

**WHY PATRIARCH APHREM BARSAUM WAS CALLED
“ATHORAYA”?: An Investigation into the Geographical names
Athor and Mosul in Syriac**

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The topic of my paper is connected to the city of “Mosul” in Iraq. For this reason, I want to draw your attention to what has happened to its Christian people and churches when the Islamic organization (Isis) occupied the city of Mosul on June 10th, 2014. About 150,000 Christian Syrians fled the city and the plains of Nineveh to the northern parts of Iraq and even outside of Iraq.

The Islamic organization ISIS systematically destroyed the Christian symbols especially the cross and gave ultimatum to our Christian brothers and sisters to convert to Islam, or to pay Jizia (high poll tax) or to leave the city. The Christians fled at once leaving all they have behind them to be confiscated by the Islamists who burnt churches and Syriac manuscripts as it was reported by the media.

The city of Mosul which was the capital of Christianity in Iraq is now completely empty of its original people, the Christian, for the first time after at least 1700 years of long Christian history in the city.

It is not within the scope of this paper to tell you about the political situation in the city of Mosul, but to speak about its name as it is available in the Syriac language and sources.

Now let us go back to our topic about the name of the city of Mosul and its connection to patriarch Aphrem Barsaum.

PREFACE

During his early life, the Syrian orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Aphrem I Barsaum was sometimes called ܐܦܪܝܡ ܒܪܫܘܡ ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ "Aphrem Barsaum Othuroyo (Athoraya)".¹ I shall in this paper, investigate why he was called "Athoraya" and what does this Syriac term mean? But first let's present him in a few sentences.

Aphrem Barsaum (1933-1957) was one of the most important patriarchs in the history of the Syrian Orthodox Church who played a big role in the life of his Syrian church and community, both as a church leader and as a scholar.

He renewed the Syrian Orthodox Church in several fields and supported Syriac language and learning. He revived the Syriac culture among his community members by starting a theological school and by writing a large number of books and articles that became important sources for the Syrian Orthodox community about their church history, literature, liturgy and identity, and he put the Syriac identity on the correct path based on the Syriac Aramaic heritage.

Aphrem Barsaum read almost all Syriac manuscripts that he found in various Syrian monasteries and churches and composed catalogues of these manuscripts;² he also used them as a

¹ In this paper we shall sometimes use the east Syriac form “Athoraya” and sometimes the west Syriac form “Othuroyo”.

² He composed the following three catalogues of Syriac manuscripts which were published in Damascus 2008 by the late patriarch Zakai I (1933-2014);
ܡܚܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ: ܡܚܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ (Catalogue of Manuscripts of TurAbdin), Damascus 2008;
ܡܚܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ (Catalogue of Manuscripts of Zaafaran Monastery),
Damascus 2008; ܡܚܘܒܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܘܪܝܢ (Catalogue of Manuscripts of Amed and Mardin), Damascus 2008.

main source in writing his book on the history of the Syriac literature, *Al-Lulu al-Manthur*³ ܠܘܠܘ ܐܠܡܢܬܘܪ which is still in use as an important source for the Syrian community, both clergy and laity.

His achievements in the field of the Syriac culture makes him the greatest writer in the Syriac Orthodox Church during the last 700 years, and one of the most important of all times. Almost all learning of the Syrian Orthodox community about Syriac literature, Church history, liturgies and traditions is from his books and writings.

2. APHREM BARSAUM "ATHORAYA"

During his early life, patriarch Aphrem Barsaum was sometimes called ܐܦܪܝܡ ܒܪܫܘܡ ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ "Aphrem Barsaum Othuroyo (Athoraya)". But what does this mean and why was he called so?

Aphrem Barsaum was born in the city of Mosul in Iraq in 1887. The city of Mosul was called in Syriac ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ "Othur" (in east Syriac Athor)⁴ and anyone who is descendant of Mosul/Athor was called in Syriac ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ "othuroyo/athoraya" which means Mosulite (resident or descendant of Mosul).

Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum was called ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ "othuroyo/athoraya" because he was from the city of ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ Mosul/Athor. The word ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ "othuroyo/athoraya" in this context should, therefore, not be translated as "Assyrian", because it is not "ethnic" but geographical, an attribution to the city of Athor/Mosul, and has nothing to do with the ancient "Assyria" except the name and the location. The word "Athoraya" in this context means only "Mosulite".

However, by the late nineteenth century, a few educated and politically conscious Syrians, especially Nestorians who had immigrated to the USA, began using the term *Aturaye*⁵ (Assyrians) in their writings.⁶ In the beginning of the 20th century, an "Assyrian political Movement" came out with an aim to connect the Christians of the Middle East with the ancient "Assyria" and to call them "Assyrians".⁷ The members of this movement claimed an "ethnic relation" to the old Assyrians and alleged that the ethnic Syrians are descendants of the old Assyrians and represent

³ This book *Al-lu'lu' al-Manthur fi Tarkh al-Ulum a al-Adab al-Suryaniya* was published many times: Homs 1943, Aleppo 1956, Bagdad 1977, The Netherlands 1987, Aleppo 1987. It was translated into Syriac by Y. Dolabani and published in Kamishli 1967; an English translation was made by Matti Moosa under the name *The Scattered Pearls: A History of Syriac Literature and Sciences*, Passeggiata Press, Pueblo 2000 and second edition by Gorgias Press, New Jersey 2003; a Turkish translation under the title *Sacilmis Inciler: Surysnilerin yazinsal tarihi* by Zeki Demir, Istanbul 2005; a Swedish translation under the name *De spridda pärlorna: En historia om syriansk litteratur och vetenskap*, by Hanseric Hällzo, Örebro 2006; the book is translated also into Malayalm.

⁴ In this paper I shall use both pronunciations of the word as "Athor" and "Othur" depending on the context.

⁵ This is the pronunciations of the east Syrians in their spoken Neo-Aramaic language.

⁶ John Joseph, *The Modern Assyrians of the Middle East Encounters with Western Christian Missions, Archaeologists, and Colonial Powers*, (Studies in Christian Mission 26) Brill, Leiden 2000, p. 18.

