

THE SYRIAN CHURCHES SERIES

VOLUME SIX

STUDIES ON SYRIAN BAPTISMAL RITES

By

K. A. Aytoun (London)

B. Botte (Louvain)

S. Brock (Cambridge)

E. J. Duncan (Washington)

A. F. J. Klijn (Leiden)

L. L. Mitchell (Notre Dame, In.)

E. C. Ratcliff (Cambridge)

EDITED BY
THE REV. JACOB VELLIAN

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KOTTAYAM

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. The Mystery of Baptism by Moses bar Kepha Compared with the Odes of Solomon (K. A. Aytoun, London)	1—15
2. The Administration of Baptism in the Demonstrations of Aphraates (Edward J. Duncan, Washington)	16—36
3. Four Fathers on Baptism: St. John Chrysostom, St. Ephraem, Theodore of Moesuestia, Narsai (The Rev. Leonel L. Mitchell, Notre Dame)	37—56
4. Baptism in the Acts of Thomas (A. F. J. Klijn, Leiden)	57—62
5. Postbaptismal Anointing in the Ancient Patriarchate of Antioch (Bernard Botte, Louvain)	63—71
6. A New Syrian Baptismal <i>Ordo</i> Attributed to Timothy of Alexandria (Sebastian Brock, Cambridge)	72—84
7. The Old Syrian Baptismal Tradition and its Resettlement under the Influence of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century (E. C. Ratcliff, Cambridge)	85—99
8. Consignation in the West Syrian Baptismal Rite (Sebastian Brock, Cambridge)	100—118

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**THE MOST REV. DR. THOMAS THARAYIL,
BISHOP OF KOTTAYAM.**

*Kottayam,
May 1, 1973.*

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1973**

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S. H. Mount,
Kottayam-686006, Kerala,
April 19, 1973.

J. V.

FOREWORD

One of the aims of *The Syrian Churches Series* is to make important studies on Syrian Churches available to students, especially in India, who are not often in a position to have access to such studies which appear in different periodicals and varied languages abroad. *Studies on Syrian Baptismal Rites* has chosen seven articles already published in English or in French, and has added a new one, "Four Fathers on Baptism," by Rev. Leonel L. Mitchell. This study dealing with the treatments of John Chrysostom, Ephrem, Theodore and Narsai (Chapter 3), as well as Duncan's study on the baptismal rites in Aphraat (Chapter 2), Klijn's in *Acts of Thomas*, (Chapter 4) and Ratcliff's in the fourth century Antioch (Chapter 7) fairly cover the early history of the Syrian baptismal rites.

The only English translation, so far, of Moses Bar Kapha's commentary on baptism, published by *The Expositor* in 1911, is not widely known, and hence it finds a place in this volume (Chapter 1). Sebastian Brock gives the text of a developed West Syrian baptismal *Ordo* attributed to Timothy of Alexandria, of the sixth century (chapter 6). His observations on the four consignations in the developed West Syrian Baptismal *Ordo* are helpful to trace the growth of its ceremonies (chapter 8). Bernard Botte presents an interesting study on the postbaptismal anointing (chapter 5). In reproducing the articles, the Greek words were transliterated and footnotes kept mostly intact.

There are other studies of some help for the understanding of the Syrian baptismal Rites, which are not included in this volume.' This restriction, among other reasons, is due to content of the volumes in preparation which are to appear in this *Series*, such as, *East Syrian Baptism*, by Joseph Kariapuram's dealing with the earliest manuscript, the Mar Esaya text of the 9th/10th century; and *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Liturgical Tradition*, by Sebastian Brock, dealing with baptism and Eucharist mainly.

1. Among such studies, the following are worthy of special mention :

S. Brock, "The Consecration of Water in the Oldest Manuscript of the Syrian Orthodox Baptismal Liturgy," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XXXVII (1971), 318-332, which is primarily a textual study. Pietro Rentinck, *La Cura Pastorale in Antiochia nel IV Secolo* (Rome: Analecta Gregoriana, 178, 1970), pp 34-56, gives a general view of the practice of administering baptism in the fourth century Antioch. E. Whitaker, "Unction in the Syrian Baptismal Rite," *Church History Review*, 1961, 176-187; "History of Baptismal Formula," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XVI (1965), 1-12.

T. M. Finn, *The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instructions of St. John Chrysostom* (Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1967). E. F. J. Klijn, "An Ancient Syriac Baptismal Liturgy in the Syriac Acts of John," *Novum Testamentum*, VI (1963), 216-228. J. Quasten, "The Blessing of the Baptismal Font in the Syrian Rite of the Fourth Century," *Theological Studies*, VII (1964), 309-313. F. F. Irving, *The Ceremonial Use of Oil among the East Syrians*, *Occasional Papers of the Eastern Church Association*, New Series, IV (London, 1902). A Mingana, *A Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist* (Cambridge: 1933). R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* (Cambridge: Text and Studies VIII, 1909).

