection with their attestation in *Sermo de Fide* 1,109-112⁴⁵:

sāgdin 'ire 'am šetqā srāpe mquddšin ba-qātā
krobe t'inin b-()iqārā gigle rāhtān b-zahyutā*
The Watchers ['ire] worship (Him) silently, the Seraphs [srāpe] sanctify (Him) sonorously;
the Cherubs [krobe] carry (Him) in honour, the flashing Wheels [gigle] run⁴⁶.

In his discussion, Beck drew attention also to *HdFide* 55,2:

man gēr d-mešta'e 'al haw mkin l-kullā
zādeq d-nešta'e 'al kull kyān luqdam
nešboq d-rabbuteh w-nemar d-markabteh
nšurāh d-()aykan (h)i npašseq d-(*)aykanā*
'āp giglēh hayyān w-()en (h)u d-(*)it lhen*
melltā l-ḥayywāteh

Indeed, who will talk about Him who created the universe?

We should talk about every (created) nature first:

let us leave aside *what pertains to His divine Majesty [d-rabbuteh]* and let us speak about *what pertains to His Quadriga [d-markabteh]*;

let us depict how (that Quadriga) is, let us expound in what manner

its Wheels [giglēh] also are living [hayyān], and whether His Living Creatures [ḥayywāteh] are endowed with *speech [melltā]*.

44 R.W. BISHOP – N. RAMBAULT, *Severian of Gabala, In ascensionem et in principium Actorum (CPG 4187): Introduction and Critical Edition*, SE 56 (2017) 113-235.

45 E. BECK, *Ephraem's Reden über den Glauben. Ihr theologischer Lehrgehalt und ihr geschichtlicher Rahmen*, Rome 1953, 107-109.

46 In my version, the attributive participial adjective 'flashing' stands for the prepositional phrase *b-zahyutā*: I follow Beck, who translates *b-zahyutā* here with 'strahlend' (1953: in his *Ephraem's Reden über den Glauben*, 109) and 'im Lichtglanz' (1961: in CSCO 213, *Scriptores Syri* 89, 4). Elsewhere, *zahyutā* means 'purity': it may be the purity of ascetic life, characteristic of both Enoch (in his consecrated marriage) and of Elijah (in his virginity), cf. *HdEccl* XLIX, 11, as well as of the Virgin (cf. JSSahd 748:14), who '(was) pure in her manner of life' (*zahyā b-'umrāh*, cf. JSSahd 746:16), and of Joseph, 'whose mind was pure' (*zhe lebbēh*) in his *qaddišūtā*, cf. JSSahd 756:14; it may be the purity of Christ himself, cf. *Sermo de Fide* 4,39-40, with Beck's comment in CSCO 213, *Scriptores Syri* 89, 47, n. 5.

Divine Majesty (*rabbūtā*), which is impossible to investigate and talk about, is here counterpoised to the divine Quadriga (*markabtā*) of Ezekiel 1, which is indeed possible to depict and describe⁴⁷. The same gradation is attested later in one of the four pseudepigraphic *soḡyātā* which Sebastian Brock published recently, cf. *soḡitā* 1, stanza 13 (*Mim*): «*the Quadriga of fire [markabtā d-nurā] is too feeble to carry / the weight of Your Majesty [rabbūtāk]*» (*mḥilā (h)y markabtā d-nurā / d-teʿan tuqpā d-rabbūtāk*) (transl. S. Brock, adapted)⁴⁸. With *HdFide* 55,2 in mind, Ephrem's polemic in *HcJul* 3,4 is now forced into strong relief: as he emphatically points to Julian's corpse and earthliness, it is his *supposed* divine majesty and his *supposed* *πυριλαμπές ὄχημα*, celebrated by the famous oracle, that Ephrem repudiates: «Is he the one who is endowed with *majesty*? Is he the one who is possessed of stateliness? Is he the king? Is he the rider of the *quadriga*?»

Now, in *HcJul* 3,17, Beck understood the verbal form *r'm* as 3rd plural feminine perfect (subject: *gigle*, a feminine noun), and translated first in 1953⁴⁹:

Weil er spottend nannte die Brüder "Galiläer,"
siehe seine Räder in der Luft die Räder des galiläischen Königs
donnerten [r'em] an seinem Wagen [...]

and then again, to the same effect, in 1957⁵⁰:

Höhnend gab er den Brüdern den Namen "Galiläer":
siehe in der Luft die Räder des galiläischen Königs
(wie sie) *donnerten [r'em]* an seinem Wagen [...]

However, Beck's reading goes against the metre: *HcJul* 3,17,3a requires five syllables, not four. Thus, we should vocalize *rā'em*, not *r'em*, the grammatical subject being 'the Galilean King' (*malkā glilāyā*). Undoubtedly, the imagery and vocabulary are reminiscent of Ps 77:18 (*w-qālā d-ra'mayk b-gigle*, «and the voice of Your thunders in the wheels»), to which Jacob of Serugh alludes in his homily *On the (Divine) Quadriga*, at JSB 4:562:13, «a great thunder (is heard) in the movement of the Wheels and of the Living Creatures» (*ra'mā rabbā b-zawā d-gigle wa-d-ḥayyiwātā*) and in one of the series *On the Nativity*, cf. JS-Sahd 762:13, «There came out a thunder from between the Wheels and stirred up the earth» (*nḡaq (h)wā ra'mā men bēt gigle w-šagšāh l-(')ar'ā*). When Ephrem purposefully attributes the 'thundering' to the Galilean King as the Charioteer instead, he avails himself of the language in which the theophany of Ps 29:3 is couched: «the voice of the Lord over the water: the glorious God *thunders [rā'em]* [...]» (*qāleh d-māryā 'al mayyā 'allahā mšabbḥā rā'em* [...]), cf. Ps 18:14 = 2 Sam 22:14).