⁷ This political movement got some members from the Syrian, Nestorian and Chaldean groups.

their remnant in the Middle East; the members of this movement stressed that they have the right to call themselves “Athoraye” (Assyrians). As a result of this new usage of the word **ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ** "othuroyo/athoraya" in the beginning of the 20th century, the word was, for the first time and after more than two thousand years, drawn into a new phase and given by the members of the Assyrian movement a political context to mean a member of an “Assyrian nation”.⁸

Because of the new development in the meaning of the word “Athoraya” by the members of this “Assyrian movement” and their new usage of the name, most of the Syrians became cautious to use it and they stopped calling the city of Mosul with its old name **ܐܘܪܘܝܘܐ** “Athor” and its inhabitants **ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܐ** “othuroye/athoraye”. The Syrians, however, began using the common name **ܡܘܨܠ** "Mawsal" for the city of Mosul and **ܡܘܨܠܘܝܘܐ** "mawsloye" for its people (Mosulites) instead of “Athor” and “Athoraye”. They did so to avoid confusion between the traditional meaning of the word as "Mosul" and the new political meaning as "Assyrian/Assyria".

An example of this shift in the meaning of the city's name from “Athor” to “Mosul”, we can retrieve from the writings of the contemporary Syrian Orthodox writer Bishop Yuhanon Dolabani (1885-1969). In the first half of his life bishop Dolabani, as all other Syriac authors, used the term **ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܐ** "Othur" for the city of Mosul and **ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ** "othuroyo" for the Mosulite, but later in his life he gave up the name “Athor” and “Athoraya” and used only “Mawsal” and “Mawsloyo”. For example in his book about the Syrian Orthodox patriarchs that he wrote in 1929 we find the expressions:

ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܓܝܘܪܓܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ “Giwargis othuroyo (Mosulite)”;⁹

ܕܦܘܬܪܝܩܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܕܓܝܘܪܓܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܘܚܘܪܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܘܘܕܡܘܘܠܩܪܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ

“Patriarch Giwargis from Othur (Mosul) who is Giwargis son of Abdelkarim Othuroyo **ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ** (Mosulite)”;¹⁰

ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܕܝܣܘܥܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ “Isaac from Othur (Mosul)”;¹¹

ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܡܦܪܝܐܢܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܘܠܝܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ “Maphrian Elias Othuroyo (Mosul)”;¹²

ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܒܝܫܘܦ ܒܝܗܢܡܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ “Bishop Behnam Othuroyo (Mosulite)”;¹³

ܐܘܪܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܦܦܬܪܝܩܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ “Patriarch Petrus Othuroyo (Mosulite)”;¹⁴

ܡܪܝܝܘܨܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܕܡܘܨܠܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ, **ܘܕܡܘܘܠܩܪܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܕܡܘܨܠܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ ܕܡܝܕܐܢܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ** “Mar Dionysius Behnam Othuroyo (Mosulite) of Maadan”;¹⁵

⁸ J.M. Fiey commented on the Assyrian claim and wrote “I just finished compiling the index of my *Christian Assyria* which required drawing up some fifty pages of proper names of persons; needless to say that there is not a single Assyrian name. J.-M. Fiey, “Assyriens’ ou Araméens” in *L'Orient Syrien* 10:2 (1965), pp. 141–160.

⁹ Y. Dolabani, **ܡܘܨܠܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܝܘܐ** *Die Patriarchen der syrisch-orthodoxen Kirche von Antiochien*, (Bar-Hebraeus Verlag) Glane/Losser 1990, p.214.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 215.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 224.

¹² Ibid. p. 236.

¹³ Ibid. p. 257.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 261.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 262.

and *ܡܪܘܨܝܢܐ* "Mar Behnam Samardji of Othur (Mosul)".¹⁶

These quotations reveal that the term "Athor" and "Athoraya" in Dolabani's text is a toponym and those persons who carry this appellation were from Mosul (Athor) irrespective of their nationality.

Anyhow, in the second half of his life, Dolabani avoided using the terms "Athor" and "Athoraya" for Mosul and Mosulite; instead of them he used the names *ܡܘܨܠܐ* "Mawsal" and *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ* "mawsloyo" for the city and its inhabitants; he mentioned the name of his contemporary patriarch Aphrem Barsaum in the form of *ܡܘܨܠܐ ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ* "Aphrem Barsaum Mawsloyo" "Aphrem Barsaum of Mosul",¹⁷ not in the old form *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ* "Aphrem Barsaum Athoraya".

During the last 10 years of his life, Dolabani translated Aphrem Barsaum's "History of Syriac literature" *ܐܠܠܘܠܐ ܡܢܬܘܪ ܦܝ ܬܪܝܚ ܐܠܘܡ ܘܐܠܐܕܒ ܣܝܪܝܐܢܝܐ* (Al-Lulu al-Manthur...) into Syriac and the translation was published in Kamishli in 1967, i.e. two years before Dolabani's death and 10 years after Aphrem Barsaum's death. Everyone who was called "Athoraya" by Dolabani in his book which he wrote in 1929,¹⁸ is called now "Mawsloyo" (Mosulite) in his translation of the mentioned book which was made about 40 years later.

An example from Dolabani about the shift from Athor to Mosul:

1. Dolabani wrote in 1929 *ܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ* "Isaac from Athor".¹⁹
2. Dolabani wrote in 1967 *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ* "Isaac, born in Mosul".²⁰

Another contemporary Syrian author, Isaac Armaleh (1879-1954) who wrote in Arabic, mentioned these persons as "Mosulite" because Arabic language does not use the term "Athor" as another name for the city of Mosul.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 262.

¹⁷ See what Dolabani wrote about Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum in the book *ܐܠܠܘܠܐ ܡܢܬܘܪ ܦܝ ܬܪܝܚ ܐܠܘܡ ܘܐܠܐܕܒ ܣܝܪܝܐܢܝܐ* (Al-Lulu al-Manthur...) "history of Syriac literature," which he translated into Syriac and published in Kamishli 1967 under the Syriac name *ܡܘܨܠܐ ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ* "kthobo d-berule bdire d-'al marduth yulfone suryaye hdire". Dolabani added an appendix to the end of his Syriac translation about the life of the author patriarch Aphrem Barsaum on pages 589-590 under the heading *ܡܘܨܠܐ ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ* "Ignatius Aphrem Barsaum mawsloyo" "Ignatius Afrem Barsaum of Mosul").

