

SYRIAC STUDIES IN ROME IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

by

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to pursue briefly the growing knowledge of Syriac and Syriac speaking Christians during the second half of the Sixteenth Century and also in that context to give a sketch of the Oriental types used in Rome in the later part of that century, the production of which was stimulated by increased contact with the Eastern churches. To do this it will be necessary to examine both the nature and extent of Roman contacts with Syriac speaking churches and the specifically Roman impulses which led to an interest in Syriac. It is, moreover, in this period that the approach to Syriac studies that characterised the work of the great seventeenth-century scholars and those who have subsequently followed them was essentially established. In addition this article seeks to draw a clear contrast with Syriac and Oriental studies in Rome during the first half of the Sixteenth Century and to show that the world-view of the later Syriac scholars there (who were increasingly native Syriac speakers) bore little or no relationship to the world of kabbalistic fantasy. A fantasy that had characterised the earlier Catholic scholars who, away from Rome, produced the first editions of the Syriac New Testaments and who also had achieved the typographic splendours of their bibles well before Rome's own golden age of Oriental typography.

I

The second half of the Sixteenth Century saw an increasing number of contacts between Rome and the Eastern churches. The development of these relationships was not uniform, nevertheless later in the century there was a concerted campaign to re-affiliate the churches of the East initiated by Pius V and pursued by Gregory XIII who was eager to have his Calendar accepted in the East. Consequently during this

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later period there was an increase in real knowledge of the Eastern Christians that is reflected naturally in the growth of the Oriental holdings of the Vatican Library.¹ The period also saw a flowering of Oriental printing in Rome that was second to none.

The purpose of this article is to pursue briefly the growing knowledge of Syriac and Syriac speaking Christians during this period and also in that context to give a sketch of the Oriental types used in Rome in the later part of the century, the production of which was stimulated by increased contact with the Eastern churches. To do this it will be necessary to examine both the nature and extent of Roman contacts with Syriac speaking churches and the specifically Roman impulses which lead to an interest in Syriac.² It is, moreover, in this period that the approach to Syriac studies that characterised the work of the great seventeenth-century scholars and those who have subsequently followed them was essentially established.

In addition this article seeks to draw a clear contrast with Syriac and Oriental studies in Rome during the first half of the Sixteenth Century and to show that the world-view of the later Syriac scholars there (who were increasingly native Syriac speakers) bore little or no relationship to the world of kabbalistic fantasy. A fantasy that had characterised the earlier Catholic scholars who, away from Rome, produced the first editions of the Syriac New Testaments and who also had achieved the typographic splendours of their bibles well before Rome's own golden age of Oriental typography.

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¹ The inventory of Marino and Federico Ranaldi (G. Levi della Vida, *Ricerche sulle Formazione del più antico fondo dei manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Vaticana*. Studi e Testi 92 (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 1939), 185-191) that lists 84 Oriental codices enables us to trace the growth of the holding of Syriac manuscripts in the second half of the sixteenth century. Of twenty additions, all of Nestorian provenance, fifteen (Vat syr 2, 3, 4, 17, 22, 45, 46, 62, 65, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 128) mainly biblical books, lectionaries or liturgical texts were written in India and came from the Church in Malabar. Three others, 66, 186, 188, were written in Mesopotamia in the years 1529, 1477 & 1493 respectively. (Vat syr 66 '*libro de consecratione della chrisma in lingua e lettere chaldaea*' travelled to India where it was owned by Mar Yosef, nominated Metropolitan of India by the Patriarch Abdisha'). This homogenous Indian collection came to Rome with Mar Yosef when he was accused by his rival bishop Abraham of Nestorianism. He died in 1569 on the way to Rome and his books passed into the Library. We have a subsequent letter of 1581 to Santoro from the archbishop of 'Amid, legate of the new Chaldean Patriarch Simon Denha Gelu, attempting to recover the 'books, robes and money' lost to his family (G. Beltrami, *La Chiesa caldea nel Secolo dell' Unione* (Rome, 1933), 92 and 199-203, Documento XVIII) but the Library kept the codices. In 1574 the Library acquired some private books of Cervini (Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 192) and it appears likely that Vat syr 148, an acephalous liturgical treatise attributed to George of Arbela, was amongst them.

² For an authoritative introduction to the Syriac Tradition: S. P. Brock and others (eds), *The Hidden Pearl: the Syrian Orthodox Church and its ancient Aramaic Heritage* (Rome, 2001).

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I have elsewhere given an account of the Catholic scholarship of the earlier Syriac scholars.³ Their work began under the aegis of Cardinal Egidio da Viterbo at the time of the arrival of Maronite scholars to the Fifth Lateran Council (1513-1515) and his distinctive Christian kabbalistic approach to Syriac decisively shaped the work of Teseo Ambrogio, Andreas Masius, and Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter who produced the *editio princeps* of the Syriac New Testament in Vienna in 1555. Most significant has been the discovery of the full significance of the role of Guillaume Postel in both the linguistic and typographic aspects of early sixteenth-century Syriac studies: his distinctive convictions also contributed much to the worldview of the early scholars. These earlier Catholic scholars were not without contact with Syriac speakers and the contribution of the Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite⁴) scribe Moses of Mardin was of the first importance, but their reception of the Oriental material was so conditioned by their kabbalistic presuppositions as to be *toto caelo* different from the scholarship of the later part of the century.

The burning of the Talmud in Rome in 1553 marked – almost symbolically – a clear ideological change in the attitude of the Curia to the Christian use of non-biblical Jewish material and thereby to Christian kabbalah.⁵ The sympathetic hearing given to the Christian kabbalists by, for example, Marcello Cervini, who became briefly Pope Marcellus II, was not extended by Paul IV: Hebrew printing in Rome effectively ceased after 1553 until the nineteenth century. The scholars left: they produced their bibles in Vienna and Antwerp. The present article looks therefore to mark the discontinuity that characterises Roman Oriental studies and particularly in the study of Syriac in the second half of the century. This dissimilarity helps set the distinctive features of both periods of Roman Oriental scholarship in a clear light as we turn now to examine the later period in greater detail.

It was the arrival of a Maronite delegation from the forty-first Maronite Patriarch, Sim'an ibn Dawud ibn Hassan at the invitation of Pope Leo X to the Fifth Lateran Council 1513-1515 that had initially stimulated Syriac studies in Rome.⁶ Relations with the Maronite Church were further strengthened in the second half of the century by two missions between 1578 and 1580 of the Jesuit Giambattista Eliano the Younger. He was the nephew and disciple of the distinguished Jewish scholar and protégé of

³ Robert J. Wilkinson, *Orientalism, Aramaic and Kabbalah in the Catholic Reformation. The first printing of the Syriac New Testament* (Leiden, 2007).

⁴ I use this term which the Syrian Orthodox may now find somewhat pejorative merely to assist readers in identification: it was used extensively in the sixteenth-century Latin sources and later in the secondary literature.

⁵ Wilkinson, *Orientalism*, 91-94.

⁶ The Maronite church, its relationship with Rome and the details of this delegation are discussed in detail in Wilkinson, *Orientalism*, 11-18.