There are two papers presented in the *Symposium Syriacum* held in Rome in October 1972 by Rev. Juan Mateos S. J. and Sebastian Brock on the Syrian Baptismal Rites, which might eventually appear in one of the forthcoming volumes of *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*.

The Mysteries of Baptism by Moses bar Kepha Compared with the Odes of Solomon*

K. A. AYTOUN
LONDON

The reason for the publication of the following tract is as follows: the question of the antiquity of the Baptismal Services of the Christian Church and of the meaning of the symbolic acts that are involved in the same have been brought into renewed prominence by a recent discovery in the Early Christian literature, in which it has been thought by several critics, working in independence of one another, that traces of the Baptismal rituals of the earliest centuries could be detected. The work to which I refer is the *Odes of Solomon*¹ recently discovered by Dr. Rendel Harris. And it was a suggestion of the discoverer that I should examine in the light of recent investigations the very interesting *Exposition of Baptism* made by a celebrated Syrian Father, Moses bar Kepha².

Since the discovery of the *Odes* there has been widespread interest in their interpretation. At present opinion seems to be moving away from Harnack's hypothesis that the *Odes* are Jewish with Christian interpolations and to be inclining towards belief in a Christian origin for them. Dr. Bernard's theory³ in particular—that they are “a collection of hymns packed

**The Expositor*, Ser. VIII, 2 (1911), 338–358.

1 The *Odes of Solomon* are early Christian hymns, most probably modelled on the poetic form of the Old Testament psalms. According to F. L. Cross, they “date from the late first century and may have emanated from Gnostic circles” (*The Early Christian Fathers*, London, 1960, p. 190). Arthur Voobus, on solid grounds, holds that the original language of these hymns was Syriac (*Celibacy: A Requisite for Admission to Baptism in the Early Syriac Church*, Stockholm, 1951). See also, *The Odes of Solomon*, edited with Introduction and Notes, by J. H. Bernard (Cambridge; Text and Studies VIII, 1912), p. 7–11. (Editor).

2 Moses bar Kepha lived from about 813 A. D.—903 A. D. He was born and brought up at Balad in Mesopotamia and was educated under Rabban Cyriacus, the abbot of the Convent of Max Sergius, which was situated near Balad.

He was himself bishop of Mosul, Both Ramman and Koniye for the last forty years of his life. He was a voluminous author, and is said to have written commentaries on most of the books of the Bible. Of these the Commentaries on Genesis, the Gospels and Pauline Epistles are still in part extant. An ecclesiastical history is also attributed to him, but of this no trace remains.

Besides these he wrote a number of homilies and treatises, some of them of considerable length, dealing for the most part with ecclesiastical matters, such as ordination, chrism, tonsure of monks. Amongst these are three dealing with Baptism, one of which being the treatise here translated.

3 J. H. Bernard, “The Odes of Solomon,” Text and Studies, 8, 3 (Cambridge 1912.)

with allusions to Baptism"—demands attention. For if it could be established, while it would lower the date of the *Odes* and of the *Pistis Sophia* it would carry our knowledge of Baptismal Ritual to very early times. It is important therefore that this hypothesis be carefully tested. Its chief confirmation comes from the old Syrian rituals.

The treatise of Moses bar Kepha is based on these. In it he sets forth the various customs and rites connected with baptism and explains the significance attached to all the details of the ceremony and gives the reasons for them. In particular he discusses the symbolic imagery of the baptismal element and of the central act itself.

As will be shown, Dr. Bernard's theory receives ample support and illustration from the work of bar Kepha. A collection of parallels are found in it to nearly all the passages which Dr. Bernard has adduced from various sources to illustrate his contention as to the numerous allusions in the *Odes* to the fruitful symbolism of the baptismal ceremonies.

This may be seen by the following comparisons between passages from the *Odes* and our Treatise respectively.

(a) *Ode 36. 3.*

The Spirit brought me forth before the face of the Lord : and although a son of man I was named the Illuminate, the Son of God.

Moses bar Kepha, section 2.

Baptism is named Illumination for two reasons. (1) Because from him who is baptized there is expelled the darkness of the ignorance of God and the darkness of sin, and he is illumined by the three lights which are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (2) Because he is counted worthy of the light of the Kingdom of Heaven, etc. It is designated Regeneration, being likened to the first birth from a woman. The first birth is from a woman, but this is of the Holy Spirit.

In both these passages we have the idea of Illumination linked with that of Spiritual Birth.

(b) *Ode 21. 2.*

I put off darkness and clothed myself with light.

M. b. K., section 19.

The white robes with which they clothe him are to show that he has been in the darkness of ignorance and has become white and shining in the knowledge of God and in the light which he has received from baptism.

(c) Ode 25. 8.

In me there shall be nothing that is not light : and I was clothed with the covering of Thy Spirit, and Thou didst remove from me my garment of skin.