¹⁸ As for example in the following: *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ (1709-1687)*. *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ* (Dolabani, op.cit. p. 215); and *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ (1894-1872)* *ܡܘܨܠܝܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܠܐ* (Dolabani, op. cit. p. 261).

¹⁹ Y. Dolabani, *Die Patriarchen der syrisch-orthodoxen Kirche von Antiochien*, Glane/Losser, 1990, p. 231.

²⁰ *ܐܠܠܘܠܐ ܡܢܬܘܪ ܦܝ ܬܪܝܚ ܐܠܘܡ ܘܐܠܐܕܒ ܣܝܪܝܐܢܝܐ* "History of Syriac literature by patriarch Aphrem Barsaum", translated into Syriac by Y. Dolabani, Kamishli 1967, p. 579.

In 1909 Isaac Armaleh mentioned the above mentioned Isaac as اسحق الموصلی "Isaac of Mosul".²¹

Another example from Dolabani and Armaleh:

Dolabani wrote in 1929 "Georges of Athor-Mosul".²²

Armaleh wrote in 1909 "Georges III of Mosul".²³

In the second half of his life, Dolabani avoided using the term "Aphrem Barsaum othuroyo" in order not to be misinterpreted or to avoid mixing the name's traditional meaning as "Mosul" with the new political meaning as "Assyrian". He didn't want to give a false picture of his patriarch Aphrem Barsaum.

However, it seems that the expression "Aphrem Barsaum othuroyo" continued to be in use in TurAbdin even in the 1950s, when other Syrians stopped using it. There is a Syriac inscription at the entrance to the Mor Barsaumo Syrian Orthodox Church in the city of Midyat in Turabdin where it says that the church was "renovated" during the time of *Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum othuroyo*. The inscription reads thus:

صتتو فلتا كفتو منو كالثو ك: كالثو كفتو كالثو ك: كالثو كفتو كالثو ك:
كالثو كفتو كالثو ك: كالثو كفتو كالثو ك:



The translation reads: "The inscription was carved" during the time of Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum othuroyo (from Mosul) and Bishop Afrem Botoyo (from the village of Bote) of Turabdin, with the diligence of the Syrian believers, in 1954 AD."

The Syriac inscription connects both Patriarch Aphrem and Bishop Afrem to their birthplaces Mosul/Athor and Bote; Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum to his city Mosul/Athor and Bishop Afrem to his village "Bote" in Turabdin, the first one is characterized as "Aphrem Othuroyo" "Aphrem of Mosul" and the second one as "Afrem Botoyo" "Afrem from Bote".

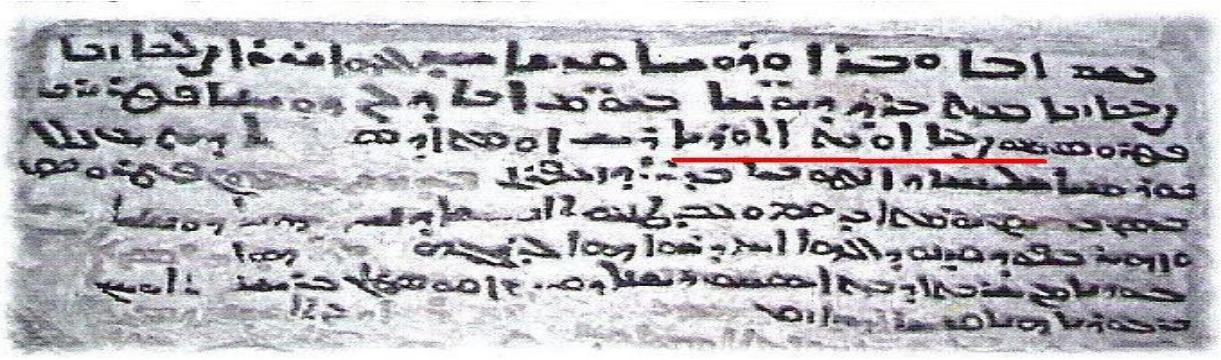
²¹ Isaac Armaleh, "al-zahra al-dhakiya fi al-batriarkiya al-suryaniya al-antakiya" (On the Syrian Antiochean Patriarchate), Beirut 1909, p. 92.

²² Y. Dolabani, "Die Patriarchen der syrisch-orthodoxen Kirche von Antiochien", p. 231.

²³ Isaac Armaleh, op. cit. p. 95.

This reminds us of another similar Syriac inscription in TurAbdin which contains the term ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ “Athoraya”; it is carved in the church of Mar Elias in the Syriac village of “Bakesyone”; the inscription was performed during the time of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Peter IV (or III) of Mosul;²⁴ the inscription reads:

ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ: ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ
 ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ: ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ
 ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ...



(... The inscription was carved "in 1893, during the time of our spiritual father patriarch Peter from Mosul, i.e., from Athor, who is the leader of the Syrian (Orthodox) nation and sits on the Apostolic See of Antioch in the Zaafrican Monastery ...").²⁵

The inscription shows clearly that both Mosul and Athor are two names for the same city, and that the word ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ "othuroyo" means Mosulite i.e. a person from the city of Mosul. The expression ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ “mawsloyo i.e. othuroyo” is a confirmation that the names ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ "Mawsloyo" and ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ "othuroyo" are synonyms meaning "anyone in or from the city of Mosul."

Anyhow, the inscription’s use of the words "Mosul" and "Athor" as synonyms is not something unique, it is a fact known to all who are acquainted with the Syriac literature.²⁶

3. ATHORAYA AND MAWSLAYA SYNONYMS:

3.1. THE NAME “ATHORAYA” AND THE EAST SYRIAN (NESTORIAN) PATRIARCHS:

²⁴ Patriarch Petrus IV (1872-1894) visited India in 1875 and returned in 1877.

²⁵ Gabriel Akyuz and Shabo Aktas, (ܠܝܘܪܝܝܐ ܘܥܠܡ ܕܘܢ ܕܡܝܫܝܢ) “History of the Village of Beth Qustan (Boqusyone)”, Mardin 2007. P. 21.

²⁶ Several other Middle Eastern cities have other “older names” in Syriac; for example today’s Diyarbekir is called Amed/Omid and Urfa is called Urhay/Urhoi. Anyone who is from Diyarbekir is called "Omidoyo" and the one who is from Urfa (Edessa) is called "Urhoiyo".