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Egidio da Viterbo, Elias Levita. Eliano was baptised in Venice 21 September 1551,⁷ entered the Company of Jesus in 1552,⁸ had undertaken a dangerous mission to the Copts 1561-1563 (and was to make another 1582-1585) and had taught Hebrew and Arabic at the Collegium Romanum.⁹ As a result of his missionary efforts on his visit to the Maronites 1578-1582 there was founded the Maronite College at Rome by Gregory XIII under Jesuit direction.¹⁰ Two young Maronites who were sent to Rome by Eliano in 1579 were housed initially in the Collegio dei Neofiti and attended lectures at the Collegium Romanum. In 1580 Elias sent four more students from the

⁷ Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 257; G. E. Weil, *Élie Lévi Humaniste et Massorète 1469-1549* (Leiden, 1963), 163-164 (his mother was Elias's daughter). The fundamental documents appear in Antoine Rabbath S. J., *Documents inédits pour servir à l'Histoire du Christianisme en Orient I* (Paris, 1905-07), 305ff. (A posthumous second volume has the name of P. Tournebize S. J.) This is supplemented by J. C. Sola, 'El P. Juan Bautista Eliano un documento autobiográfico inédito,' *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu IV* (1935), 291-321. M. Moosa, *The Maronites in History*, New York 1986 discusses this mission on 245-255. Also: Sami Kuri S.J., *Monumenta Proximi-Orientis I Palestine-Liban-Syrie-Mésopotamie (1523-1583)* (Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu 136 (Rome, 1989), 113-118. GERSL (Groupe d'Études et Recherches souterraines du Liban), *Momies du Liban Rapport préliminaire sur la découverte archéologique de 'Asi-l-Hadat (XIII siècle)* (Beirut, 1994), 114 & 161-162 has interesting evidence of Eliano as a book-burner and destroyer of literature he found unacceptable. There seems little doubt he destroyed important Maronite manuscripts the value of which he was unable to appreciate.

⁸ See M. L. Kuntz, *Guillaume Postel: Prophet of the Restitution of All Things. His Life and Thought* (The Hague, 1981), 16 for the early Jesuits' positive attitudes to newly converted Jews. The Order however later introduced a racial standard for office-holders and then membership. The 'Aryan Clause' was dropped in 1946. See Jerome Freidman 'Jewish Conversion, the Spanish Pure Blood Laws and the Reformation: A Revisionist View of Racial and Religious Anti-Semitism,' *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18/1 (Spring 1987), 3-29 at 23 with reference there to the work in this area of J. Rieters and J. P. Donnelly. For a general survey of the Jesuits in the Near East: Bernard Vincent, 'Les Jésuites et l'islam méditerranéen,' in B. Bennassar & R. Sauzet (eds), *Chrétiens et Musulmans à la Renaissance (Actes du 37e Colloque du CESR 1994)* (Paris, 1998).

⁹ F. Pericoli-Ridolfini, 'La Missione pontificia presso il Patriarca copto di Alessandria Gabriele VII nel 1561-1563,' *Revista degli Studi Orientali* 31 (1956), 129-167. M. Scaduto, 'La Missione di Cristoforo Rodriguez al Cairo (1561-1563),' *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 17 (1958), 233-278. The mission may be seen in the broader context of relationships between the Copts and Rome at this time in V. Buri, 'L'Unione della Chiesa copta con Roma sotto Clemente VIII,' *Orientalia Christiana* 23/2 (1931), 106-171. G. Levi della Vida, *Documenti intorno alle Relazioni delle Chiese orientali con La S. Sede durante il Pontificato di Gregorio XIII* (Studi e Testi 143, Vatican City, 1948), 114-171 adds text and discussion of a letter to Gregory XIII from the Coptic Patriarch John XCVI. A very clear account of these matters is now: A. Hamilton, *The Copts and the West 1439-1822* (Oxford, 2006), 58-73.

¹⁰ Pierre Raphael, *Le Rôle du Collège Maronite romain dans L'Orientalisme aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Beirut, 1950), discusses the early history of the College, 11-69. More extensively: N. Gemayel, *Les échanges culturels entre Les Maronites et l'Europe: du Collège maronite de Rome (1584) au Collège de 'Aya Warka (1789)* (Beirut, 1984).

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Lebanon. A third group of ten boys – some so young as eight years old – arrived in 1583. They were allowed to celebrate their own liturgy and 12 May 1584 they were given their own College. The College grew and was in time the home of great Syriac scholars like Gabriel Sionita and Abraham Ecchellensis (Ibrahim al-Haqilani) in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the Assemanis of the eighteenth century. Many books from the Lebanon passed through the College and eventually ended up in the Vatican Library where they now remain. The College thus came to be the focus of a new school of Syriac studies in Rome in the second part of the century.

A second major force in Oriental matters in Rome at the time was Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro (or Santori), a dynamic and influential prelate – *papabile* in 1592 – who had been since 1577 protector of the Collegio dei Neofiti with Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto and Filippo Vastavillano. In this capacity Santoro was to concern himself with the Eastern Churches. Not only was Santoro instrumental in promoting ecclesiastical matters, he was also able to attract Robert Granjon, one of the greatest of all French typographers, to Rome and into his entourage. Granjon was the man who had made possible Plantin's Antwerp Polyglot of 1568-72 and was subsequently to develop the excellence of the Roman Stamperia Medicea *Oriente* (circa 1590-1614), which we shall shortly discuss. Santoro thus brought together Rome's interest in the Eastern churches with typographic excellence.

Santoro has left an autobiography and six volumes of his notes upon private audiences and consistories in which he took part. These have been selectively edited by Krajcar.¹¹ As a sixteenth-century Roman, Santoro shows, as we would expect, no sensitivity to Eastern rites at all: *tolerari possunt* he conceded at best, rather his goal was conformity to the Roman ritual.¹² Nor was his attitude to the Greeks entirely above reproach. Yet there were those more extreme than he and he was not without generosity to Eastern Christians. This perhaps was not too difficult under Gregory XIII but things were different under Sixtus V who memorably expressed his irritation with the Oriental Christians by saying he had no intention of 'feeding the whole of Armenia'.¹³

It is in fact in connection with Armenian that we first find mention of Granjon in Santoro's entourage. Granjon was to have a most significant influence on Oriental

¹¹ Ed. G. Cugnoli 'Autobiografia di Monsignor G. Antonio Santori Cardinale di S. Severina,' *Archivio della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria* 12 (1889), 327-372 and 13 (1890), 151-205; J. Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro and the Christian East: Santoro's Audiences and Consistorial Acta* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 177, Institutum Pontificium Orientale, Rome 1966); Beltrami, *La Chiesa*, 230-244.

¹² Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 11-12.

¹³ *Ibid.* 13-14.

printing in Rome, as we have indicated. Santoro's note of an audience with Gregory XIII 2 April 1579 reads: '*Della stampa armenica – che il piace*'.¹⁴ The papal approval for cutting Armenian punches was given 10 September 1579, as Santoro noted. A copy of this specimen offered to the Pope is among Santoro's papers in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome.¹⁵

Thereafter on 15 December 1583 the Pope gave permission to print a Calendar.¹⁶ This was done by Domenico Basa using Granjon's superb Armenian.¹⁷ The calendar was taken to Azarias, Patriarch of the Armenians, by Leonardo Abel in 1584. The Armenian printing nicely illustrates Gregory's eagerness to promote his Calendar. It also marks the beginning of an exceptional period in Oriental typography in Rome that saw the creation of the Tipografia Camerale, the Stamperia del Popolo Romano, the Stamperia Vaticana, and the Stamperia Medicea.¹⁸

An essential note of caution in the consideration of these presses is sounded by H. D. L. Vervliet who warns that the lack of published research

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 29.