Apart from the divine Quadriga of Ezekiel 1 and 10 to which it markedly alludes, on another level, such *demonstrativeness* (cf. *hā*), combined with the epithet *glilāyā*, which Ephrem's stanza resounds, echoes moreover that *δεικτική φωνή* (cf. Severian, *In ascensionem et in principium Actorum* 34, and John Chrysostom [PG 60,29], *δεικτικῶς ἐχρήσαντο τῇ λέξει*) by which, immediately after the Ascension, the two angels address the disciples according to Acts 1:11: «*Men of Galilee [gabre glilāye]*, why do you stand and look into heaven? *This Jesus [hānā Yešu]*, who was taken up (away) from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen Him ascending into heaven». Well into the sixth century, Romanos the Melodist recasts the pronoun in οὗτος Ἰησοῦς ('this Jesus') at Acts 1:11 exactly as Ephrem did with *hānā Yešu* of his Syriac version. In the kontakion *On the Ascension*, st. 13, ll. 10-12⁵¹, the angels address the eleven:

47 Like the four Creatures, the Wheels are also 'living' (*ḥayyān*). Regarding what is asked in 5b-6 about the Living Creatures («[let us expound] whether they are endowed with *speech [mellitā]*», cf. Ezekiel 1:4, «And I heard the sound of their wings [...] *like the sound of speech [ā(y)k qālā d-mamllā]* in the midst of an army»), the standard Jacobean formula *gigle mallatā* ('the eloquent Wheels') implies that it is applicable to the Wheels as well, cf., e.g., JSB 4:544:10, 4:564:6, 15 (cf. JSB 5:564:19); JSB 2:138:18, 3:5:11 and 3:17:3; JSSahd 766:17, 809:19, 828:11 (cf. 831:11); JSB 5:526:22; JSakhress-Syryany 1:8:35 and 1:90:15.

48 S. Brock, *Ephremiana in Manuscript Sinai Syr. 10*, Muséon 129/2-3 (2016) 285-232.

49 E. Beck, *Ephraem's Reden über den Glauben*, cit. (n. 45), 109.

50 E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso und Contra Julianum*, cit. (n. 38), 79.

51 Ed. J. Grosdidier de Matons, *Hymnes IV* (SC 283), Paris 1981.

... Τί ἐστήκατε; Τίνοι δὲ ἀτενίζετε;
 Τί θέλετε κατιδεῖν;
 Ἰδοῦ (= *hā*) κάθεται Θεός ἐπὶ θρόνου αὐτοῦ.

Why are you standing here? What are you gazing at?
 What do you wish to look on? See [Ἰδοῦ], God is seated on his throne. (transl. Ephrem Lash⁵²)

In the illustration of the Ascension in the Rabbula Gospels of 586, a few decades later than Romanos' *floruit*, that demonstrativeness is translated into the angels' contagious *Zeigegebärde*⁵³.

Now, when in 402 Severian preaches on the Ascension in his strong Aramaic accent in Constantinople⁵⁴, he contrasts – as Ephrem does in *HcJul* 3,17 – the connotations of the angels' address ('Men of Galilee') with those of the epithet 'Galileans' as used by Julian, whom he does not mention by name, cf. *In ascensionem et in principium Actorum* 33:

Ἐλεγον οἱ ἄγγελοι πρὸς ἐκείνους· Ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι (Acts 1:11). Μακάριοι οἱ ὄντες ἄξιοι ταύτης τῆς φωνῆς. Αἰεὶ οἱ ἐχθροὶ τῆς εὐσεβείας ὅταν ὄνειδιζουσιν ἡμῖν, Γαλιλαίους καλοῦσιν. Οἱ ἄγγελοι σεμνύνουσιν ἡμᾶς. "Γαλιλαῖοι" καλοῦμεθα οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι. Πρῶτον γὰρ σημεῖον ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐποίησεν ὁ Χριστός· καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐφάνερωσε τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ (John 2:11). Ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι (Acts 1:11)· ἐντεῦθεν ὁ προφήτης ὅλης τῆς γῆς προτιμᾷ τὴν Γαλιλαίαν· λέγει γὰρ Ἡσαΐας· Ἐπένηθη ἡ γῆ, ἠσχύνθη ὁ Λίβανος, ἔλη ἐγένετο ὁ Ἀσσαρών, φανερὰ ἔσται ἡ Γαλιλαία καὶ ὁ Κάρμηλος (Isaiah 33:9).

The angels were saying to them, *Men of Galilee* (Acts 1:11). Blessed are those who are worthy of this form of address. When the enemies of (our) religion reproach us, they always call us "Galileans." (By contrast, it is in this very manner that) the angels exalt us. We, "those to whom a revelation (of God) has been made [οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι]," are called "Galileans." Christ *did* (his) first sign in *Cana of Galilee*; and there he revealed his glory (John 2:11). *Men of Galilee* (Acts 1:11). Hence the prophet prefers Galilee to the whole earth; because Isaiah says, *The earth mourned, Lebanon was ashamed, Sharon turned into marshes, but Galilee and Carmel will be visible* (Isaiah 33:9)⁵⁵.