The mentioned book *Al-Majdal*, being in Arabic, its writer used all names according to the tradition of the Arabic language. The city of Mosul is, therefore, called "Mawsal"²⁹ موصل, not "Athor", and the persons from it موصلي "Mawsalli" not "Athoraya".

Giwargis Warda lived about one century after the historian Mari Ibn Suleiman and used Mari's book as his source, but he changed the names into the form and tradition of Syriac language. Whenever the name Mosul is mentioned by Mari, our poet Warda changed it into "Athor", and every time when Mari called someone موصلي Mawsalli (Mosulite), our poet Warda called him "Athoraya".

Let us examine Mari Ibn Suleiman's Arabic statements on the East Syrian Patriarchs who were descendants of Mosul to see how he used their names, and then examine Warda's statements to see how he mentioned these persons in Syriac.

Our historian Mari Ibn Suleiman mentioned Patriarch Mar Mari (987-999) by saying in Arabic:

مار ماري ابن الطوبا، من اهالي الموصل، وهو من اولاد الرؤساء والكتاب وتربى في الدواوين
"Mar Mari son of Toba from the inhabitants of Mosul, is a son of the leaders and writers, he grew up in the authority service".³⁰

Our poet Giwargis Warda on the other hand says of him in Syriac: ܡܪܝ ܡܪܝ ܐܬܘܪܝܬܐ ܡܢ ܕܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ
"Mar Mari Athoraya (of Mosul) is descendant of a dynasty of nice name."³¹

Both authors praised this patriarch and his dynasty because he was from the famous city of Mosul/Athor and descendant of a prominent family. So, he is called "of Mosul" and "Athoraya" in the same meaning.

Almost, in the same way our author Mari Ibn Suleiman describes patriarch "Abdisho of Mosul" (1085-1090) when he wrote of him: عبديشوع المعروف بابي الفضل بن العارض الموصلي
"Abdisho, who is known as Abi Al-Fadl the son of Al-'Arid al-Mawsalli".³² But our poet Giwargis Warda called him Abdisho "Athoraya".³³

About Patriarch Makkikha (1092-1110), our historian Mari Ibn Suleiman wrote: استدعاه
"Patriarch Mar Abdisho called him and consecrated him a bishop of Mosul and Hazza".³⁴

But our poet Warda says about him in Syriac ܡܟܟܝܟܗ ܡܢ ܕܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ ܡܢ ܕܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ
"Makkikha who was a church leader in Athor"³⁵ (i.e, in Mosul).

²⁹ Another pronunciation of the word is Mawsil.

³⁰ "Akhbar Batarikat Kursi Almashriq", p. 104.

³¹ Giwargis Warda, op.cit.p.96.

³² "Akhbar Batarikat Kursi Almashriq", p.127.

³³ G. Warda, op. cit. p. 96.

³⁴ "Akhbar Batarikat Kursi Almashriq", p.137.

³⁵ G. Warda, op. cit. p.96.

انه كان من اهل الموصل، وكان مطران (1111-1132) Our historian says of patriarch Mar Elijah "He was a resident of Mosul and became Bishop of Mosul and Hazza"³⁶, and our poet Giwargis Warda says about him:

ܐܠܝܗܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ "Elijah, who was full of virtues grew up among the scholars in Athor (Mosul), which is the home of scholars",³⁷ he praises him with these words because his city Athor/Mosul was known for its writers and knowledge.

The historian Mari Ibn Suleiman says of another East Syrian patriarch:

"Patriarch Mar Abdisho known as ibn Almuqali was from Mosul",³⁸ but our poet Warda says of him: ܡܘܨܠܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ ܡܪܝܢܐ "Abdisho is a chosen instrument from the fine city of Athor (Mosul)."³⁹

Thus, we have seen that every East Syrian patriarch whom Mari Ibn Suleiman wrote of him that he was from the city of Mosul, the poet Giwargis Warda wrote about him that he was from "Athor". And every patriarch Mari Ibn Suleiman calls him ܡܘܨܠܝܢܐ "Mawsalli" the poet Giwargis Warda called him ܡܘܨܠܝܢܐ "Athoraya". This means that the names "Mosul" and "Athor" are two synonymous words that mean the same thing by the two writers, and the words "Mawsalli" and "Athoraya" are also synonyms that means the same thing by the two authors.⁴⁰

Our two mentioned authors Mari Ibn Suleiman and Giwargis Warda, preserved the traditions connected to the languages they used in their writings, the first one wrote in Arabic and Mosul is called Mawsal by him, while the second one wrote in Syriac and Mosul is called Athor by him. They also maintained an old oriental tradition by calling peoples after the name of their home areas, Mari Ibn Suleiman called people from Mosul "Mawsalli" and Giwargis Warda called the same persons from Mosul "Athoraya".

4. "ATHOR" MEANS MOSUL IN SYRIAC LITERATURE

Syriac literature calls the city of Mosul with the name "Athor" ܐܘܪܝܢܐ and any person from Mosul ܡܘܨܠܝܢܐ "othuroyo/athoraya". To confirm this, we refer to two old East Syrian lexicographers who explained the name Athor/Mosul in their Syriac/Arabic lexicons.

The first East Syrian lexicographer is Barbahlul (10th cent.); in his Syriac Arabic encyclopedia he explains the name ܐܘܪܝܢܐ "Athor" by saying:

³⁶ Akhbar Batarikat Kursi Almashriq", p. 152.

³⁷ Warda, op. cit. p. 96.

³⁸ Akhbar Batarikat Kursi Almashriq", p. 156.

³⁹ Warda, op. cit. p. 96.

⁴⁰ To call persons after their home cities and towns is an oriental old habit; several Syrian personalities carry their city names such as the Syriac philosophers Sargis of Rish'aina (d. 536), Jacob of Sarugh (d. 531), Patriarch Athanasius of Balad (d. 687), Jacob of Edessa (d. 708), etc.