M. b. K., section 19.

The white robes show that the baptized...will put on the glory which Adam wore before he transgressed the commandment.

“The glory which Adam wore” is undoubtedly the “coat of light” which was lost when the “coat of skin” was acquired.”⁴

(d) Ode 15. 7, 8, 9.

According to His bounty He hath given to me, and according to His excellent beauty He hath made me. I have put on incorruption through His name : and have put off corruption by His grace. Death has been destroyed before my face.

M. b. K., section 19.

The white robes are...because beforetime he (the baptized) was without form or beauty, and it is come to pass that he has acquired both form and adornment, and because after the resurrection he will receive a robe of immortality and incorruption.

Here we may notice that not only do we have in both these passages the conception of the putting on of a garment of *incorruption* and of the acquiring of immortality, but also in both is the accompanying thought of the acquirement of new beauty.

(e) Ode 39. 8. 10.

The Lord has bridged them by His word...And the waves were lifted up on this side and on that.

M. b. K., section 16.

These very waters have fore-shadowed baptism from the beginning, *the sea that was divided*, the Jordan which purified Naaman, *the torrent which Ezekiel saw*.

Ode 6. 7f.

There went forth a stream and became a river great and broad ; for it flooded and broke up everything and none could restraint it--for it spread over the face of the whole earth and filled everything, etc.

That Ode 6. 7 refers in the first instance to the river described in Ezekiel xlvii. is generally recognised.

⁴ Compare J. R. Harris, *Introduction to Odes and Psalms of Solomon*, pp. 66-69. (Cambridge 1911).

(f) Ode 11. 14f.

He carried me into His Paradise : where is the abundance of the pleasure of the Lord : and I worshipped the Lord on account of His glory : and I said, Blessed, O Lord, are... those who have a place in Thy Paradise.

M. b. K., section 24.

The entrance to the Holy of Holies (after Baptism) signifies the entering into the tree of life from which Adam was prohibited.

(g) Ode 8. 16, 17.

For I know them, and before they came into being I took knowledge of them, and on their faces I set my seal ; I fashioned their members.

M. b. K., section 18.

He is sealed with 'myron'.. upon the organs of sense that they may not be the entrances of sin. Again on the forehead that he may be terrifying to demons Again on the joints (members) that they may be the instruments of righteousness.

(h) Ode 21. 1.

He had cast off my bonds...I put off darkness and clothed myself with light.

M. b. K., section 5.

The divestiture of the baptized...shows that he is delivered from the captivity from the Adversary like those who escape from captivity naked."

Ode 10. 3.

"He has given me...to lead captivity a good captive for freedom."
Cf. also Ode 22, 25. 1, 17. 3, 11.

M. b. K., section 20.

The 'orarium' which is upon his head is a symbol of the freedom, which he has received from Christ in baptism, who has freed him from Satan ignorance and death.

(i) Ode 24. 1.

"The dove fluttered (*lit.* brooded) over the Messiah."

M. b. K., section 13.

The priest pours 'myron' upon the holy waters of baptism. The 'myron'...here typifies the Holy Spirit. For as the Spirit of God brooded upon the waters in the beginning of creation that it might impart to them generative and creative power, so here also the Holy Spirit broods upon the waters of baptism through the pouring out of the 'myron' upon them that it may impart to them power to bring forth spiritual sons of a heavenly Father.

(j) Ode 21. 1.

My arms I lifted up to the most High, even to the grace of the Lord : because He had cast off my bonds from me.

Cf. also Ode 27. 1, 42. 1, 35. 8, 37. 1.

M. b. K., section 9.

By spreading out his hands he declares that right willingly he confesses what he confesses and promises to do what he promises.

(k) Ode 15. 1.

As the Sun is the joy to them that seek for its daybreak, so is my joy the Lord, because He is my Sun and His rays have lifted me up and His light hath dispelled all darkness from my face.

M. b. K., section 9.

By turning to the East and confessing Christ signifies that he is confessing that Christ is the Light...and that He is the 'Sun of Righteousness.

(l) Ode 25. 7.

Thou didst set me a lamp at my right hand and at my left, and in me there shall be nothing that is not light.

M. b. K., section 21.

The lights which precede him who is baptized...signify (1) that he has removed from the darkness of ignorance and sin in the knowledge of God...(2) that he is prepared for the heavenly light.

(m) Ode 18. 2, 3.

My members were strengthened that they might not fall from his strength, Sickness removed from my body, and it stood to the Lord by His will.

Cf. also Ode 6. 15, 21. 5, 25. 9.

M. b.K., section 16.

Water strengthens the weak. Just as iron is softened and liquefied by fire, but when it is dipped in water it is made hard and strong : so also those who are weak and languid by the practice of error and wickedness are baptized, and the waters of baptism make them strong in the practice of virtues.

All these parallels illustrate and confirm Dr. Bernard's position. One point, however, on which he has laid much stress—the crowning of the baptized—is not borne out by Moses bar Kephä, who mentions no crown nor garland, but only an orarium, a kind of kerchief which was tied about the head to symbolize freedom.