The gloss οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι reflects *glayā* (passive participle, plural masculine emphatic, of the verb *glā*, 'to reveal,' corresponding to ἀποκαλύπτω and φανερώω): resorting to a pseudo-etymology that is possible in Aramaic but not in Greek, Severian forces a link between φανερώω (*glā*) and Γαλιλαῖοι (*glilāye*). On the basis of his quotation of John 2:11 (Πρῶτον γὰρ σημεῖον ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐποίησεν ὁ Χριστός· καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐφάνερωσε τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ), by reference to which he assigns meaning to his gloss, οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι should have been meant to denote 'those to whom a revelation (of God) has been made.' True, the Peshitta renders ἐφάνερωσε (τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) with *ʾawdaʾ* (*šubheh*) (lit. 'he made (his glory) known'). However, the seventh-century Harklean chose *glā* as the translation equivalent of φανερώω and ended up translating John 2:11: ... *b-Qāṭne da-Glilā* (Γαλιλαία) *wa-glā* (ἐφάνερωσε) *šubhā dileh*. Severian seems to have had in mind a similar formulation serving his own exegetical purposes. He may well have been guided by Ephrem's *HdVirg* 36,9,1-3:

Lāʾazar da-praš lawwyu(h)y l-gaw qabrā
*l-rawmā praš rabbā*⁵⁶ *w-lawwyu(h)y glilāye*
rahḥiq w-qarrib ʾap kse b-galyuteh

52 St. Romanos the Melodist, *Kontakia on the Life of Christ*, translated with an Introduction by Archimandrite E. LASH, San Francisco 1995, 202.

53 S.H. GUTBERLET, *Die Himmelfahrt Christi in der bildenden Kunst*, Strassburg 1935², 51.

54 On Severian's native accent, betraying his mother tongue, see Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* VI 11, ed. HANSEN: Σευριανὸς δὲ <καί> δοκῶν πεπαιδευθῆσθαι, οὐ πάνυ τῆ φωνῇ τῆν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐξετράνου γλώσσαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἑλληνιστὶ φθεγγόμενος Σύρος ἦν τὴν φωνὴν (transl. P. PÉRICHON – P. MARAVAL [SC 505], Paris 2006): «Sénérien cependant, bien qu'il parût avoir de la culture, ne maîtrisait pas tout à fait la langue grecque dans sa prononciation, mais lorsqu'il s'exprimait en grec il était Syrien par la prononciation»). On the probable date of the sermon's delivery, see R.W. BISHOP – N. RAMBAULT, *Severian of Gabala*, In *ascensionem et in principium Actorum*, cit. (n. 44), 153-156.

55 In the French version of LXX Isaiah by Alain Le Boulluec and Philippe Le Moigne (*Vision que vit Isaïe*, Le Bible d'Alexandrie, Paris 2014), Isaiah 33:9 runs as follows: «La terre a été dans le deuil, le Liban dans la confusion; le Sarôn est devenu marais, la Galilée et le Karmêl seront bien visibles».

56 Read so with Beck.

They escorted Lazarus, who *departed* [praš], to the grave;
 it was to the (heavenly) height that *the Master departed* [praš] and *the Galileans* [glilāye]
 escorted Him,
 both distant and near, as well as hidden, in *His revealed state* [galyuteh].

Here, ll. 2 and 3 are structured in such a way as to force an association between *glilāye* ('the Galileans') at the end of l. 2 and *galyuteh* ('His revealed state') at the end of l. 3: Syriac poets artfully put forth parallelism in order to suggest associations or to draw contrasts.⁵⁷

On the other hand, the phraseology of Isaiah 33:9 ([...] *φανερὰ ἔσται ἡ Γαλιλαία* [...]), the second passage by which Severian illustrates *οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι*, may be understood in two different ways. Severian may well have interpreted *φανερὰ*, in a somewhat forced manner but in agreement with his apparent understanding of *οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι* in the light of *ἐφανέρωσε* at John 2:11, to mean *ἡ ἀποκεκαλυμμένη* (*glitā*), that is, '(the region) to which a revelation (of God) has been made.' Alternatively, by reference to Isaiah 33:9, Severian may be indicating a complementary denotation for his gloss: 'the confident ones' (*οἱ ἀποκεκαλυμμένοι*) or 'the confident one' (*ἡ ἀποκεκαλυμμένη*). This should also make good sense in context. Accordingly, Severian should have read into his gloss a meaning suggested by such phraseology as attested at Peshitta 1John 3:21, *galyān enen appayn qdām allāhā* for *παρησίαν ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν* ('we have boldness before God'): the 'Galileans' would thus be those who display such boldness, and Severian would have taken pride in that. In a similar vein, at JSSahd 809:16, Jacob of Serugh presents the paradox of the Incarnation by contrasting the attitude of the Seraph (in the singular, perhaps collectively), attending Christ in heaven according to Isaiah 6:2, to that of Joseph, the 'borrowed father' (*abā š'ilā*, cf. JSB 5:526:19), in his interaction with the incarnate Christ on earth: awe-struck, the former is "covered" (*mḥappay*), while the latter, in his boldness, remains 'uncovered' (*gle*): «the Seraph is covered [mḥappay],⁵⁸ but Joseph is *uncovered* [gle], showing his affection to You» (*srāpā mḥappay wa-gle Yawsep wa-mḥabbeb lāk*).⁵⁹

3. CONCLUSION

On the basis of a close reading of *HcJul* 3,3-6 and 17 I have tried, in this article, to reconstruct a polemic which parallels other fourth-century Christian reactions against the idea of Julian's deification. That idea, spread abroad by the adherents of the emperor soon after his death in June 363, was famously put forward through an oracle which describes his *apotheosis* and has been handed down by Eunapius. Although the narrative of Julian's 'apotheosis by drowning' in *Oration* 5,14 may well have been crafted by Gregory of Nazianzus in order to unmask and deride that pagan prophecy, Gregory's response was only indirect. By contrast, Ephrem, who apparently became aware, through whatever channels of transmission, of that oracle, directly responded to its contents, and his *madrāšā* should be the earliest witness to it. He responded by sharpening motifs that would become, in part, standard ingredients of Ascension formulations in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries. On the one hand, Ephrem antithetically juxtaposed the dead emperor's wretched earthliness to Christ's divinity and glorious *sessio ad dexteram*; on the other hand, he contrasted Julian's shattered quadriga, in which he would purportedly ascend to the celestial realm, to