"Athor is the name of the city of Mosul, it was built by King Sapur"⁴¹ *ܐܘܬܘܪ ܐܝܪ ܩܘܝܢ ܣܦܘܪ ܘܗܝ ܡܘܨܠ*

The second East Syrian lexicographer and physician is Yesu‘ Bar‘ali (died about the year 900); in his Syriac-Arabic dictionary he explains the word *ܐܘܬܘܪ* “Athor” as follows: *ܐܘܬܘܪ (أثور) ܐܝܪ ܩܘܝܢ ܣܦܘܪ ܘܗܝ ܡܘܨܠ ܘܡܘ ܝܨܠܘܪ ܗܝ ܡܘܨܠ ܘܡܘ ܝܨܠܘܪ ܗܝ ܡܘܨܠ ܘܡܘ ܝܨܠܘܪ ܗܝ ܡܘܨܠ*⁴²

The names “Athor” and Mosul were used by the Syriac authors in three intermingled meanings:

- 1. As a name of the city of Mosul.
- 2. As a name of a province in which the city of Mosul was its capital.
- 3. As a name of a church diocese which constituted of Mosul/Athor and Adiabene.

Hereby, I refer to three Syriac authors and give examples of their writings in this regard:

The East Syrian writer Thomas of Marga (d. 840), in his book known under the English name *The Book of Governors* and the Syriac title *ܕܘܚܘܚܘܫܘܬܐ ܕܚܘܠܐ ܕܩܘܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ* used the terms “Athor” and “Mosul” for the same city and province.

Thomas used the name *ܡܘܨܠ* “Mawsal” sometimes as a name of the city of Mosul and sometimes as a name of the province of Mosul. As a name of the city of Mosul we read his statements *ܘܥܢ ܩܘܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ*, “There was a certain Moslem man in the city of Mosul”,⁴³ and *ܕܚܘܠܐ ܕܩܘܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ* “In a certain year I entered the city of Mosul concerning taxes”.⁴⁴ For his other use of the word as a name of the province that Mosul was its capital city, we read his statements *ܥܒܕ ܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ* “a ruling leader for the province of Mosul was appointed”,⁴⁵ and *ܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ* “His forefathers were governors of Mosul and all the north”.⁴⁶

Thomas of Marga used also the term “Athor” as a name of a church diocese which consists of both “Athor” and Hdayab (i.e. Adiabene), we read his following sentence *ܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ ܘܚܕܝܐ* “All bishops of this diocese of Athor and Hdayab (Adiabene)”,⁴⁷

⁴¹ Barbahlul’s Syriac-Arabic lexicon was published by Rubens Duval in Paris 1888 - 1901, Col. 322.

⁴² See Part I of his dictionary that was published by G. Hoffmann in Rome in 1874, page 63; besides its name Athor the city of Mosul was sometimes called *ܡܘܨܠ* “Mawsal” and its inhabitants *ܡܘܨܠܐܝܢ* “Mawslaye” in the Syriac literature.

⁴³ Thomas Bishop of Marga, *The Book of Governors: The Historia Monastica of Thomas Bishop of Marga A.D. 840*, edited by E.W.Walis Budge, London 1893, p.222.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 250; also the quotations *ܕܚܘܠܐ ܕܩܘܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ* p. 248, and *ܕܚܘܠܐ ܕܩܘܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ* *ܘܡܘ ܝܨܠܘܪ ܗܝ ܡܘܨܠ*

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 207.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 294.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 74.

and “The archbishopric of the areas of Athor and Hdayab (Adiabene)”.⁴⁸

However, in another place Thomas of Marga used the word “Athor” as a name of a province consisting of the two areas Athor and Adiabene as in his statement “Mr. Sabrisho‘ the governor of Adiabene and Athor”.⁴⁹

This shows that Thomas of Marga used the names Athor and Mosul interchangeably as a place name (toponym) for the same city, province and diocese.

Another East Syrian author, Ibn Al-Tayyib (d.1043), in his Arabic commentary⁵⁰ on the Bible and in the chapter of his interpretation of Jacob’s blessings, he called the old Assyrians “المواصله” which means “Mosulites”⁵¹ because Mosul and Athor are the same name. In his French translation of this work J.C. Sanders translated the word “المواصله” into “Assyriens”.⁵²

The other Syriac author whom I want to mention in this regard is Michael the Syrian. In his Syriac chronicle,⁵³ the Syrian Orthodox patriarch and historian Michael the Syrian (d.1199) used the word “Athor” in the three mentioned meanings as other authors did, that is as a name of the city of Mosul, a name of a province and as a name of a church diocese. Here are examples from his Syriac chronicle:

In the first meaning, that is “Athor” as the city of Mosul, we read the following sentence:

“At the same time a division between the Turks and the Arabs of Athor (Mosul) took place”;⁵⁴ and: “It was interpreted from Arabic books which were written in Athor (Mosul) and Babel (Baghdad)”.⁵⁵ The second quotation places the city of Mosul side by side with the city of Baghdad.

In the second meaning, Athor as a name of a province, we read his following phrases:

⁴⁸ Ibid. p.120.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p.139

⁵⁰ Edited by J.C.J. Sanders, in CSCO 274/arabici 24, Louvain 1967.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 101. His Arabic text reads:

وتشبيه بنيامين بالذئب المختطف لتعويله اذا دخل ارض الوعد على السلب والنهب والاستيلاء على الغزير. فانه سلب الهند في ايام اساء، **والمواصله** في ايام حزقيا. وهذه صفة لجسارته واقدامه بالغداة ياخذ السلب وبالعثي يقسم القطوع (ص 101).

⁵² Ibid, p. 95.

⁵³ The Syriac Chronicle of Michael the Syrian was edited and translated into French by J.B.Chabot, he published a photographic copy in four volumes (1899–1910) with a French translation. The chronicle was typed on the computer and published in Sweden in 2006. In my quotations I use this Swedish edition. A facsimile of the Edessa codex, which is in Aleppo now, was published by George Kiraz, Gorgias Press, in 2009.

⁵⁴ *The Chronicle of Michael the Syrian*, Sweden 2003, p. 673.

⁵⁵ Ibid. P.686.

ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܝܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ
 ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ
 ”On the last outgoing of the Turks when they ruled over Persia, Athor, Beth Nahrin (Mesopotamia),
 Armenia...”,⁵⁶ and the phrase ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ
 ...ܐܘܬܘܪܐ “The rulers who seize the reign of the kingdom in Athor, Gzirto and Beth Nahrin”,⁵⁷ and
 ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ “He was respected by all rulers in Beth
 Nahrin (Mesopotamia) and in Athor”.⁵⁸

In all these quotations “Athor” is mentioned as a province together with other provinces.