¹⁵ Ms K17 f. 176. Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 29 n. It reads: '*Armenici characteres Gregorii XIII Pontif. Optimi Maximi iussu nunc primum Romae incisi.... Rob. Granlon Parisien, incidebat Romae 1579*'.

¹⁶ Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 77 n. 106.

¹⁷ *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* VII (Rome, 1975), 45-7.

¹⁸ I depend heavily upon H. D. L. Vervliet, *Cyrillic and Oriental Typography in Rome at the end of the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1981). A modern overview of Roman typography at this period stressing the importance of Trent for Oriental scholarship and with a good bibliography is A. Tinto 'Per una Storia della Tipografia Orientale a Roma nell'età della Controriforma,' *Accademie e Biblioteche d'Italia* 41 (1973), 280-303. A. Lodolini 'La Stamperia Vaticana e i suoi primi Libri,' *Accademie e Biblioteche d'Italia* 7 (1933), 151-161 also offers archival sources. See also: B. M. Biagiarelli 'La Bibliotheca Medicea Laurenziana Una nuova Sala per l'attrezzatura della Stamperia orientale (Sec. XVI),' *Accademie e Biblioteche d'Italia* 39 (1971), 83-99 with documents. F. Barberi 'Librie Stampatori nella Roma dei Papi' *Studi Romani* 13 (1965), 432-456 offers a review of Roman printing until the nineteenth century that is helpful in showing how the legacy of sixteenth-century Oriental printing passed to the Congregation *De Propaganda Fide* in 1626 (445) and emphasizes continuities here. On the later history of the Congregation: W. Henkel, 'The Polyglot Printing Office of the Congregation' in J. Metzler (ed.), *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Memoria Rerum: 350 years in the Service of the Missions 1622-1972*, vol. 1/1 (Freiburg, 1971), 335-350; vol. 2, 1973, 299-315 and *Die Druckerei der Propaganda Fide: Eine Dokumentation* (Munich, 1977). L. Huetter, 'La Tipografia Vaticana,' *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1962) 273-279 similarly continues the story into the twentieth century. For orientation on modern Western Syriac printing see J. F. Coakley, 'Some Syriac Types at Oxford and Cambridge,' *Matrix* 10 (1990), 181-191 and 'Edward Breath and the Typography of Syriac,' *Harvard Library Bulletin* 6 (1995), 41-62. Also his 'Printing Syriac 1539-1985,' in E. Hanebutt-Benz and others (eds), *Sprachen des Nahen Ostens und die Druckrevolution / Middle Eastern languages and the print revolution: a cross-cultural encounter* (Westhofen, 2002), 93-115. Dr. Coakley's *The Typography of Syriac* (London, 2006), now supplies expert guidance to the whole field of Syriac printing.

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“makes it impossible to define with any precision what were the limits at any given time ... of a number of institutional presses, the Camerale, the Vaticana, the Medicea, the Tipografia del Collegio Romano, the Tipografia della Congregazione dell’Oratio in S. Maria della Vallicella, the Tipographia Linguarum Esterarum, and finally the Tipographia Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide. Not seldom these imprints succeed one another so as to leave one in doubt whether they really indicate different workshops. A basic study of this phase in Roman printing history has yet to be made.”¹⁹

With that considerable caveat in mind, what we know of these presses may be briefly summarised.

The Tipografia Camerale was the official press of the Papal States and produced edicts and the like. The post of *impressor Cameralis* remained in the family of Antonio Blado for almost all the Sixteenth Century. The press was combined with the Stamperia Vaticana in 1609 by Geremia Guelfi, *impressor* from 1608-1626. The Vaticana was a dependency of the Library intended for conciliar decrees, bibles and liturgies – particularly exotic ones. Pius IV in 1561 had invited Paulo Manuzio from Venice for such a purpose and had put in his charge the Stamperia del Popolo Romano. This latter lasted until 1598. Sixtus V however founded the Stamperia Vaticana 27 April 1587 by the Bull *Eam semper*. The technical direction fell to Domenico Basa. The Oriental type from the Vaticana eventually made its way in 1626 to the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*.

For the Stamperia Orientale Medicea one still depends on fundamental work by Guglielmo Enrico Saltini.²⁰ This provides archival documentation for the establishment of the Medicea Press in 1584 by Cardinal Ferdinando de’ Medici with Giambattista Raimondi and Domenico Basa. The aims of the press were to preach the Gospel to Moslems, to reconcile schismatic churches, the propagation of Gregory’s Reforms and, no doubt, the glory of the Medici. A further consideration was the usefulness of reading the sacred text in native idioms in dispute with Protestants, a point to which we shall return.²¹

Of particular interest to us is the involvement of the Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) bishop and ex-patriarch Na’matallah (of whom, more extensively shortly) in the

¹⁹ See H. D. L. Vervliet’s introductory remarks to his facsimile edition of: *The Type Specimen of the Vatican Press 1628* (Amsterdam, 1967), 13-14.

²⁰ G. E. Saltini, ‘Della Stamperia Orientale Medicea e di Givan Battista Raimondi Memoria Compilata sui documenti dell’ Archivio Centrale di Stato,’ *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani* 4 (1860), 257-308.

²¹ *Ibid*, 258. See below.

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founding arrangements of the Medicea Press. The bishop provided manuscripts (presumably Syriac, but possibly Arabic) in return for a pension.²²

The Press had launched a considerable search for Oriental manuscripts like these in anticipation of the production of a Polyglot Bible to rival that of Antwerp.²³ G. E. Saltini later summarized what is known about plans for this Polyglot:²⁴ it was to overshadow the Antwerp Polyglot by comprising thirty volumes in a dozen languages and further serving the evangelisation of the East. Raimondi's collection of prints made in anticipation of the project comprises seven Arabics, three Greeks, five Hebrews, three Chaldeans or Syriacs (to which we shall return), four Persians, one Turkish, and two Egyptians. A Congregation of learned men were to meet in the Palace of Trinità dei Monti to work on the texts.²⁵

It is, however, important to realise that in 1580, in terms of Syriac typography, Rome was behind the times. Granjon had already been in Antwerp. He was certainly there by the beginning of January 1565 (although already by October 1564 Plantin had sold him books) and he left the city around 1570. The Plantin collection has some forty of Granjon's types and it was in Antwerp that he prepared his first Syriac for the Polyglot Bible (1568-1572) after the model and direction provided by Postel. By the time Granjon came to Rome to cut his Syriac there, this was the fourth in Europe and four printed editions of the New Testament, two in Syriac letters, had already been produced.²⁶ (The two Catholic editions amongst these were the product of the older kabbalistic Orientalism of the scholars who gathered around the New Testament projects, a very different imaginative world from the late century emphasis on calendrical and liturgical uniformity.) Rome needed to catch up.

²² Biagiarelli, 'La Bibliotheca', 88-89.

²³ Saltini, 'Della Stamperia', 273, 262 and 297-308.