Two or three further probable allusions to baptism in the Odes which have not been pointed out by Dr. Bernard are suggested by our Treatise.

In Ode 11, in which Dr. Bernard saw so many references to baptism, are also found these words, "And my nostrils enjoyed the pleasant odour of the Lord" (Ode 11. 13). Moses bar Kepha mentions that incense is burned before the baptized, and explains it thus, "The incense that is burned before him shows this—the sweetness of the fragrance of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost which he has received from Baptism" (sec. 22).

It may be significant that according to the Treatise burning of incense immediately preceded the entrance of the baptized to the "Holy of Holies," which is likened to Paradise; while in the Ode the same connexion of thought is apparent, "My nostrils enjoyed the pleasant odour of the Lord; and He carried me to Paradise."

The next passage is the short 13th Ode, which runs as follows :

Behold the Lord is our mirror : open the eyes and see them in Him: and learn the manner of your face : and tell forth praises to His Spirit : and wipe the filth from your face and love His holiness, and clothe yourselves therewith, and be without stain at all times before Him.

Now Moses bar Kepha, in discussing the waters of Baptism, likens them to a mirror. He says, "When thou lookest on water thou seest in it another in thine own likeness—like thee. Here thou wilt perceive thou goest down to baptism one person and comest up another instead, the new instead of the old" (sec. 16). The rest of the Ode seems to fit in with this. Obviously, "Wipe the filth from your face" might refer to the cleansing function of Baptism, and "Clothe yourself with holiness" to the symbolism of the subsequent putting on of the white robes. The reference would be beyond doubt if the following rendering of the first verse based on suggested emendations were correct. "The water is our mirror : open the eyes and see yourselves in it."⁵

One further possible baptismal allusion in the Odes indicated by our Treatise may be added to Dr. Bernard's suggestions.

Moses bar Kepha says, "The betrothals of Rebecca, Rachel and Zipporah were beside water."⁶ So also are the betrothals of the Holy Church beside the waters of baptism." (sec. 16). The 3rd Ode is a hymn eminently suitable for such a conception, mystical union and spiritual love being its keynotes. "I love the Beloved, and my soul loves Him...I have been united

5 The emendation is supported by the language of Ephrem. *Hymn, in Epiph* ix. 7, "Aquae natura sua veluti speculum sunt illi qui in eis respicit." He is speaking of baptism, and follows the argument of the 14th Ode so closely as to suggest actual acquaintance with it."

6 The illustration is borrowed from Ephrem, *Comm. in Diat.* p. 40, and is reproduced in the Commentary of Isho'dad (see Harris, *Ephrem on the Gospel*, p. 44). It is also a commonplace in the Syrian service-books; compare Maclean, "East Syrian Rite of the Epiphany" in *Rituale Armenum*, pp. 318, 352, apparently in each case quoting from Ephrem.

We may also compare Ephrem : *Hymni in Epiph.* vii. 4. "Ad puteum occurrit Rebecca, in aures gestat et armillas. Sponsa Christi rebus pretiosis vestivit se in aquis."

to Him, because the Lover has found the Beloved...he that is joined to Him that is immortal will also himself become immortal.

Apart from its bearing on the Odes, the Treatise has a value of its own as a clear and simple statement of the thoughts which gathered about Baptism and its attendant ceremonies in the earlier centuries of the Eastern Church, some of which are suggestive even for today, and few without some beauty or interest.

MOSES BAR KEPHA'S EXPLANATION OF THE MYSTERIES OF BAPTISM.⁷

1. *Firstly the preparation.*

True faith is the beginning of all the Christian mysteries, and therefore the canons of the holy and inspired Fathers command that who so wishes to become a Christian shall first learn the true faith of the Christians and shall thereupon become a hearer of the Holy Scripture for a definite period, and then shall be introduced to the Christian mysteries. And first it is fitting that he should know what the faith is. And we say that Dionysius the Areopagite said this: -“Faith is the way which leads to fundamental truth and holy and spiritual behaviour.”

And holy Mar John of Constantinople has said that Faith is the way of acquiring immortal life.

And many things you will find in the Teachers which have the same meaning as what these holy Fathers said before time, although they vary in phraseology.

2. *And next we must investigate and inquire by how many names this act is called, and what they are, and what the meaning of each one of them signifies.*

And we say that it is called by three names—baptism,⁸ illumination, regeneration. And it is called baptism² for two reasons. Firstly, because it washes both bodilywise and spiritually; spiritually from sins and bodilywise from filth. And secondly, because he who is baptized is plunged in the water and is hidden. Again, it is named illumination for two reasons. Firstly, because from him who is baptized there is expelled the darkness of the ignorance of God and the darkness of sin, and he is illuminated by the three lights which are the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the one true God. And, secondly, because he is counted worthy of the light of the Kingdom of Heaven, in which the righteous shine as the sun,⁹ as the Lord has said, if indeed he also keep baptism by works of righteousness.