In the third meaning, “Athor” as a name of a church diocese, Michael uses the term ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ “the diocese of Athor”.⁵⁹

5. OTHER MEANINGS OF “ATHORAYA” IN SYRIAC

In addition to its meaning of “Mosulite”, the word ܐܘܬܘܪܐ “Athoraya-Assyrian” was used in Syriac both as a noun and an adjective in a mixture of negative meanings such as: “enemy” “tyrant”, “despot”, ”oppressor”, “unfair”, “harsh”, “severe”, “cruel”, “tyrannical”, “tyrannous”, “oppressive”, “despotic”, “aggressive”, “hostile”, “offensive”, etc. When we read old Syriac texts, we come across the word “Athoraya-Assyrian” in these negative meanings.

We meet the word “Athoraya-Assyrian” in these meanings in the Syriac letter, which was sent by Jesus to Abgar, the Aramean king of Edessa⁶⁰. The legend of this Syriac letter is available in the book ܕܘܛܪܝܐ ܕܥܕܝܐ *Doctrine of Addai*⁶¹ (written about the year 400 A.D.).

In the mentioned letter Jesus says to king Abgar of Edessa ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ “An enemy will not overcome you”.

⁵⁶ Ibid. p.650.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p.669.

⁵⁸ Ibid. P.717.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p.481-482; Even the 13th century Syrian orthodox polymath Gregory Barhebraeus (1226-1286) used the terms Athor and Mosul as two names for the same city, province, and church diocese.

⁶⁰ Jacob of Sarugh (d.521) said of king Abgar
 ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ

ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ
 ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ

”King Abgar became a mouth for many peoples,

So that the world’s darkness and the brownness of Abgar the son of the Arameans,

The dark world was lightened by Christ through Abgar”. (See Jacob’s Homilies edited by Bedjan under the title *Homiliae selectae Mar-Jacob Sarugensis*, vol. 5, Paris 1910, p. 738.)

⁶¹ It is a Syriac document about the conversion of Edessa to Christianity with the story of the letter of king Abgar of Edessa to Christ and Christ’s reply. The “Doctrine of Adday” was first published in Syriac in London 1864.

⁶⁹ܐܘܪܝܝܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ “Since a long time has the yoke of the oppressors become severe, and many people because of this left their faith”.

In his Syriac lexicon, the East Syrian (Nestorian) lexicographer Barbahlul (10th cent.) explains the term “Athoraya-Assyrian” as enemy by saying: ܐܘܪܝܝܢܐ: ܥܠܡܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ ܕܥܝܪܐܢܐ “Athoraya means enemy”.⁷⁰ In his explanation Barbahlul depended on older Syriac texts.

6. APHREM BARSAUM BETWEEN THE “ASSYRIAN” AND THE “ARAMEAN” NAMES: 6.1 THE "ASSYRIAN" NAME IN APHREM BARSAUM’S WRITINGS

Aphrem Barsaum used the word "Assyrian" in a political context in a couple of documents that he wrote in English and French. He presented these documents to the European politicians in 1920 to defend the rights of his Syrian Orthodox Church and community after the genocide committed against them in the First World War in southeast Turkey.⁷¹

The first of these documents is a *Memorandum* in English written in February 1920 and was addressed to the *Peace Conference* in Paris after the First World War. In this document Aphrem Barsaum, who was the bishop of Syria then, explains the suffering and demands of the Syrian Orthodox people. In the document he uses the phrase: Our *ancient Assyrian nation*.

The second document is also in English and has the date of March 1920. He says in it: "The Syriac people belonging to the Syrian Orthodox Church are descendants of the old Assyrian race".

The third document is another *Memorandum* in French dated 2ed April 1920. It was presented to the *Peace Conference* in Paris in which he says: *Notre nation syrienne, ancienne descendante de la race assyrienne*, "our Syrian nation, the old descendant of the Assyrian race."⁷²

By saying "the descendant of Assyrians" Aphrem Barsaum broke a long tradition of his Syrian Orthodox community by claiming an Aramean origin. But did he do this intentionally and deliberately, and what was his purpose in saying "the descendant of Assyrians"? These questions need answers.

In the first decades of the 20th century, an "Assyrian political movement" arose among some Syrians who tried to connect themselves with the ancient Assyrians. These peoples began using the name "Assyrian" instead of “Syrian”⁷³ to rename themselves and the members of the Syrian, Chaldean and Nestorian churches and communities. These persons, even though they were not many, they could make influence. In using the "Assyrian" name they had various reasons and arguments:

⁶⁹ Ibid. p.741.

⁷⁰ Hassano Barbahlule, *Lexicon Syriacum*, ed. Rubens Duval, Paris 1888, col.322.

⁷¹ Aphrem Barsaum compiled a list of the Syrian orthodox casualties and presented it to the European politicians. His list contains 93000 persons who were killed.

⁷² Sébastien de Courtois, *The Forgotten Genocide: Eastern Christians. The Last Arameans*, Gorgias Press 2004, P. 334.

⁷³ By calling themselves Assyrians, they broke a 1500 years old tradition.

Some of them thought that the "Assyrian" designation had capability to unite them and collect the Aramaic-speaking around it.

Others believed in a historical affiliation and claimed that the Syrians were the descendants of the ancient Assyrians and therefore they had the right to use the word "Assyrian" instead of Suryoye / Suryaye.

Some others believed that the ancient Assyrians were a part of the Syrian nation and spoke the same "Syriac" language.⁷⁴ They believed that if they are called "Assyrian" in the West this will give them more respect and support of the European nations. Those who believed in this used the word "Suryoye/suryaye in their Syriac language, but they used the word "Assyrian" in the European languages.

In the beginning of 20th century there was an idea of an Assyro-Chaldean nation⁷⁵ to unite all peoples of Syriac origin; this idea appeared publicly in the debates during the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919. The idea was put forward by an Assyro-Chaldean delegation in Paris which does not seem to have had any official contacts with the Syriac Catholic or Syriac Orthodox delegations from Syria and Iraq. The Syrian delegations to this conference used this Assyro-Chaldean name.⁷⁶

Even though it was only few who believed in the "Assyrian" name among followers of the Syrian Orthodox, the Chaldeans and the Nestorians, the absolute majority of East and West Syrians did not know anything about the new "Assyrian" name.

Anyhow, the "Assyrian" new name got a steady foot among the Syrian Nestorians. During the following decades most of the Nestorians began calling themselves "Assyrians" in the European languages but continued up till now calling themselves "Suraye" (Syrians) in their Aramaic mother tongue.