²⁴ G. E. Saltini, 'La Bibbia Poliglotta Medicea secondo il disegno e gli apparecchi di Gio. Battista Raimondi,' *Bolletino Italiano degli Studi Orientali* (n. series) 22 (1882), 490-495; Tinto, 'Per una Storia', 73-79; J. Le Long, *Discours historiques sur les principales éditions des Bibles polyglots* (Paris, 1713), 74-85.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 493-494. Also important is A. Bertolotti 'Le Tipografie Orientali e gli Orientalisti a Roma nei secoli XVI e XVII,' *Revista Europea* (Firenze) 11 (1878), 217-268 again with archival documents relating to some litigation of Raimondi. The Antwerp Polyglot was the product of the kabbalistic world-view of the early Syriac scholars and had been subject to considerable criticism. It is understandable that it might have been thought desirable to produce another without such compromising associations, and, of course, linguistically even richer. For the Antwerp Polyglot see R. J. Wilkinson, *The Kabbalistic Scholars of the Antwerp Polyglot* (Leiden, 2007).

²⁶ The two editions in Syriac letters were, of course, the *editio princeps* of 1555 and the Syriac New Testament in the Antwerp Polyglot. Tremellius's 1569 edition of the Syriac New Testament, as we shall see below, used Hebrew characters.

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At this time when both Catholics and Protestants were preparing for the spiritual conquest of the East, Granjon's skills were in great demand. He had worked in Paris, Lyons and Frankfurt, as well as Antwerp. Bandini, moreover, provides revealing evidence of rival attempts to win Granjon to Germany. He reports that the Pope's generous remuneration of Granjon (and his anxiety to keep Granjon's punches in Rome) was motivated by his fear that Protestant heretics would plant their religion in the East by way of Oriental languages, particularly Arabic.²⁷ This competition for Granjon and his punches is made to appear the sharper by an appreciation of the poverty of German Oriental printing at this period. Caspar Kraft of Ellwangen who cut the Syriacs of Zimmermann for Widmanstetter's Vienna *editio princeps* of the Syriac New Testament in 1555 had emigrated to Debreczin. When the Protestant Tremellius came to produce his Heidelberg edition of the Syriac New Testament in 1568, the text was set in Hebrew characters for lack of Syriac.²⁸ Jacob Christmann in 1582, and Rutger Spey in 1583, both again in Heidelberg, signally failed to produce an Oriental press. Typographic technology was a strategic weapon in confessional competition: Oriental printing was imagined as the gateway to the East.

II

At this point we may conveniently begin to turn our attention to the long and difficult episode of the Syriac Orthodox (Jacobite) Patriarch Ignatius Na'matallah's stay in Rome.²⁹ He arrived with a rather vague letter of recommendation from the patriarch of Aquileia dated Venice 7 November 1577 and he remained in Rome until some time after February 1595. The whole rather unsatisfactory business illustrates the difficulties inherent in the papal attempts to reconcile the East and impose upon it liturgical and calendrical discipline, and provides the background for Rome's Golden Age of Oriental printing.

²⁷ Vervliet, *Cyrillic*, 24. The quotation is from *Lettera sopra I principi e progressi della Biblioteca Laurenziana* (Florence, 1723), 76-78. For reasons of brevity I have omitted discussion of Granjon's Arabics. Vervliet, *Cyrillic*, 23-40 is essential. Josée Balagna, *L'Imprimerie arabe en Occident* (Paris, 1984), provides a general context, and discusses the Jesuits' mission, 27-32. Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 26 and Tinto 'Per una Storia' 284-285 discuss the refreshing of the Jesuit type in 1578.

²⁸ I have discussed both Tremellius's edition and Heidelberg Orientalism in R. J. Wilkinson, 'Emmanuel Tremellius's 1568 Edition of the Syriac New Testament,' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 58/1 (2007), 9-25.

²⁹ Ni'mat Allah, Nema, Neeme and many variants. The essential account with sources in Levi della Vida, *Documenti*. Also now: Hamilton, *The Copts*, 68-70.

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Na'matallah had himself several years earlier sent a priest to Rome to raise the question of Union. (Union had technically been agreed at the Council of Florence in 1444. The question of its contemporary health had perhaps been explored by Moses of Mardin, as we have suggested elsewhere,³⁰ and also had apparently been raised in Rome in 1561-1562 by a Jacobite bishop John Cassa Qasha who had been sent to Rome along with the monk Abdel for this purpose.) Na'matallah concerned himself not only with his submission to Rome, and the Union of the Jacobite church. He was also involved, as we shall see, in scholarly work on the reform of the Calendar and corresponded with Scaliger and other Orientalists.

Na'matallah's sojourn in Rome gave hope of the return of the Monophysite Church (Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic and Armenian) into Union with Rome. Although this hope was not ultimately fulfilled, it stimulated considerable activity in Rome and led to the mission of Leonard Abel and of that to the Coptic Patriarch Gabriel VII.³¹

Santoro interested himself in the patriarch and arranged support and a house for him and an audience 20 January 1578.³² Na'matallah had sent messengers to Pius V 1562-1565 who had returned to him asking for an explicit declaration of faith (that offered by Moses of Mardin had never been confirmed by his Patriarch).³³ Four other messengers were sent to the Holy See in 1565, 1570 and 1571 but had suffered some bad luck. The first was eaten by a crocodile in the Nile, the second died of plague in Constantinople, the third got caught up in the Turkish wars and the last was arrested by the Turks. Nevertheless Na'matallah persevered in his search for Union and, renouncing his patriarchate in favour of his nephew, he determined to travel to Rome himself. His two companions were a deacon 'Abdannur and the bishop Moses of Şor.³⁴

³⁰ Wilkinson, *Orientalism*, 66.

³¹ Leonardo Abel, a priest of Malta, found himself in Rome under the patronage of Santoro and was used as a translator and confessor in Arabic – '*confessore e interprete della lingua arabica*', Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 25 – of which he was a native speaker, a literate writer, and a grammatical student. The occasion of his mission was a proposal of Santoro to Gregory XIII in April 1581 occasioned by Na'matallah's visit. Gregory made him Bishop of Malta in 1582 and a nuncio to the East '*in Syriae, Mesopotamiae, Assiriae, et Aegypti ac aliis Orientibus regionibus*' by a letter of 30 October 1582. He left Rome 12 March 1583 and was in Aleppo by July. After three years he returned to Rome and gave a full account of his work to Sixtus V dated 19 April 1587. Abel died in Rome 12 May 1605 and was buried in St. John Lateran. Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 201-202. The essential account is [Léon Abel], *Une mission religieuse en Orient au seizième siècle. Relation adressé à Sixte-Quint par l'évêque de Sidon*, translated by A. d'Avril (Benjamin Duprat / Challamel, Paris, 1866).

³² Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio* (2 October 1578), 25.

³³ Robert J. Wilkinson, *Orientalism* 84-85.