57 *HdVirg* 36,9 is an important text for a number of reasons. For example, intransitive *praš* in l. 2 should be alluding to the Peshitta reading *ētpreš* ('He was separated') at Luke 24:51 (διέστη), which Sebastian Brock has already suspected as known to Ephrem on the basis of *puršāneh* at *HdResur* 1,18 (see his *Ephrem the Syrian: Select Poems*, Provo, UT 2006, 93, n. 7; on *puršānā* in this context, see M. PAPOUSAKIS, «United in the strife that divided them», cit. [n. 28], 53, n. 22). Again, Ephrem's *lawwyu(h)y* ('[the Galileans] escorted Him') in l. 2 lies behind Jacob's *lawwyu(h)y* at JSB 2:676:4 (verse-homily *On Pentecost*), «(the disciples) escorted the Son as He was about to move up to His lofty region» (*lawwyu(h)y la-brā kad me'alle l-(*)atreh rāmā*), and is thematically transposed at JSSahd 827:5 (verse-homily *On the Ascension*): as Christ was moving up, 'lightnings escorted Him' (*lawwyu(h)y barqe*), ultimately to be left behind by Him in His upward journey. Attention should also be drawn to the formula *sleq la-šmaw(hy)* ('He ascended to His heavens') in l. 6: it is Jacob's source at JSSahd 823:15 (*sleq leh la-šmaw(hy)*).

58 Note that at Peshitta Isaiah 6:2, the participle of *kassi*, not of *ḥappi*, is used: *ba-trēn mkassen paršopayhon* ('with two (wings) they [i.e. the Seraphs] cover their faces').

59 'and he shows his affection to You' (*wa-mḥabbeb lāk*): note the variant 'and he serves [mšammeš] You.'

Christ's Quadriga in heaven. *HcJul* 3 should have been composed between 366 and 370, that is, around the time when, in a number of places, the feast of the Ascension started being celebrated separately from Pentecost. Here, I did not attempt to explain how the reconstructed polemic was integrated into the whole of the third *madrāšā* against Julian: I intend to return to this important question on another occasion. Still, I hope that, in the course of my reconstruction, I have moreover solved textual problems which, in my view, had not been dealt with satisfactorily in the past.

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Abstract. On the basis of a close reading of *HcJul* 3, 3-6 and 17 I have tried, in this article, to reconstruct a polemic which parallels other fourth-century Christian reactions against the idea of Julian's deification. That idea, spread abroad by the adherents of the emperor soon after his death in June 363, was famously put forward through an oracle which describes his *apotheosis* and has been handed down by Eunapius. Although the narrative of Julian's 'apotheosis by drowning' in *Oration* 5, 14 may well have been crafted by Gregory of Nazianzus in order to unmask and deride that pagan prophecy, Gregory's response was only indirect. By contrast, Ephrem, who apparently became aware, through whatever channels of transmission, of that oracle, directly responded to its contents, and his *madrāšā* should be the earliest witness to it.

Keywords. Ephrem the Syrian; Julian the Apostate; Apotheosis; Ascension; Biblical Exegesis; Jacob of Serugh; Syriac Literature.

Appendix: glh at HcJul 3, 17, 4a: Form and meaning

There is yet another problem in stanza 17 which we must consider, that is, the verbal form *glh* at 4a. It puzzled Edmund Beck as much as earlier and subsequent translators: what is the root on which the form is built and what does the verb mean? One thing is clear: Ephrem chose this verb in order to draw attention to *glilāyā*, by surrounding the epithet with similarly sounding vocabulary.

In order to interpret *glh* we may start with the af'el of the root *g-w-l*: 'agil means 'to reject' and is often used together with *šdā* ('to cast away'), either in close proximity to it or within an asyndeton. Thus, 'the forefathers' (*abāhātā*), according to *HdFide* 56,3, «had utterly rejected [*agil(w) šdaw*]⁶⁰ the disputes (stirred up) by the subtle one [*drāšaw(hy) d-qaṭṭinā*]⁶¹. Similarly, according to *HdVirg* 15,10, «the pure pile of grain [*karyā dakyā*] utterly rejected [*agil šdāy(hy)*]⁶². Again, in his first homily on Gen 4, Jacob of Serugh elaborates on the acceptance of the offering of Abel and the rejection of that of Cain on the part of the divine fire which descended from heaven. This motif is elaborated upon, with characteristic brilliance, in

60 'had utterly rejected' (*agil(w) šdaw*): lit. 'rejected (and) cast away.'

61 Here, *qaṭṭinā* ('the subtle one') stands for the Devil. In *Sermo de Fide* 6,17-18, the adverb *qaṭṭinā'it* (as opposed to *pšitā'it*) is used with reference to the Arian teaching. In his annotation (CSCO 213, *Scriptores Syri* 89, 60, n. 7), Beck pointed to the use of the verb *ʿtqaṭṭan(w)*, with the Aetians as the grammatical subject, in *HcHaer* 22,4, 2.

62 Beck is misleading when he implies (in CSCO 224, *Scriptores Syri* 95, 52, n. 17) that, at *HdVirg* 15,10,8 (*w-(ʿ)ʿtṣṣaḥ npal w-(ʿ)ʿebad*), Ephrem glosses *ʿtṣṣaḥ* at Acts 1:18 with *ʿtṣṣaḥ* (or does he imply, instead, that Ephrem's text at Acts 1:18 read *ʿtṣṣaḥ* instead of *ʿtṣṣaḥ*? But Ephrem does know of *ʿtṣṣaḥ* in this context; see M. PAPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. [n. 8], 135-136). The very sequence of events put forth at Acts 1:18 renders this impossible: Judas first 'fell headlong' (*npal ʿal ʿappaw(hy)*) and then he 'burst open in the middle' (*ʿtṣṣaḥ men mšaʿteh*). Undoubtedly, the imagery which *ʿtṣṣaḥ* here suggests is that of a 'branch' (*pešhā*) that has lopped itself off from the 'tree' (*ʿilānā*), the Tree being Christ (explicitly so at *HdVirg* 15,10,5): the form *ʿtṣṣaḥ* is middle not passive, as the reflexive *pšaḥ napšeh* ('he lopped himself off') at 10, 6 and Jacob of Serugh's elaboration, discussed in detail below, on *HdVirg* 15,10 clearly show. It may be noted further that the variant *paršeh* for *pašeh* (subj. the Devil, obj. Judas) at JSB 1:492:6 directly links Jacob's allusion to *HdVirg* 15,10 there to the other Jacobean passages on Judas on which I comment below.