Did patriarch Aphrem Barsaum belong to these groups? The answer could be both yes and no. His use of the "Assyrian" name in the mentioned couple of documents may explain that he could have believed that the Syrians were associated with the "Assyrian" name at the time when he wrote them, i.e., in 1920, but later he refused any connection between the Syrians and Assyrians and strongly criticized those who used the Assyrian name.

⁷⁴ They adopted this idea from the Syrian Orthodox patriarch and historian Michael the Syrian (d. 1199) who believed that the ancient Assyrians spoke Syriac therefore they belonged to the Syrian people, (See his Chronicle p.815.

⁷⁵ A Memorandum of the Assyro-Chaldean delegation, October 19, 1919, at Paris (from Sebastien de Courtois, *The Forgotten Genocide: Eastern Christians, the Last Arameans*, (Gorgias Press) Piscataway 2004, p. 217.

⁷⁶ J.M.Fiey wrote "In the summer of 1876, an emissary of the Anglican Archbishop is dispatched to visit the districts of Hakkari and Urmia, to study the situation and to evaluate the needs. The emissary Lewes Cutts would publish two works in 1877. The first is an official report to the archbishop and to the two societies who had supported the expedition. It is titled *The Assyrian Christians*, which means the Christians of Assyria. Except in the title, the word Assyrians is never mentioned in the report, and throughout the document the talk is about Nestorians" (*THE SYRIAN EAST*, vol. X (1965), p.6).

It seems that in his early age Afrem Barsaum's knowledge of the name issue was inadequate, and he lay under the influence of the "Assyrian" political environment. But later in his life when he became a Syriac scholars and church historian, he rejected the Assyrian name totally and defended the Syriac Aramean name as the only proper name for both the Syrian Orthodox community, the Syrian Orthodox church, and the language.

When Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum was in the zenith of his knowledge in Syriac culture and church history he made research on the name issue; he also wrote a treatise on the subject defending the Syrian Aramean name against the "Assyrian" one. His book is called *حل في اسم الامة السريانية* *ܠܚܘܡܝܢ ܕܥܡܘܢܝܢ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ* "On the issue of the name of the Syriac nation".⁷⁷ In this book he collected tens of Syriac evidences from both East Syriac and West Syriac writers who confirmed the Syrian-Aramean origin of both east and west Syrians.

To avoid confusion in the name issue, patriarch Aphrem Barsaum suggested that the Syrian Orthodox Church in the West should be called "Syro-Aramaic Church" *ܠܚܘܡܝܢ ܕܥܡܘܢܝܢ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ*, and both the community and the language should also be called Syriac-Aramaic.⁷⁸

In his refusal of the "Assyrian" name, he gives us four arguments: "Now, as for using the "Assyrian" word for the language and the community, it contradicts:

1. The truth in history
2. The old tradition kept by our scholars,
3. The universal recognition of our community over all the world,
4. The agreement of all the Western scholars in France, England, Italy, USA.⁷⁹

He explains the origin of the new "Assyrian" political name by saying: "The "Assyrian" name is an invention of the Protestant English men in the beginning of the 20th century (about the year 1900); it was bequeathed to the Nestorians in the region of Mosul in 1919-1920 A.D. for a malicious, political purpose, so that they might create for themselves out of the Nestorian youth a militia they named "Assyrian" aiming at the realization of their political plan in Iraq, a plan which failed in 1933 and resulted in the exile of the Catholicus of the Nestorians and his exile from the country with his followers, the result being that all nations refused to permit his return to the East".⁸⁰

Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum's conclusion in this issue as regards the "Assyrian" name is: "In conclusion, the Syrians have no interest whatsoever in taking to themselves this strange name

⁷⁷ The book is called *حل في اسم الامة السريانية* *ܠܚܘܡܝܢ ܕܥܡܘܢܝܢ ܕܫܘܪܝܐ* "On the name issue of the Syriac nation", Homs 1953. The book was translated into English, Turkish and German and was published in Holland in 1984; I have translated the book into Swedish and published it in Stockholm in 2007.

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.44, 46.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.43.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p.45.

which will make them lose their race, their ecclesiastical support which is their unique and sole means of existence in the world”.⁸¹

6.2. THE NAME “ARAMEAN” IN THE WRITINGS OF APHREM BARSAUM:

Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum was well versed in the Syriac literature, Syriac authors and church fathers; he read a significant part of the corpus of Syriac texts. We understand this when we read his book about the history of the Syriac literature *Al-Lulu Al-Manthur*. Such a person, well acquainted with the writings of the Syriac authors, knows what these authors wrote about the Syrian people and the Syrian church. All this led him to confirm the Aramean origin of both East and West Syrians.

Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum in his important treatise on just the Syrian name and origin⁸² affirms the Syrian Aramean origin of this people.⁸³ The treatise contains tens of evidences chosen from both East and west Syrian authors who affirm his statement.

As a Syrian person Aphrem Barsaum was proud of being a member of both his nation and church with its Syrian/Aramean origin. He spared no opportunity to praise the Aramean belonging and affiliation, especially when he wrote of the old Syriac famous writers such as Ephrem the Syrian, Jacob of Sarugh, Jacob of Edessa, etc.⁸⁴

The Aramean affiliation occurs so often and very clearly in Aphrem Barsaum's books and writings, both when he was a monk and a bishop or a patriarch. We can quote evidences of this from some of his works by beginning with his first published work *نزهة الازدهان في تاريخ دير الزعفران* "Nuzhat al-Adhhan fi Tarikh Deir al-Zaafaran" (History of Zaafaran monastery) which was published in Mardin in 1917 when he was still a monk in the monastery itself. On page 49 of this work, he wrote:

يقسم الاراميون من حيث لهجة لغتهم الى غربيين وهم السريان بوجه العموم وشرقيين وهم النساطرة الكلدان "Arameans are divided according to their language into Westerners, who are the Syrians in general, and Easterners who are the Nestorian Chaldeans".⁸⁵

In his *Poetry Collection*⁸⁶ *مصحف لحة القلوب* which contains poems and literary prose in praise of the old Syrian writers, the terms "Aramean", "Aramaic", "Aram", occur so often.

⁸¹ Ibid, p.45.

⁸² Aphrem Barsaum, *Fi Ism Al-Umma al-Suryaniya* "On the Name of the Syrian community", Homs 1952.