It is designated regeneration, being likened to the first birth from a woman. The first birth is from a woman, but this is of the Holy Spirit. And the former is by reason of sin, but this is for pardon and adoption.

⁷ Translated from the Syriac.

⁸ Lit. “bathing” or “immersion.”

⁹ Matt. xiii, 43

3. *The "Sponsor," that is the near kinsman.*

The "sponsor" is called by the following titles: leader, near kinsman, surety and teacher.

(a) "Leader" because he leads and brings to the priests at whose hands the baptism is effected.

(b) And "Surety" because he stands surety on behalf of him who is baptized that he will fulfil all those things which he promises relating to baptism. Moreover, he pledges himself to him who is baptized that baptism confers on him forgiveness of sins, and that he will be a son of God the Father and a brother of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that he is heir to the Kingdom of Heaven if he keeps the baptism in holiness of life.

(c) "Near-kinsman" because he is neighbour and family friend of him who is being baptized, more so than other people.

(d) He is called "Teacher" because he has to teach him how to conduct himself in the Church precincts and in the pious practices of asceticism.¹⁰

Now the Teachers have given injunctions that on account of the exigency of death, infants shall be baptized. And because an infant is not able to speak regarding baptism nor to make either renunciation or confession nor to promise to abide by his promise, the sponsor is asked to come and say all these things instead of him. And his spreading out both his hands and receiving it (i.e. the child) announces that he willingly pledges himself and receives on him those things in which he has pledged himself.

And again, after the manner of our Lord when He took up the children in his arms and said, "Whosoever receiveth one of these little ones who believes in me, receiveth me."¹¹ Therefore it is God whom he receives and for whom he stands surety.

4. *The enrolment of the baptised.*

The name of him who is baptized is written down for the following reasons. First, because as soon as he is enrolled he is numbered among those who are saved from the service of Satan and sin. Secondly, because he is enrolled among the sons of God by grace. Thirdly, because he is enrolled in the Church of the firstborn, who are written in heaven with the saints. Moreover, that the name of the surety is written down makes it known that he is the leader of the baptized, and not a misleader. It is not a case like that which is said, "Cursed be he who leads astray the blind by the way."

5. *The divestiture of the baptized and the removal of his ornaments and the putting off of his shoes.*

First and foremost it shows that he lays aside the "old man" and his former manner of life.

¹⁰ Lit. "peculiar excellence"

¹¹ Matt. ix. 37.

Second, that he is delivered from the captivity of the Adversary like those who escape from captivity naked.

Third, the putting off of his shoes, which are lowest and least, shows that baptism purifies him from those lower and lesser things of his former manner of life.

6. *The Exorcism.*

The exorcism signifies two things. Firstly, his warfare with Satan; and secondly, the appeal to the Judge asking him to free him from the evil tyranny of the Evil One.

7. *The threefold sealing with the cross without the chrism.*

With the cross he seals him to show this—the cross typifies the death of the Lord, and he who is baptized is baptized into the death of Christ,¹² as the Apostle Paul says.

Again, he seals him with the cross, because the cross reveals and shows to us the Trinity. How? For by the hands of Him who was crucified we acquire knowledge of the Holy Trinity.

And again, he seals him with the cross, because all the mysteries of the Christians are summed up in the cross

He seals him thrice for two reasons. In the first place to show that he is sealed in these three respects: in spirit, soul and body. In the next place, because he invokes the Trinity over him, saying, “In the name of the Father, Amen; and in the name of the Son, Amen; and in the name of the living and holy Spirit, Amen.”

And he seals him first of all without oil for this reason. It is as when a painter comes to an image which is already old and has the paint rubbed off. First he scours it and cleans it from the marks of its age, and after that he puts paint on it and adorns it. Because if he put paint on it before he had cleaned and scoured it, he would ruin the paints. Likewise, also, when the priest comes to the baptized, who is old and sullied with sin, he first seals him with the cross without oil, thus cleaning off his [marks of] age, and afterwards he seals him with oil, restoring him to his pristine beauty.

8. *The turning to the west, the repulsion with the hands, the blowing with the mouth, the renunciation of Satan and the execration¹³ of him with the hands.*

The west is the dark region. That he turns to the west and renounces Satan shows that he renounces Satan who is darkness, also his dark and evil deeds. Then that he repels with his hands shows two things: first, that he curse Satan¹⁴ and next that he drives away from him the evil deeds of

¹² Rom. vi. 3.

¹³ Lit. “giving him woe.”

¹⁴ Lit. “gives Satan woe.”

Satan. Moreover, the hands show that it is the deeds. Furthermore, by blowing he drives away from him the evil thoughts of Satan. For sin is committed in two ways—in theory, I say, and in practice; and, therefore, with his hands he drives away the practice of sin and by his blowing the theory of it.