³⁴ Considerable controversy surrounds this figure. Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 204 gave an account of his activities and insisted that he was not the same person as Moses of Mardin. The identity of the

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During the first difficult days in Rome it appears Naʿmatallah was seen among others by Leonardo Abel who probably at this time produced *Opiniones et Articuli aliquot, quos revelavit R. mus Neemet Alla Jacobinor(um) Patriarcha, in quibus natio illa in p(raesentiar(um) versatur*, a work on theological and ritual differences between the Jacobites and Rome.³⁵ The work covered Christology, the Procession of the Holy Spirit, forbidden foods, baptismal and penitential formulae, the administration of chrism and communion, the permissibility of second and third marriages and the state of the souls of the just between death and the Last Judgement.³⁶ We also have probably from the same time a memorandum that gives a clear indication of Rome's programme in the East: *Promemoria per l'Unione delle Chiese orientali*. The document and the languages it mentions – Arabic, Syriac, Armenian and Ethiopic – probably reflect Gregory's printing undertakings of the year 1578 and thus nicely illustrate the connection between ecclesiastical politics and printing.³⁷

When Naʿmatallah was first received by Gregory XIII on 30 January 1578, Santoro's diary indicates that the Pontiff had before him a letter and its translation from the new Patriarch, Naʿmatallah's nephew Dawudshah.³⁸ The Pope was, however, clearly reluctant to negotiate the Union of the Churches with an ex-Patriarch and not surprisingly wished to deal with the current one. Responses were

two Moseses was argued strongly by J. Leroy 'Une Copie syriaque du Missale Romanum de Paul III et son Arrière-plan historique,' *Mélanges de l'Université St. Joseph XLVI* / fasc. 23 (1979), 355-382, 375-381. Leroy's case is plausible but the matter is perhaps best considered 'not proven'. The matter was taken up again by H. Kaufhold in a review of Helga Anschütz' *Die syrischen Christen von Tur 'Abdin* (Würzburg, 1984), *Oriens Christianus* 70 (1986), 208-211, 207-208, and is also discussed by R. Contini, 'Gli Studi siriaci,' in *Giorgio Levi della Vida nel Centenario della Nascita (1886-1967)* (Rome, 1988), 25-40, especially n. 54. I regret that I have nothing to contribute to the question.

³⁵ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 13-17 on the difficult question of Syriac documents written at this period. *Documenti*, 10, 20, 21, 41-42 give an inventory of all the manuscripts that may be associated with Naʿmatallah.

³⁶ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 46-47. The document is not without interest as it shows the extent to which Abel was inclined to find Monophysite views of the Incarnation and the Procession of the Holy Spirit substantially in accord with Roman belief.

³⁷ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 48-49. Articles four and five are programmatic and look forward to printing 'in lettera Arabica, Caldea, Armena, et Abessina'. '...et li libri che in ciascheduna lingua si dovessero stampare sari la Bibia, la unione de Greci, Armeni, et Jacobiti fatta nel Concilio Fiorentino, la Epistola di S. Leone Papa à S. Flaviano, qualche buona dottrina Christiana, qualche Catechismo particolare per loro, alcune cose più principali del concilio Tridentino, il Catechismo ad Parochos paucis mutatis, Un direttorio per insegnare à confessori, Una breve summa de decreti piu principali fatti da tutti li Concilii generali, alcune cose del Pontificale Romano, et qualche bel libro spirituale et qualche catena de Dottori sopra la sacra scrittura, ò almeno sopra li Evangelii, et altri libri che alla giornata si offrissero per questo medesimo fine.'

³⁸ Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 22. Naʿmatallah's nephew Ignatius XVIII, David II, was elected Patriarch in March 1576.

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solicited and were evidently favourable. On 30 November 1578 Santoro spoke to the Pope about the Patriarch's desire to return to obedience.³⁹ Discussion in the same audience also touched upon the persistent problem of lack of a Syriac interpreter '*Del mancamento d'interprete chaldeo...*' and there was discussion thereafter of 'the Syriac mass and that of St. James translated by Trancosa'.⁴⁰ The Antiochene Jacobite Missal had been translated by Na'matallah himself into Arabic, whence it had been turned into Latin by a neophyte from Constantinople, Paul Orsini.⁴¹ Theological and liturgical support was provided by Trancosa, the theologian of Paulo Boncompagni. The point of the translation was to demonstrate the antiquity of the Rite (St. James being the first Bishop of Jerusalem) against the Protestants, a significant attraction of Eastern liturgical material for Catholics throughout the sixteenth century.⁴² Subsequently 29 January 1579 they spoke "about the mass of the Patriarch of Antioch".⁴³ In all this it does rather seem that the work of Teseo Ambrogio who had worked on a translation of the Syriac liturgy around the time of the Fifth Lateran Council in 1516 had been forgotten.⁴⁴

In early 1579 a mission from the new Patriarch Dawudshah comprising his brother Yusufshah and his nephew Nicola arrived in Rome. Unfortunately for the speedy conclusion of matters all their papers, the letters from Dawudshah and the rest of their baggage had been stolen near Tripoli.⁴⁵ Santoro noted after his audience 29

³⁹ Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 26.

⁴⁰ *Della messe chaldee e di S. Iacobo tradotto dal Dottor Trancosa*'.

⁴¹ The title is '*Caeremoniae communes ad omnes missas quibus Chaldaei utuntur missa S. Iacobi fratris domini et primi episc. Ierosolymitani, ex lingua chaldaea in arabicam per R. Dom. Ignatium patriarcham Antiochenum, nomine quondam fratrem Naaman ord. S. Antonii et civem Mardinensem, et inde in Latinam conversae per doctorem Antonium Trancosam theologum Ill.mi et R.mi D. Card. D. Iacobi Boncompagni, interprete Paulo Ursino, iussu Ill.mi et R.mi D. Card. S. Severinae (= Santoro)*'. Bibliography is found in Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 12. (The text contains in addition a catalogue of Syriac anaphoras and the *explicit* is dated *Idibus decembris anni 1578*. The manuscript is in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Rome. E. Narducci, *Catalogus codicum mss praeter orientales qui in Bibliotheca Alexandrina Romae asservantur* (Rome, 1877), 115-116.)

⁴² The polemical use of this liturgical material against the Protestants is very clearly seen in I. M. Hassens 'Un ancien Catalogue d'Anaphores syriennes,' *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 46 (1932), 439-447 which gives (442-443) the text of the preface *De numero missarum apud Chaldaeos ad lectorem* whence we may learn that the catalogue of anaphoras with which the *Caeremoniae communes* appears was written for just such a purpose. For Guy Lefèvre de la Boderie's Jacobite missal see Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 223. I have discussed this polemical use of Syriac liturgical material and the case of the controversy provoked by the Protestant Tremellius's omission of some liturgical material from his edition of the New Testament in Wilkinson, 'Emmanuel Tremellius'.

⁴³ Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 28.

⁴⁴ Teseo's work is discussed in detail in Wilkinson, *Orientalism*, 111-115.

⁴⁵ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 107; *ibid.* 75.

March 1579 in which he discussed the mission and previous relations between the Jacobites and Rome, that it was thought diplomatic to send a letter to the Patriarch about his confirmation alone and not mention Union.

Na'matallah gave Santoro another memorandum for the Pope which Santoro presented in his audience of 2 April 1579.⁴⁶ (This was the same audience in which Gregory gave permission for the Armenian type.)⁴⁷ In this memorandum Na'matallah gave a summary of his relationship with Rome and proceeded to ask for a church and a house: *'si come tieneno l'altre nationi'*. Na'matallah had raised the question of a College with Pius IV in a previous letter of 28 February 1565.⁴⁸ Levi della Vida suggests with plausibility that Na'matallah's failure to receive these substantially cooled his ardour for Union.⁴⁹ Whatever the truth of that, Dawudshah's mission had to return to the East in April 1579. They took with them a letter urging Dawudshah to submit to Rome.⁵⁰

Na'matallah was a man of considerable learning in Medicine,⁵¹ Mathematics and Astronomy,⁵² and Gregory appointed him to his Commission for the Reform of the Calendar. Na'matallah was able to submit Gregory's proposals for the reform of the Julian calendar to thorough-going criticisms and to offer another proposal for reform based upon Eastern traditions. This is preserved in an Arabic (karšuni) manuscript in the Laurentian library in Florence.⁵³ Leonardo Abel who we have already seen was working closely with Na'matallah was able to turn this into Latin (no mean feat!) and

⁴⁶ In all probability that published, Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 51-57, Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 8.