⁸³ Ibid. p. 2 and 44.

⁸⁴ His love for these Syrian authors and poets is shown when he praised them with very beautiful words in his poems and other writings especially in his *book* *مصحف لحة القلوب* "the Harp of Hearts".

⁸⁵ Aphrem Barsaum, *نزهة الازدهان في تاريخ دير الزعفران* "Nuzhat al-Adhhan fi Tarikh Deir al-Zaafaran", Mardin 1917, p. 49.

⁸⁶ Aphrem Barsaum, *مصحف لحة القلوب* was published in Homs in 1954; it was translated into Syriac by Shleimun Hanno and published with its original text in Kamishli 1969. I use here the second edition of 1969.

In his poem on Ephrem the Syrian, he says: **هو حجة اللسان الارامي: صحنك دلعك كوزك** "(Mar Ephrem) is the great master of the Aramaic language".⁸⁷ The title of the introduction to the chapter on Mar Ephrem the Syrian is:

سحك دصحنك صحنك دكتر كوز and لواعج الهيام بنبي بني آرام
"The great love passion of the Aramean prophet".⁸⁸ He also calls him:
حلحك دكتر كوز and نابغة بني آرام "the Arameans' genius".⁸⁹

In another poem he says: "Come Arameans, let us climb the holy mountain of Edessa where God's chosen ones are".⁹⁰

الى مجتمع اصفياء العلي في جبل الرها المقدس هلموا بنا نصعد يا ابناء آرام
لهك حنك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك

He longs for the old Syrian greatness when he says: "May God reintroduce the glory of the Arameans in Edessa after alienation and exile...".⁹¹

عسى الله يؤتي مجد آرام في الرها حياة وبعثا بعد لأي وغرب
حنك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك

In another poem about the famous monastery of Qenneshrin, he says: "The souls of the Arameans thrive and long for you whenever you are mentioned o Qenneshrin monastery".⁹²

ترتاح نفوس الاراميين وتتوق كلما ورد ذكرك يا ديرقنشرين
سحك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك

In a poem on Mar Marutha of Tagrit (7th cent.) he says: "He invites the Aramean youth to commemorate the memory of a prelate who plaited a spiritual crown of glory for the Syrians".⁹³

ينادي فتيان آرام لاحياء ذكرى حبر صفرت يمناه اكليل الشرف الديني للسريان
حنك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك دكتر كوزك

⁸⁷ Ibid. pp. 26-27.

⁸⁸ Ibid. pp.26, 27.

⁸⁹ Ibid. pp. 28, 29.

⁹⁰ Ibid. pp. 46, 47.

⁹¹ Ibid. pp. 52, 53.

⁹² Ibid. pp. 66, 67.

⁹³ Ibid. pp. 84-87.

He praises Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) and calls him: "the irrefutable authority of Aram's sons".⁹⁴

(يعقوب الرهاوي) حجة ابناء آرام الدامغة
ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

and: "The honor of the Arameans".⁹⁵

(يعقوب الرهاوي) كنت ملء عين الايام ومفخرة ابناء آرام
ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

He also calls him: "The greatest of the Arameans without hesitation, whose sea of knowledge does not come to end".⁹⁶

(يعقوب الرهاوي) إمام بني آرام غير مدافع لك الله بحرا علمه ليس ينضب
ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

About the author Moses Barkifo (813-903) he says: "He has raised the Aramean rank" and by his favor "Greatness has embraced the Arameans".⁹⁷

(موشى بر كيفو)
بمرايض الأرام زاد غرامي
ومكارم الامجاد لج هيامي

ياحجة الاعصار طلاع العلى
يا رافعا شأن الحجا الأرامي

سقيا لسعيك حكمة ومأثرا
والعز مكتنف بني آرام

ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ
ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

In his book on the history of Syriac literature *Al-lulu al-Manthur*, he says: "The Syrian Arameans had at the beginning a beautiful language ..."⁹⁸

كان للسريان الاراميين في اول امرهم لغة مهذبة تزدان بادب من نثر ونظم وكان لهم بالعلم عناية

To this degree was patriarch Aphrem Barsaum fond of the old Syrian authors, saints and monasteries, he praised them with fine words and called them Arameans.

⁹⁴ Ibid. pp. 94, 95.

⁹⁵ Ibid. pp. 96, 97.

⁹⁶ Ibid. pp. 100, 101.

⁹⁷ Ibid. pp.18, 129.

⁹⁸ Aphrem Barsaum, *Al-Lulu Al-Manthur*, p. 17.

Aphrem Barsaum preferred the Aramean/Aramaic name to the degree that he suggested the Syrian Orthodox Church in the English-speaking countries should be called ܣܘܪܝܝܐ ܥܕܝܘܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܝܢܐ “Syrian Aramean church”⁹⁹ and his community “Syrian Arameans”.¹⁰⁰

7. CONCLUSION:

“Athor” and “Mosul” are two names for the same city. Athor was used in Syriac and Mosul in Arabic, but even the form Mosul is available in the Syriac literature. The terms “Athoraya” and “Mawslaya-Mawsalli” were synonyms; the one is in Syriac and the other in Arabic.

Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum was called “Athoraya”, that is to say “Mosulite” because he was from the city of Mosul/Athor. He was called both “Athoraya” and “Mawsalli” depending on the language and source.

A few patriarchs of the East Syrian church who were from the city of Mosul were called “Athoraye” by the Syriac poet Gewargis Warda, but they were called “Mosulite” by Thomas of Marga.

The name “Athoraya-Assyrian” was used in Syriac in other negative meanings such as “enemy”, “oppressor”, etc. and as pejorative adjective for unjust and unfriendly peoples. It was applied for those who persecuted the Syrians/Christians. Many Syrian writers used it in this meaning, and they applied it once to the Arab Abbasids and once to the Persians because they persecuted the Christians.

Patriarch Aphrem Barsaum used the “Assyrian” name a couple of times in a political context in the beginning of his life, but he refused it later. When he was in the top of his knowledge he wrote research on the name issue, he refuted the Assyrian name and suggested that his church in the USA and the English-speaking countries should be called Syrian Aramean and his community Syrian Aramean.

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⁹⁹ Aphrem Barsaum, *Fi Ism Al-Umma al-Suryaniya* “On the Name of the Syrian community”, p.44.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p.44.