9. *On turning to the East and spreading out the hands and confessing Christ and accepting Him and His words.*

The East is the region of light. By turning to the East and confessing Christ he signifies that he is confessing that Christ is the light, as He said, “I am the light of the World”;¹⁵ and that He is “the Sun of Righteousness,”¹⁶ as the prophet has said. And he acknowledges that He and His Father and the Holy Spirit are the one True and Light-giving God, and that he is accepting the true and light-giving teaching which was delivered by Him, and that he is promising to do the works of light and righteousness.

And by spreading out his hands he declares that right willingly he confesses what he confesses and promises to do what he promises.

10. *On being anointed with oil.*

He is anointed with oil for these reasons. Firstly, to show that he is entering on a contest and wrestling match with Satan. Because he who enters on a wrestling contest is anointed with oil, so that the hands of him with whom he is striving may slip from him. So too the baptized is anointed that he may not be held fast by the demons.¹⁷

Secondly, by being anointed with olive oil he shows that he has been a wild olive and a stranger to God. And now he is anointed so that he may be grafted on the olive of faith in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in whom he is about to be baptized, and that he may become as one “planted by a stream of water,”⁽¹⁸⁾ etc. And that he may say openly, “I am like a glorious olive in the house of God.”¹⁹

It is just as when there is a tree which bears no fruit and the husbandman brings a piece of another tree which does bear fruit and makes an incision into the fruitless tree and thus engrafts the fruit-bearing branch. So too does the priest to him who is to be baptized. Because he has been a wild olive tree bearing none of the fruits of righteousness he anoints him with oil and thus engrafts on him the fire²⁰ of the orthodox faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he will bear the fruits of righteousness, “some thirty, some sixty and some a hundred fold.”²¹

¹⁵ John viii. 12.

¹⁶ Mal. iv. 2.

¹⁷ Cf. Dion. Areop. P. G. 3. 420.

¹⁸ Ps. i. 3.

¹⁹ Ps. lii. 8 (Syriac Vers.).

²⁰ MSS. “bnura,” but perhaps read “nurba”—“and thus engrafts on him a twig of the orthodox faith.”

²¹ Mark iv. 8.

11. *Again as to the priests saying "Sign the Messiah,"²² on those who are being baptized.*

For the name of Messiah symbolizes the whole of the Trinity. And how so? It is the Father who anoints and the Son who is anointed, and it is the Holy Spirit which is the anointing. For in every anointed one there are three things concurring: the anointer, the anointed and the anointing. The anointer is the Father, the anointed is the Son and the anointing is the Holy Spirit.²³ And because the name of Messiah signifies the whole Trinity, the priest says "Sign the Messiah" on those who are being baptized.

12. *On the priest's breathing upon the water.*

The priest breathes upon the water for these reasons. Firstly, as God "breathed on Adam the breath of life"²⁴ when He created him, and as baptism too is a fashioning anew, it is right that the priest should breathe on the water as if it were the first fashioning. And, secondly, the priest breathes on the water as in the passage our Lord breathed on His disciples and said "Receive ye the Holy Spirit."²⁵

13. *On the priests' pouring "myron"²⁶ upon the water of holy baptism.*

He pours the oil on it. Firstly, to show that it was for the sake of our regeneration by baptism that the Word of God came down and emptied Himself even unto the enduring of the cross and death. And secondly, the "myron" which is poured upon the water here typifies the Holy Spirit. For as the Spirit of God brooded upon the waters in the beginning of creation, that it might impart to them generative and fertilising power, so also here the Holy Spirit "broods"²⁷ upon the waters of baptism, through the pouring out of the "myron" upon them, that it may impart to them power to bring forth spiritual sons of a heavenly Father. For holy Mar Severus²⁸ says in one of his writings that "myron" typifies the Holy Spirit.

14. *The baptistery and the descent of the baptized and his threefold immersion.*

The baptistery then takes the place of the grave of Christ, and therefore when the baptized goes down he goes down as if to the grave and his immersion in the water symbolises two things. First, his complete dying: and second, that when a man is buried he is altogether covered up and nothing of him is visible. So, too, the baptized when he plunges all of him into the water.

Then that he plunges three times, neither more nor less, shews that our Lord was in the grave three days.²⁹ And that the immersion in the water

22 "Sign the Messiah," etc. These words are part of a prayer which begins thus: "O Trinity, sign They Messiah on these who are about to be regenerated."

23 Cf Basil P. G. 32. 116-117. 24 Gen. ii. 7. 25 John. xx. 22. 26 Perfume, sweet oil.

27 Gen. i. 12

28 Patriarch of Antioch 512-519 A. D.

29 Cf. Dion. Areop. *De Eccles. Hier.* P. G. 3. 404.

symbolises the death of Christ, and the font His burial, the Apostle Paul testifies, saying: "Know ye not that those who are baptised into Christ are baptized into his death?"³⁰ and "For we are buried with him in baptism to death."³¹ Also, this ought to be known, that formerly when believers were baptized when they were youths and men, the priests made them plunge in the water in the midst of the font three times, but nowadays because those who are baptized are infants and little children the priests do not plunge them into the midst of the water lest they should be choked, but instead of immersing them they perform upon them pourings, taking up the water partially and pouring it upon their heads thrice, instead of three immersions, making three sprinklings, doing it carefully so that the infants be not choked. We accept by faith that three sprinklings are like three immersions.