⁴⁷ *'Della stampa armenica. – Che li piace'*. There was also discussion of Arabic: *'Della stampa arabica'*. Santoro in his Autobiography (vide supra XII 366) lists the efforts made in Oriental printing in 1579: *'...giacchè s'erano dati in stampa non solo I caratteri dell' idioma armeno, ma anco l'illirico, l'abissino, arabico et cofto, acciò tuute le genti havessero i libri secondo il loro idioma'*.

⁴⁸ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 19. The Maronite College had not yet been founded but young Maronites were being brought to the Collegio dei Neofiti as we have seen.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 50-51.

⁵¹ Montaigne met Na'matallah 13 March 1581 and was given a medical remedy. The account from *Journal de Voyage en Italie... en 1580 & 1581* is found conveniently in Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 25.

⁵² Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 22-25 presents Scaliger's communication with Na'matallah for *Opus novum de emendatione temporum* (Lutetiae, 1583). Na'matallah gave Scaliger a Syriac Apocalypse as a gift. This was written by Gasparo Indiano, a teacher at the Collegio dei Neofiti and is now Heb. Scaligeri 18 in Leiden.

⁵³ S. E. Assemani *Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae...catalogus* (Florence, 1742), Orient. 64 (now 301). The manuscript has 55 folios though it has lost some of the tables at the end. Assemani Orient. 66 is a second work on the Calendar now bound with the work just mentioned. Karšuni is Arabic written in Syriac letters. In printing the Syriac font needs to be augmented with a few extra sorts which represent the additional letters in Arabic.

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printed it with an epistle of dedication to Gregory XIII dated 12 March 1580.⁵⁴ In spite of this published counter-suggestion Na'matallah was to sign in both Syriac and Arabic the proposition of 14 September 1580 submitted to the Pope and containing the reform which would finally be accepted.⁵⁵ His signatures are authenticated by a note from Abel. The Reform of the Calendar came into force 24 February 1582 with the publication of the bull *Inter gravissimas* and Gregory XIII thereafter busied himself with getting the reform accepted in both Europe and the Eastern Churches. Na'matallah was recruited to support Gregory's efforts in the East: he wrote in person to the Coptic Patriarch John XCVI on the matter.⁵⁶

Gregory was looking for the submission of all the Monophysite churches: Ethiopic, Coptic and Syriac. He entered into correspondence with the Negus of Ethiopia, Sarsa Dengel (Malak Sagad), and also with his rebellious Governor of the North-eastern Province, Yeshaq, who though allied to the Turks had shown some favour to Jesuits in his territory.⁵⁷ Na'matallah wrote to both parties urging them to seek peace with Rome. Na'matallah told the Negus he had written twice before and that in early 1575 he had offered to meet the Coptic patriarch in Jerusalem to discuss such matters but 'men of the Devil' had prevented the meeting. Having come himself to Rome under the protection of the Rightful Vicar of Christ he was seeking to obtain the Union of all the Monophysite churches and was thus writing to the Negus to make peace with his rebellious governor Yeshaq and accept Union. It was however to little avail. Sarsa Dengel defeated and killed Yeshaq 21 December 1578. Thereafter he showed very little interest in embracing Rome.

The matter of the Union of the Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) Church was still, however, not solved. The Patriarch replied 1 November 1579.⁵⁸ This time the good offices of the Venetian consul in Tripoli were enlisted to prevent loss of the letters. Dawudshah announced that the Jacobites were ready to accept Union having agreed to it at the Council of Florence (30 September 1444).⁵⁹ Attached to the letter was a note of proxy in which Leonardo Abel and 'Abdannur were instructed to ask for confirmation of the Patriarch's election and the bestowing of the Pallium. A letter

⁵⁴ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 20-21 for text.

⁵⁵ Vat. lat. 3685.

⁵⁶ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 22, 114ff for the Patriarch's reply on this and other matters.

⁵⁷ See generally: R. Lefevre 'L'Etiopica nella Politica orientale di Gregorio XIII' *Annali Lateranensi* 11 (1947), 295-312. Na'matallah is discussed 317-319. Alberto Marani has an edition of *Minuccio Minucci Storia inedita dell'Etiopica (De Aethiopia)* (Rome, 1968) written in 1598 by the Archbishop of Zara. It presents an interesting picture of Ethiopia as perceived in Rome at the end of the century.

⁵⁸ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 27.

⁵⁹ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 28-30 for this paragraph and further details.

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was included to the College of Cardinals. It was a statement from the Jacobite Metropolitans swearing to be bound by what was acceptable to Naʿmatallah and a series of proxy notes from these to Abel and ʿAbdannur. The letter to the Cardinals asked that Naʿmatallah might keep the title of Patriarch and notes that Dawudshah had sent his confession of Faith written in his own hand. This has been lost but was evidently inadequate as Abel, as Patriarchal proxy, was asked to write another more explicit statement for Dawudshah to subscribe to later.

The confirmation of patriarchal election was anticipated in a Consistory of 20 February 1581.⁶⁰ On 30 March Santoro spoke on this matter with the Pope and again 11 April when it was first decided to send Abel to the East. On 5 March Santoro sent all the Cardinals a document about the confirmation and allowed Naʿmatallah to keep his title. The document proposed that Dawudshah should receive the title '*Patriarch of the Church of the Nation of the Jacobites*' but that traditionally held by the successors of St. Ignatius was '*Patriarch of Antioch*', a title similarly claimed for their chief prelate both by the Maronites and the Greek Melchites – the latter apparently considered by Santoro to be the proper owners of the title. Naʿmatallah was, of course, upset. A congregation of 25 April approved the election with the Title (which was intended to be conciliatory) of Patriarch *de Zaffran Antiochenus nationis Syrorum Jacobitarum* (the monastery of Deyr az-Zaʿfaran was effectively the residence of the Jacobite patriarch). Naʿmatallah again expressed his displeasure to Santoro who told the Pope about it 5 May 1581. Naʿmatallah sent a bitter memo to the Pope which contains veiled threats of terminating the Union unless the title was bestowed '*sine adiecto*'. A secret consistory of 29 May confirmed the title '*of Antioch*'.

Progress was nonetheless slow. It was almost a year later that the Pope received Naʿmatallah and proposed sending Abel to take the confirmation of his election to Dawudshah and to receive his explicit profession of faith. Abel was to visit other Eastern Churches (but not the Maronites) and was to be made a bishop. He was consecrated 19 August 1582.

Things were, however, rather shaken up in Rome by a letter from the Jesuit Giambattista Eliano who had been amongst the Maronites in the Lebanon and had also come into contact with Jacobites. He sent a note calling into question the commitment of the Patriarch to Union. Santoro met the Pope to discuss this 16 August 1582.⁶¹ This cast a shadow of the whole business of the Union and Naʿmatallah began to get difficult. Quite remarkably, in the letter in Syriac he gave Abel to deliver 12 March 1583 when Abel departed for the East, he wrote *against* the Union or at least expressed

⁶⁰ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 30-32 for this paragraph and the following.