the Syriac literary tradition, but can be traced ultimately to καὶ ἐνεπύρισεν (Gen 4:4), the rendering of ‘Theodotion,’ probably representing the Jewish revision (late first century B.C.) of the Septuagint, which here reads καὶ ἐπείδεν: apparently, that ‘Theodotion’ associated by false etymology Hebrew *wayyiša* ‘(apocopated 3rd sing. masc. imperfect consecutive of the verb *šā’āh*, ‘to gaze,’ ‘to regard (with favour),’ thus: «and (the Lord) had regard [wayyiša] for (Abel and his offering)») with the noun ʿš ‘(fire)’⁶³. Let us focus on JSB 5:8:1-6:

w-kad qurbānā ʿal da-trayhon šed rabbūtā
 (ʿ)tat kenutā w-neqlat šeqlat ʿaynā da-gbāt
 šdāt sulānā d-lā ḥāšah (h)wā l-metqabbālu
 w-nesbat gabyā d-leh zādeq (h)wā l-metyaqāru
 ʿagilat (h)wāt šeqlat qudšā men dakyutā
 w-peršat šebqat debhā l-ṭamā da-pligūtā

And when the offering of each⁶⁴ was presented⁶⁵ to divine Majesty [rabbūtā],
 there came divine Justice [kenutā] and cleared away (the scum) [neqlat] and picked [šeqlat] the
 offering of her choice⁶⁶.

She cast away [šdāt] the refuse, which would be useless that it be accepted:
 she took away [nesbat] the choice offering, for which it was right that it be honoured.
 (Divine Justice) rejected (Cain’s offering) [ʿagilat (h)āt] (and) picked [šeqlat] holiness (offered)
 on the part of purity [men dakyutā];
 she distinguished (Abel’s offering) [peršat] (and) left aside [šebqat] the sacrifice (offered) by the
 impure man of two minds [l-ṭamā da-pligūtā]⁶⁷.

JSB 5:8:2BC (*neqlat šeqlat ʿaynā da-gbāt*) establishes the pattern according to which 8:5AB (*ʿagilat (h)wāt šeqlat qudšā*) as well as 8:6AB (*w-peršat šebqat debhā*), in straight parallelism to 8:5AB, should be read. This pattern involves an asyndeton consisting of antonymous verbs (*nqal*, ‘to clear (and throw away),’⁶⁸

63 S. BROCK, *Fire from Heaven: from Abel’s Sacrifice to the Eucharist. A Theme in Syriac Christianity*, StPatr 25 (1993) 229-243 (now reprinted in his *Fire from Heaven. Studies in Syriac Theology and Liturgy*, Aldershot 2006). See also the materials collected in J.B. GLENTHOJ, *Cain and Abel in Syriac and Greek Writers (4th-6th centuries)*, Leuven 1997, 97-100 and 229.

64 ‘the offering of each’: lit. ‘the offering of the two.’

65 ‘was presented’: lit. ‘entered’.

66 ‘the offering of her choice’: lit. ‘that which she chose.’

67 On Jacob’s use of *pligā* / διψυχοσ (cf. James 1:8), see M. PΑPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. (n. 8), 144.

68 At JSB 5:8:2BC (*neqlat šeqlat ʿaynā da-gbāt*), *nqal* (*neqlat*) means ‘to clear away/to remove (useless stuff).’ Jacob is fond of this verb, and a few examples of his usage may be given here. JSB 4:48:12-13 (context: Gen 8:10-11; God commands the destructive waters to subside): «the (divine) command cleared [nqal] the boulders of water [yagre d-mayyā] away from the earth; / it rolled away [ʿaggel] and removed the huge stones which had crushed [d- paʿa(w)] the insolent (humanity)» (*nqal puqdānā yagre d-mayyā mennāh d-(ʿ)arā / w-ʿaggel wa-šqal buḡše d-paʿa(w) la-d-marrāhin*). Two comments on the text: a) I read *yagre d-mayyā*, ‘the boulders of water’, instead of *yagre rāme*, ‘the tall boulders’, in Bedjan’s text (Bedjan relegated the reading *d-mayyā*, ‘of water’, to the apparatus). Jacob should have referred to the pelting of the earth with water in punishment: he used such metaphorical language at JSB 4:34:1, *kepay mayyā*, ‘stones of water’ (by analogy, in the fourth homily *On Sodom*, he speaks of *kepe d-nurā*, cf. JSB 5:140:21 and 144:3); b) I read *d-paʿa(w)* (‘which crushed’) instead of *da-paʿa(w)* in Bedjan’s text. Again, in the context of Gen 22, at JSB 4:95:11, Isaac, a type of Christ, ‘cleared [nqal (h)wā] the path before the Son of the King toward the slaughter» (*šbilā nqal (h)wā qdām bar malkā luqbal qeltā*). Similarly, in the opening of homily 74 (*On the Revelation to Jacob at Bethel*), at JSB 3:192:15-16, we are told that the ‘just’ (*kene*) «went out and walked upon the royal (lit. ‘great’) road of the Son of God: each one of them cleared [nqal] an (especially assigned) τόπος [dukkā] on it that the road become smooth [tehwē šapyā]» (*b-(ʿ) urheh rabbtā d-bar ʿallāhā npaq(w) hallek(w) (h)waw / w-ḥad ḥad mennhon dukktā nqal bāh d-tehwē šapyā*). The use of the term *dukkā* here is suggestive: the ‘just’ are τοποτηρηταί (*nāṭray dukktā*) of Christ in that they carry His image in their own person (on this motif, which moreover stands behind JSakhrass-Syryany 1:21:131, see M. PΑPOUTSAKIS, *Vicarious Kingship*, cit. [n. 8], 176). For the vocabulary which Jacob uses at JSB 4:95:11 and JSB 3:192:15-16, cf. Ephrem, *HdEcll* 31,4,1-2, *ba-šbilā šapyā mašraʿ / wa-b-(ʿ)urhā matqel da-nqilā*, «On the smooth path [šbilā šapyā] he caused one to slip; on the clear road [urhā ... da-nqilā] he caused one to stumble»). Finally, the passive participle is used in a remarkable passage in the homily *On Holy Baptism*, at JSB 1:200:16-17: «In the region of Light, the sun and moon have been removed [nqilin] and have been cast [šden] away from its gate lest (that Light) be offended [neštahhe] by their rays» (*b-(ʿ)atrā d-nuhrā d-šemšā w-sahrā l-bar men tarʿeh / nqilin wa-šden d-lā neštahhe men denḥayhon*).