15. *The priest lays his hand on the head of him who is baptized and says, "So and so is baptized in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit," the face of the baptized looking eastward and the face of the priest looking westward opposite to him who is baptized.*

The priest sets his hand upon the head of him who is baptized for these reasons. Firstly, as God formed Adam with his hands in the first creation, so also does the priest in the second creation. Secondly, as John put his hand upon the head of the Son in baptism. And thirdly, the hand of the priest points out him who is being baptized as if by a finger—while the Father cries out "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."³² And therefore he is able to say openly to the Father, "Our Father who art in heaven."³³ Fourthly, the hand of the priest is a secret sign that he who is being baptized is born again. The priest says, "So and so be baptized," and not "I baptize," because the baptism is not his doing but God's,³⁴ and he has been chosen by grace to be minister to the mysteries of Baptism.

But the face of him who is baptized looks eastward because it is our first home from whence came out our father Adam, when he transgressed the commandment of the Lord.

16. *Why did Christ constitute baptism from water and the Spirit and not from anything else? For it could have been from oil and the Spirit. For the priests and kings of the children of Israel were anointed with oil.*

And we say that he constituted baptism from water, for these three reasons. Firstly, because the first creation of the first man was by means of water. "The Lord God created man from dust."³⁵ It is fitting that the second creation too should be by water. Secondly, that the element should be easily accessible in all places for rich and poor. "Behold, water; what is the hindrance that I be baptized?"³⁶ If the element had not chanced to be easily obtainable, many would have been robbed of baptism, which is the

30 Rom. vi. 3.

31 Rom. vi. 4.

32 Matt. iii. 17.

33 Matt. vi. 9.

34 Cf. Basil P. G. 32, 116-117.

35 Gen. ii. 7.

36 Acts viii, 36.

Vol. II.

salvation of souls. Thirdly, so that the filth of the soul might be cleansed by the mysteries. For just as water cleanses the filth of the body, so baptism cleanses the filth of the soul, i. e. sin. Fourthly, because it is of the nature of water to bring forth, which nature it received at the beginning; "Let the water swarm, etc."³⁷ Even so they produce a swarm of spiritual children. Fifthly, furthermore, when thou lookest on water, thou seest in it another in thine own likeness—like thee. Here thou wilt perceive, thou goest down to baptism one person and comest up another instead,³⁸ the new instead of the old. Sixthly, by means of water writings are blotted out, and therefore by the waters of baptism the bill of our liabilities is wiped clean and the bond which Adam wrote by which we were made debtors both to sin and death. Seventhly, water strengthens the weak. Just as iron is softened and liquefied by fire, but when it is dipped in water it is made hard and strong. So, also, when those who are weak and languid by the practice of waywardness and wickedness, the waters of baptism make them strong in the practice of virtues. Eighthly, because in the beginning we were formed from earth and our dwelling place was commanded to be on the earth. We are now reformed by water that we may dwell at last above the firmament, which is drawn out and hammered out of water³⁹—"Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water."⁴⁰ Ninthly, because these very waters have foreshadowed baptism from the beginning: the sea that was divided;⁴¹ the Jordan which purified Naaman;⁴² the torrent which Ezekiel saw;⁴³ the pool⁴⁴ of Siloam.⁴⁵ Moreover, the betrothals of Rebecca,⁴⁶ Rachel⁴⁷ and Zipporah⁴⁸ were beside water. So also are the betrothals of the Holy Church beside the waters of baptism. Tenthly, St. Basil has said thus: "Because mortality and resurrection are appointed to us, therefore, through water and the Spirit baptism is consummated, the water symbolising mortality and the spirit renewing us in resurrection. "Thou sendest thy Spirit, and thy are created."⁴⁹

17. *The ascent from the baptistery and the sealing with "myron."*

The ascent from the baptistery shows three things. First, the ascent and resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Second, that there will be an ascent and resurrection from the grave on the last day. And, thirdly, that he will rise up above the heavens if he keep the baptism inviolate.

18. *He is sealed with "myron" for these reasons.*

Firstly, that he may acquire sweetness of saviour, which is well-pleasing to God. For, according to the apostle, "we are a sweet saviour in Christ."⁵⁰

37 Gen. i. 20.

38 Lit. "thou goest down to baptism and thou comest up one person instead of the other.

39 There is a play on the words here impossible to render in a translation. Raki'a=firmament; marak=drawn out; raki=hammered.