⁶¹ Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 53.

reservations about it. Santoro was eager to keep relations open and urged the Pope still to provide him with a house.⁶² When this was granted Na'matallah was further annoyed to find the house was only temporary and not permanent. Na'matallah was humiliated and turned against Santoro. He transferred his allegiance to Cardinal Francesco de' Medici who was later to become Grand Duke of Tuscany. We have discussed above Na'matallah's association with the Cardinal's Tipografia Medicea Orientale subsequently in March 1584 and his contribution of manuscripts to the nascent though ultimately abortive polyglot bible project.

In terms of ecclesiastical politics little moved and only for the worse.⁶³ A long letter to Gregory XIII from Dawudshah 28 October 1582 (Julian style!) and one to the Secretary of State Tolomeo Galli, Cardinal of Como, recapitulated the whole history of the attempt at Union. The failure of Na'matallah to receive the treatment that he thought he deserved had clearly not helped matters. Dawudshah however reaffirmed his decision for Union but said he could not do this without agreement of the Coptic and Ethiopic Churches. This interesting display of Monophysite solidarity indicates that the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch had been talking amongst themselves and whilst supporting orthodox aspirations were somewhat concerned for their own authority. Dawudshah at the end of his letter complains of the arrogant and rude behaviour of Eliano in Egypt. Send someone less offensive was his advice (it will be remembered that Eliano had denounced the Patriarch's attitude to the Pope). There seems little doubt of Eliano's diplomatic ineptitude and the Pope sent a famous traveller, Giovanni Battista Vecchiotti, to take letters to the Coptic patriarch and the Ethiopian Negus.⁶⁴ Santoro was now openly blaming Na'matallah for the failure of negotiations. The Coptic Patriarch did not wish to accept the Calendar reforms and Gregory himself was only to live a little longer. His successor Sixtus V was not greatly interested in the Eastern Churches. Dawudshah remained concerned about these slights, his own position, and other difficulties. Na'matallah disappears from Santoro's diaries after February 1586 until he is mentioned as already dead in 1595. Oriental sources put his death about 1590.⁶⁵

This long and exhausting tale of prickly ecclesiastical politics sets the essential context for the Roman Orientalism of the second half of the Sixteenth Century. It is against the background of Gregory XIII's efforts to reconcile the East and impose ecclesiastical discipline, the missions to and from Rome for that purpose, and the various Eastern scholars and ecclesiastics drawn to the Holy See, that Rome's

⁶² *Ibid.* 62, 65-6.

⁶³ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 34-39 for the following.

⁶⁴ Levi della Vida, on this mission *Documenti*, 168-172.

⁶⁵ Levi della Vida, *Documenti*, 39-44.

Golden Age of Oriental printing is to be understood. Whilst ecclesiastical politics are in no way incompatible with kabbalistic mysteries, the absence of the latter is one respect in which Roman Orientalism in the second half of the century differs from that of the first half.

III

It was immediately after completing his Armenian Type and in the context of Naʿmatallah's arrival in Rome that Granjon's preparations for a Syriac press began in September 1579.⁶⁶ This was, as we have seen, the forth Syriac cut in Europe and Granjon's second. The original specimen is in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana and follows the same pattern as the specimen of the Armenian we discussed above. Its imprint has *Rob. GranJon Parisiensis incidebat Romae 1580*.⁶⁷ About six months after the cutting of the type had begun a catechism of some sixty pages, probably by Fabio Bruno and in karšuni, was prepared for the Maronites for their Lebanese Synod of 1580.⁶⁸ The catechism is prefaced by a letter of Cardinal Carafa the protector of the Maronites. It is dated 7 April 1580 without imprint though there is little doubt it was Domenico Basa, the usual custodian of the type, who had probably just printed Granjon's Armenian Calendar. Just as he took Granjon's Armenian Calendar to the East, so Leonardo Abel took with him on his mission a *Professio Fidei* (no date, no place) and gave it to the Jacobite bishop Thomas together with Gregorian Calendars.⁶⁹ These in turn were probably the second impression of Granjon's Syriac type. There then followed the *Kitab as-sab'a salawat* or *Hologium Maroniticum, The Book of the Seven Daily Prayers* with its Latin colophon *Sanctissimi D. N. Gregorii XIII. Pont. Max. impensa. Romae, Anno Domini 1584. Ex typographia Domenico Basae*.⁷⁰ In 1585 in the same Syriac and by the same printer

⁶⁶ Vervliet, *Cyrillic*, 17-18.

⁶⁷ Krajcar, *Cardinal Giulio*, 35. Santoro discussed Syriac and Malabar character types in his Audience 27 October 1580. He also spoke: '*ella indulgentia plenaria che hanno per una volta l'anno, che sia di Quattro volte in que paese della Christianità di S. Tommaso. – Si contentò*'.

⁶⁸ See Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 387-388. Richard Simon, *Voyage au Mt. Liban* 1685 342: '*le P. Brun avait fait en latin un catéchisme qui contenait les erreurs des autres sects de l'Orient avec la refutation, et expliquait en même temps les articles de noster foy selon la méthode de l' Eglise romaine. Le P. Jean Baptiste Elain mit en arabe ce catéchisme, le fit imprimer et le donna à examiner dans un synode des Maronites qui fut assemble au Mt. Liban, il fut receu et approve de tous en plein synode, et leur servit ensuite de règle*'.

⁶⁹ [Léon Abel] *Une Mission*, 15, 17, 28-30; Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 211.

⁷⁰ Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 424-425. The motive behind these printings is (again) made clear in a dedication of the printer Francesco Zanetti to Gregory XIII that appears in his 1581 edition of the

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appeared *Officium defunctorum ad usum Maronitarum S. D. N. Gregorii XIII Pont. Max. Chaldaicis characteribus impressum*.⁷¹ This last item alone was written in Syriac and not karšuni.

The subsequent Syriacs found in Roman imprints of the late sixteenth century and the first part of the seventeenth century still await a thorough and expert treatment⁷². So does the part played in their production by succeeding engravers for the Medici, and subsequently the Propaganda – Granjon, Jean Cavaillon, Battista Sottile, Giacomo Antonio Moro – and indeed, as we have seen, the precise identification of the punches which still remain in the Biblioteca Medicea. In the absence of this we cannot be certain which type was used for the *Missale Chaldaicum Romae In Typographia Medicea 1592-1594*⁷³ or for the *Liber Ministri missae iuxta ritum Ecclesiae Nationis Maronitarum Romae 1596 ex typographia Linguarum externarum apud Jac. Lunam* (8°, 280 pages; it is also known as the *Diaconicon*) though the significance of these printings for Rome's supervision of Maronite worship is obvious.⁷⁴

Homilies of St. John Chryostom and is quoted by Vervliet, *Cyrillic*, 18: 'Nam Chaldaeae, Armenae, Arabumq. Linguarum characters magnis sumptibus incidi curavit [Gregorius XIII], quo Aethiopes Iacobitae, Armeni, Maronitae, Georgiani, et reliquae gentes, quae a nostra Religione dissident, catholicarum dogmatum formulas propriis liguis conceptas ... ab Apostolica Sede accipere... '.