and *šqal*, 'to pick') that receive different direct objects. Moreover, the direct object of the first verb (*neqlat*) is not mentioned; it is only the direct object of the second verb (*šeqlat*) that is made explicit. This pattern is not sustained throughout. By contrast to JSB 5:8:2BC, 8:5AB and 8:6AB, at JSB 5:8:19-20, the asyndeton *w-(*)agilat (h)wāt šebqat* does not consist of antonymous verbs: they are synonymous and govern the same direct object:

šrāt gawzaltā 'al tuqqāneh d-haw šappirā
w-()agilat (h)wāt šebqat debheh d-haw zipānā*

The flame dwelt upon *the meal prepared* [*tuqqānā*] by that εὐάπειρος [*šappirā*]:
it had rejected (and) left aside [*agilat (h)wāt šebqat*] the sacrifice of that deceitful man.

Next, we may turn to the homily *On the Crucifixion*, at JSB 2:467:8-11 (in my English version below, the verb *lā gālu(h)y* is purposefully left untranslated):

'dammā d-hu leh trad men ḥayye hu lā ṭardeh
da-ṭ'in (h)wā leh wa-zhir (h)wā beh d-lā netparse
haw 'awwālā 'agil napšeh kad lā gālu(h)y
wa-praš wa-npaq men talmide kad lā paršu(h)y

Until he [i.e. Judas] *expelled himself* [*hu leh trad*]⁶⁹ from Life, He [i.e. Christ] *Himself had not*
expelled him [*hu lā ṭardeh*]

for (Christ) was tolerating him⁷⁰ and was keeping him safe lest he be exposed.
 It was that lawless man⁷¹ who *rejected himself* [*agil napšeh*]: (the disciples) *lā gālu(h)y*.
He set himself apart [*praš*] and *left* [*npaq men*, lit. 'he went out from'] the disciples:
they had not excommunicated him [*lā paršu(h)y*].

Judas Iscariot brought 'excommunication' (*puršānā*) upon himself: it was neither Christ nor Judas' fellow disciples who inflicted it upon him. In order to express this idea effectively, Jacob counterbalances, within his twelve-syllable line, two short contrastive statements centering on the same verb. The first involves either a reflexive construction (transitive verb + reflexive pronoun) or an intransitive application of the verb in the affirmative. In response to this first statement, the second involves the transitive use of the verb in the negative. Of course, in this second statement the grammatical subject is different from that of the verb in the first statement; again, the person which here functions as the direct object of the transitive verb is that which functions as the grammatical subject of the verb, reflexive or intransitive, in the first statement. JSB 2:467:8 provides the clearest example: «Until *he* (i.e. Judas) *expelled himself* [*hu leh trad*] from Life, *He* (i.e. Christ) *Himself had not expelled him* (i.e. Judas) [*hu lā ṭardeh*]». At JSB 2:467:10C and 11C, the negative statements in parallelism are introduced by the adversative *kad*: *kad lā gālu(h)y / kad lā paršu(h)y*.

On the basis of the pattern *hu leh trad* versus *hu lā ṭardeh*, I introduced into the text, at JSB 2:467:11, the variant *paršu(h)y*, which Bedjan had relegated to the apparatus⁷²: *praš* versus *lā paršu(h)y* ('(Judas) set himself apart' versus '(his fellow disciples) had not excommunicated him')⁷³. In that case, Jacob would avail himself of *praš* in its double application: as intransitive in the affirmative ('he set himself apart

69 On the reflexive construction which involves *hu leh* and which might, at first sight, pass for a Graecism, see S. BROCK, *Some Diachronic Features of Classical Syriac*, in *Hamlet on a Hill: Semitic and Greek Studies Presented to Professor T. Muraoka on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. by M.F.J. BAASTEN – W.TH. PEURSEN, Leuven 2003, 95-111, at 110. For good examples from the recently published homilies of Jacob, see JSAkhress-Syryany 1:20:103 (*hu leh nawled*), 1:37:143 (*makkek hu leh*), 1:37:145 (*masken hu leh*), 1:37:147 (*sayyek hu leh*); for another attestation of this construction, which is, moreover, thematically relevant to the Jacobean passages on Cain and Judas Iscariot discussed here, see Brock's review of A. TOEPEL, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden im syrischen Buch der Schatzhöhle. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung* (2006), in *OrChrP* 74/2 (2008) 554-557, at 557 (in the *Book of the Cave of Treasures*, Satan is described as having 'separated himself from the divine Majesty').