⁷¹ J. Nasrallah, *L'Imprimerie au Liban* (Beirut, 1948) xvii-xix stresses the importance of Eliano's missions in the East and the pressure from Maronite clergy eager to have printed liturgical books. He quotes (xvii) Yuhanna ibn Ayyub al Hasruni, who had come to Rome at the request of Cardinal Carafa in 1583 to oversee the production of Maronite liturgical books, writing in 1585 to Eliano: 'The Pope has given us a press complete with large Syriac characters. God reward him in the Kingdom of Heaven!' 1585, it will be recalled, was the year of the dubious Psalter Assemani claimed preceded the very real Psalter of Quzhaya by 25 years. At this stage one may be better able to appreciate Nasrallah's arguments against the existence of that Psalter. There was as yet no pupil of the Maronite College returned to the Lebanon, nor does Dandini (see immediately below) refer to any press. Nasrallah, *L'Imprimerie*, 2-7.

⁷² Raimondi's papers in Florence (Saltini, *Della Stamperia*, 268; Vervliet, *Cyrillic* 17) indicate that Granjon produced not only a 'chaldea grande' but also a 'chaldea piccolo' (2 September 1578) and (20 February 1587) a type 'mezzano sirochaldeo'. On these now: Coakley, *Typography*, 40-45 with illustrations. In July 1590 Cavaillon cut a 'caldaico seconda i Maroniti', Sottile in 1593 a 'caldaico antico' Coakley, *Typography*, 43-44, 158-159. Bertolotti, *Le Tipografia*, 38-40 attributes to Moro the Syriac of Paul V used in 1621 to print the Breviary, Vatican, Stampe Barb. B - X. 32. Coakley, *Typography*, 56-58, 59-63 for this type, 160-161 for the estrangela.

⁷³ Described in Nasrallah, *L'Imprimerie*, xix. The Latin date is 1594, the Syriac 1592. There are several woodcuts that also appear in the Arabic Gospel edition of 1591. Clement VIII sent P. Girolamo Dandini S. J. on a mission to the Maronites with two hundred copies of this missal. Nasrallah, *op.cit.* xx. On this mission: Moosa, *The Maronites* (New York, 1986), 256-266 and P. Girolamo Dandini, *Missione Apostolica al Patriarca e Maroniti del Monte Libano del P. Girolamo Dandini* (Cesena, 1661).

⁷⁴ Generally on Maronite Liturgy: Michel Hayek, *Liturgie Maronite. Histoire et textes eucharistiques* (Paris, 1964).

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In the same type as the *Missae* there was printed Georgio M. Amira's *Grammatica syriaca sive chaldaica. Romae. In Typographia Linguarum Externarum Apud Iac. Lunam 1596*.⁷⁵ The book is more important for us in that it most conveniently marks the beginning of a 'native' movement in Syriac studies. The Maronite College formed an obvious base for this movement and it is not surprising that Gabriel Sionite (born 1577, Djibrael as-Sahyoun) who had been sent to Rome at the tender age of seven from the Maronites by Sergius Rizzi the Patriarch (1581-1597) should already have assisted in the correction of the *Missale Chaldaicum* of 1592-1594.⁷⁶ Sionita was active in the production of a Latin translation of the Arabic Psalter and later in the Paris Polyglot with two other Maronites, John Hesronite⁷⁷ and Abraham Ecchellensis.⁷⁸ The Assemanis of the eighteenth century would crown this distinguished Maronite tradition.⁷⁹ Before then, however, there appeared in 1618 a *Rudimentum Syriacum, Romae, Ex Collegio Maronitarum*. In 1628 Abraham Ecchellensis published *Linguae syriacae sive chaldaicae perbrevis institutio* (Rome, Propaganda 1628)⁸⁰ and, after his year in Paris in 1640 when he worked on the Paris Polyglot, he held the Chairs of Syriac and Arabic at the Collège royal under the title of *Professeur et Interprète royal*. From 1642-1653 he was made *scriptor* for Syriac and Arabic at the Vatican by Alexander VII.

The development of Syriac Studies in the seventeenth century lies beyond the scope of this article but the serious work at that time was done by scholars from the East. Dr. Sebastian Brock succinctly observes: 'Once the Maronite college, founded in 1584, had become fully established, it was a series of great Maronite scholars working in

⁷⁵ Vat. Lib R. G. Or IV 388, Levi della Vida, *Ricerche*, 343-344. Amira was sent to Rome by the Patriarch Sergius Rizzi in 1584. He published his Grammar, which he composed in Latin, in 1596 under Clement VIII 'in obedience to the decree of the Pope who introduced the teaching of Syriac into the Maronite College'. The printer Jacques Kamar (Iac. Lunam) was a Maronite too. His subsequent career was distinguished. He became a priest 26 December 1596 on his return to the Lebanon and was made Bishop of Ehden in 1600 where he worked to introduce the Gregorian calendar in his diocese. He corresponded with Aquaviva asking for a Jesuit mission. He became Patriarch in 1633 and was confirmed by Urban VIII in 1635. He died 9 July 1644: Assemani *Bib. Or.* I, 552; Raphael, *Le Rôle*, 93-94. The preface of the *Grammatica* mentions Raimondi's involvement in the book. R. Contini 'Gli Inizi della Lingistica Siriaca nell'Europa rinascimentale,' *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 68 (1994), 15-30, 24 notes the change in method of Syriac Grammars at this point, as they break away from the Hebrew model used for example by Masius: the paradigms are enriched; there is a full account of diacritics; syntactic problems are addressed; Syriac grammatical terminology is introduced.

⁷⁶ Raphael, *Le Rôle*, 84 with convenient list of scholarship.

⁷⁷ Raphael, *Le Rôle*, 96-97.

⁷⁸ Raphael, *Le Rôle*, 87-92. On Ecchellensis recently: Peter Rietbergen, *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome: Barberini Cultural Politics* (Leiden, 2006), 296-335.

⁷⁹ Raphael, *Le Rôle*, 123-144.

⁸⁰ Coakley, *Typography*, 64-66 for the Propaganda's type.

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Italy who provided the real stimulus for the development of Syriac studies in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries'.⁸¹

It is in clear contrast to this 'native' development that we are able to define the 'Orientalism' that gave birth to the earlier sixteenth-century study of Syriac that produced the *editio princeps* of the Syriac New Testament and the edition in the Antwerp Polyglot. The Syriac studies of the seventeenth century were the achievement of learned and informed Maronite scholars. They lacked not only the ignorance (if we may be brutal) but also the mystical dimensions of the very first Western scholars. Thus our brief survey of Roman Orientalism in the second half of the sixteenth century emphasizes that the approach of the Post-Tridentine second half of the century was not that of the scholars of the High Renaissance. The discontinuity here is striking. The earlier scholars who were to produce the Syriac New Testaments had left Rome in mid-century and we have used the Burning of the Talmud in 1553 as a symbolic moment around which to group their departure. The mystical, kabbalistic approach of these scholars bears no relationship either to the native scholarship of the Maronites, or to the ecclesiastical politics of Gregory XIII which characterised Syriac studies in the second half of the century.

⁸¹ S. P. Brock 'The Development of Syriac Studies,' in K. J. Cathcart (ed), *The Edward Hincks Bicentenary Lectures* (Dublin, 1994), 94-113, 97-98. The whole article provides initial orientation in the history of Syriac studies in the West.

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