70 The 'abstract' denotation of *ṭ'in* here (*ṭ'in (h)wā leh*, 'He [i.e. Christ] was tolerating him [i.e. Judas]') may still go back to that verb's 'concrete' application at *HdVirg* 15,10,5 («The Tree [i.e. Christ] bore him [i.e. Judas as a branch] in Its affection»): Judas had been the branch that *lopped itself off* (*pšaḥ napšeh*). *HdVirg* 15,10 is discussed in n. 62 above.

71 '(that) lawless man' stands for (*haw*) *'awwālā*, the term used at 2 Thess 2:8 (Greek: ἄνομος).

72 Bedjan's text reads *ṭardu(h)y*. Thus, with Bedjan: *praš* versus *lā ṭardu(h)y*.

73 On the variant *paršeh* at JSB 1:492:6, where Bedjan's text reads *pašheh* (subj. the Devil, obj. Judas), see n. 62 above.

[*praš*'] and again, by contrast, as transitive (with a different subject) in the negative ('they had not communicated him [*lā paršu(h)y*']). Apparently, the contrastive balance of JSB 2:467:10 (*haw 'awwālā 'agil napšeh kad lā gālu(h)y*) is the same as that of 467:8 and 11 with a difference in morphology. Instead of counterbalancing the construction af'el + reflexive pronoun in the affirmative (*'agil napšeh*) with the transitive, non-reflexive, application of the af'el in the negative (*lā 'agil(w) leh* or *lā 'agilu(h)y*), Jacob now sets the reflexive construction of the af'el (*'agil napšeh*) against the transitive pe'al of the same root: *lā gālu(h)y*. To do justice to the pattern used at JSB 2:467:8 and 11, we should assume that the pe'al at JSB 2:467:10 is synonymous to the af'el (*'agil*). They both mean 'to reject':

haw 'awwālā 'agil napšeh kad lā gālu(h)y

It was that lawless man who rejected himself [*'agil napšeh*]: (the disciples) had not rejected him [*lā gālu(h)y*].

The reason for using *lā gālu(h)y*, instead of either *lā 'agil(w) leh* or *lā 'agilu(h)y*, is metrical. The pattern according to which the cognate forms *'agil* and *gāl* are distributed at JSB 2:467:10 conforms to that of JSB 2:467:8 (*hu leh ttrad* (reflexive construction) versus *hu lā ttardeh*) and JSB 2:467:11 (*praš* (intransitive) versus *lā paršu(h)y*).

Now, in this homily, the transitive application of *praš* is attested also at JSB 2:466:17-18:

*ʾašig reglaw(hy) ʾa(y)k da-l-Šem'on wa-l-Yoḥannān
w-ida⁷⁴ (h)wā leh w-lā paršeh (h)wā men ḥabbibaw(hy)*

(Christ) washed his [i.e. Judas'] feet as He did with Simon and John;

He had known him (well), but *He did not separate him [paršeh (h)wā]* from his friends.

What Christ chose not to do, Satan cunningly achieved, cf. JSB 2:493:3-6, where transitive *praš* is attested once again (in my English version below, the verb *'ettgil* is purposefully left untranslated):

*šqal (h)wā ḥākēl laḥmā šbi'ā haw marrāḥā
w-ʾal sātānā dalḥeh w-paršeh men talmide
'ettgil wa-npaq ʾa(y)k zizānā men bēt ḥete
d-nezal nehwe laḥmā l-nurā d-šāwe (h)wā laḥ*

Thus, that insolent man had picked the dipped bread

and Satan entered (into him): *he agitated and separated him [dalḥeh w-paršeh]* from the disciples.

'ettgil and parted company (with them) [npaq, lit. 'he went out (from among them)'] – as the weed would do with the wheat–

to go and become (himself) the bread which fire (would consume) for he deserved that fire.

Here, the formula *'ettgil wa-npaq* (JSB 2:493:5A) is clearly equivalent to the formula *wa-praš wa-npaq* ('and he set himself apart [*praš*] and left [*npaq men*, lit. 'he went out from']') at JSB 2:467:11A, discussed above: everything about the verses JSB 2:493:5 and JSB 2:467:11 suggests their semantic equivalence. The correspondence between *'ettgil wa-npaq* and *wa-praš wa-npaq* is comparable to that between *nettgil wa-nqum* and *neproš neppoq*, attested in semantically parallel, well-balanced couplets, within the same narrative and in close proximity to one another, at JSB 1:175:1-2 and JSB 1:175:5-6 respectively. In the homily *On the Baptism of our Saviour*, JSB 1:175:1-2 reads as follows:

*qpas (h)wā 'ideh d-lā na'med (h)wā l-(')aylen d-(')āten
d-nettgil wa-nqum ḥatnā mšihā hu ballḥudaw(hy).*

(John) withdrew his hand lest he baptize those who were coming (to him)

so that Christ the Bridegroom *nettgil and stand [nettgil wa-nqum]*, He alone.

At JSB 1:175:5-6, the verse narrative continues:

*rabṭāḥ l-ʾānā d-tedḥoq napšāḥ men mabboʾā
d-neproš neppoq ʾemrā d-debhā men mar'itā*

(John) repelled the sheep [*ʾānā*] that they move away [*tedḥoq napšāḥ*, lit. "(that) it remove itself"] from the spring [i.e. the river Jordan]

so that the Sacrificial Lamb stand apart and emerge [*neproš neppoq*] from (within) the flock.

Given that, with roots II-waw, the *'etpēl* is supplanted by the *'ettafal*, the form *'ettgil* (*'ettafal*) stands as the

74 I read *ida'* instead of *yāda'* in Bedjan's text.

middle (intransitive) form not only of *ʿagil*, which is not uncommon, but also of *gāl*, which is very rare. The meaning 'to reject,' which I read for *gāl* at JSB 2:467:10, should also be read for its attestation at *HcJul* 3,17,4a. Regarding the form *gh* at *HcJul* 3,17,4a, Edmund Beck suggested the reading *gallāh*, that is, 3rd sing. masc. perfect of the otherwise unattested pe'al of a geminate verb *gal* with the fem. sing. objective suffix. He noted: «da *gālāh* kaum in Frage kommt, wäre hier das sonst nicht bezeugte Pe'al der Wurzel *gll* anzunehmen; Bedeutung? Wälzen, treiben?»⁷⁵. This derivation of the form *gh* from the root *g-l-l* seems to have been anticipated by Gustav Bickell, although Beck suggested a different denotation for the geminate verb. Most probably with a view to bringing out, in his German version, the alliterative connexion with *gigle* ('Räder') in the Syriac original, Bickell translated *gh* with 'rädern' («Der Galiläer *rädert* die Herde des Zaubers und überliefert sie den Wölfen in der Wüste»), surely a fanciful interpretation⁷⁶. In his recent translation, Dominique Cerbelaud followed Beck: «Le Galiléen *emmène* et confie le troupeau du devin aux loups en plein désert»⁷⁷. By contrast, Judith Lieu translated: «The Galilaean *made known* and handed over the flock of the diviner to the wolves in the wilderness»⁷⁸. Apparently, she understood *gh* to stand for *glāh*, from *glā* ('to reveal'): her interpretation makes poor sense and goes against the metre⁷⁹.

Beck felt that, here, a form *gālāh* would be out of the question simply because he relied on Brockelmann. According to *Lexicon Syriacum*, 109a, the primary denotation of *gāl* (from the root *g-w-l*) is 'effervuit, aestuavit (*raḥme*, viscera, met. misericordia),' and all citations given to illustrate that primary sense involve the idiom *gāl(w) raḥme + 'al*: Gen 43:30; Hosea 11:8-9; *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, 3:234:4 (*On Placidus*), ed. P. BEDJAN; *Julian Romance*, ed. J.G.E. HOFFMANN, 163:21; and *Ephraem Syri Opera omnia*, 1 (Syriac), 528E (*Commentary on 1Kings*, attributed to Ephrem, but not by him; on the narrative of 1 Kings 4:18ff.)⁸⁰; Aphrahat, *Homilies*, ed. W. WRIGHT, 36:3 (= PS 1 [*Dem.* 2,13], 76:11): the passage from Aphrahat is the only one in the group in which the idiom *gāl(w) raḥme* is not construed with the preposition 'al⁸¹. Moreover, Brockelmann discovered a second meaning ('miseratus est') of *gāl* (intransitive) in a verse by the medieval poet Yoḥannān Yak⁸², cited from W. WRIGHT, *A Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, Cambridge 1901, II, 691 (*w-napsāk 'al qnom(y) mḥilā mnawwā w-lā sāk gāylā*, «and your soul is irritated with my weak self and is never compassionate»). It is under this second meaning that Brockelmann classified the transitive *gāl* with an accusative of person, citing only JSB 2:467:10, that is, the passage discussed above, where, however, *gāl* (pe'al) proves to be equivalent to *ʿagil* (af'el). As I have explained, both the af'el and the pe'al of the root *g-w-l* mean 'to reject': at JSB 2:467:10, Jacob resorts to using the rare pe'al (instead of the af'el, of which he appears otherwise to be fond) only for metrical reasons. Whatever the ultimate relationship between the transitive *gāl* at JSB 2:467:10 and the intransitive *gāl* of the idiom *gāl(w) raḥme + 'al* may be, it is clear that, although *gāl(w) raḥme + 'al* does mean, with Brockelmann, 'effervuit, aestuavit (*raḥme*, viscera, met. misericordia),' the transitive *gāl*, construed with an accusative of person, does not mean 'miseratus est'. Once we abandon the explanation of Brockelmann, who, in this case, apparently misled Beck, and we turn to Jacob and his transitive use of *gāl* at JSB 2:467:10, Ephrem's *HcJul* 3,17,4-5, where that verb is employed in conjunction with *ʾašlem* ('to deliver, to hand over'), makes excellent sense: «The Galilean *rejected* the herd of the consultant of oracles and *delivered* it to the wolves in the heart of the desert».

75 E. BECK, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso und Contra Julianum*, cit. (n. 38), 79, n. 17.

76 G. BICKELL, *Die Gedichte des h. Ephräm gegen Julian den Apostaten*, cit. (n. 37), 350.

77 Éphrem de Nisibe, *Hymnes contre Julien*, cit. (n. 37), 469.

78 S. LIEU, *The Emperor Julian. Panegyric and Polemic*, cit. (n. 37), 120.

79 Kathleen McVey, who misunderstood Beck, also took *gh* as a form of *glā*: «The Galilean *revealed* [the chariot] and handed over the flock of the soothsayer to the wolves in the wilderness». See her comment in *Ephrem the Syrian, Hymns*, cit. (n. 37), 248, n. 130, where she defends her translation, which, however, is untenable.

80 For the idiom *gāl(w) raḥme (+ 'al)*, cf. also *Life of Rabbula*, ed. J.J. OVERBECK, 162:25, and S. BROCK, *Ephremiana*, cit. (n. 48), 297 (*sogitā* 2, stanza 3, l. 1).

81 In his review of Bedjan's *Homiliae selectae Mar Jacobi Sarugensis* III and IV in GGA 171/7 (1909) 585-590, at 590, Carl Brockelmann reads *gālen raḥmēh d-(')emeh* for *gā'en raḥmēh d-(')emeh* at JSB 4:125:20 (Brockelmann's emendation finds support in JSakhrass 1:9:62, *w-kad gāl(w) raḥmaw(hy) d-(')abā d-neproq 'ālmā ba-breḥ*, and JSakhrass 1:35:101, *w-kad gāl(w) raḥmēh d-(')allāhutā d-teproq(y) šālmāh [...]*).

82 A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, Bonn 1922, 323.

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