40 Gen. i. 6. 41 1 Cor. x. 2. 42 2 Kings v. 10-14. 43 Ezek. xlvii. 1-12.

44 Jno. ix. 7. 45 Lit. baptisery. 46 Gen. xxiv. 47 Gen. xxix. 1-12.

48 Ex. ii. 15-22. 49 Ps. civ. 30. 50 2. Cor. ii. 15.

Second, because by it the baptized is perfected and receives the Holy Ghost.

Third, because it is a token of Christ, by which he who is baptized is separated from alien flocks.

Fourth, that he may be fearsome to the demons and not dependent on their help.

Fifth, he is sealed upon the organs of sense that they may not be the entrance of sin.

Sixth, again on the forehead that he may be terrifying to demons. Just as what the case in Egypt when the destroyer came not near to the home upon which was the token of the blood of the lamb.⁵¹

Seventh, he is sealed upon the heart that it may be an abode not of evil thoughts but of good.

Eighth, upon the joints, so that they may be "instruments of righteousness," as Paul said.⁵²

19. *The white robes with which they clothe him.*

The white robes with which they clothe him are for these reasons.

First, to show that he has been in the darkness of ignorance and has become white and shining in the knowledge of God and in the light which he has received from baptism.⁵³

Second, to show that he has put off the old man and put on the new.⁵⁴

Third, that beforetime he was without form or beauty, and it is come to pass that he has acquired both form and adornment.

Fourth, that after the resurrection he will receive a robe of immortality and incorruption, and will put on the glory which Adam wore before he transgressed the commandment.⁵⁵

Fifth, that after the resurrection he will dwell in heaven as a luminary.

Sixth, that he will shine in the Kingdom of Heaven as the Sun of Righteousness, with the righteous ones.⁵⁶

20. *The "orarium"⁵⁷ which they tie about his head.*

The "orarium" which is upon his head is a symbol of the freedom which he has received from Christ through baptism who has freed him from Satan, ignorance and sin.

51 Ex. xxii. 23.

52 Rom. vi. 13. 53 Dion. Areop. P. G. 3. 404. 54 Col. iii. 10.

55 Gen. iii. 21. Cf. Introduction. 56 Matt. xiii. 43. 57 A "kerchief" or "napkin."

21. *The lights which precede him who is baptized.*

The lights which are before him signify that he has removed from the darkness of ignorance and sin to the light of the knowledge of God and the works of righteousness.

Secondly, that he is prepared for the heavenly light.

22. *The incense which is burned before him.*

The incense, which is burned before him shows this : firstly, the sweetness of fragrance of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which he has received from baptism.

Secondly, the sweet fragrance of the holy life which he is about to present to God, even as Noah presented a sacrifice to God.

23. *The service by which he comes to the sanctuary*

The service by which he comes to the sanctuary shows firstly, the spiritual nuptials which have fallen to him; secondly, it typifies the joy on his behalf with which the angels rejoice; and, thirdly, it relates to the oneness of the holy angels; fourthly, to his participation (?) in the Kingdom of Heaven.⁵⁸

24. *The entrance to the Holy of Holies.*

The entrance to the Holy of Holies signifies the entering in to the tree of life from which Adam was prohibited.

25. *The reception of the holy mysteries.*

The reception of these holy mysteries shows, first, that he is fully initiated and perfected in gifts; second, that he has been united to the Word of God and has become a member of Him; third, that the fatted calf has been slain for him because "he was dead and is alive, and was lost and is found,"⁵⁹ fourth, as bodily children come to bodily nourishment so also do spiritual children; fifth, it shows the banquet which is prepared for the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven.

27. *Why those who are baptized do not wash their hands for seven days.*

And this signifies the not washing away of the secret power, which they have received from holy and divine Baptism.

The end of the Exposition of the holy mysteries of Baptism.

⁵⁸ Cf. Dion, Areop. ut sup.

⁵⁹ Luke xv. 23-24.

The Administration of Baptism In the *Demonstrations* of Aphraates*

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THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM

1. The Time of Administering Baptism

In the Church of Aphraates the solemn administration of baptism formed a part of the annual celebration of the Pasch. Speaking of this festival, the Persian Sage says that, according to tradition, it consisted of fast, prayer, singing of psalms, handing over of signs, baptism and celebration of the eucharist:

Ut vero festum singulis annis statuto tempore observetur, haec a nobis requiruntur; ieiunium cum puritate, oratio cum fide, laudatio cum sedulitate, et cantus psalmorum quemadmodum oportet; et traditio signi, cum baptismo iuxta ritum; benedictiones consecrationis in temporibus suis, et omnia quaecumque ex consuetudine perficiuntur.¹

In order to determine if possible the very day on which baptism was given, we must examine briefly the nature and chronology of the Paschal celebration as outlined by Aphraates. We have already had occasion to mention² that the Pasch of which the Persian Sage speaks was in a sense

*Edward J. Duncan, *Baptism in the Demonstrations of Aphraates, the Persian Sage* (Washington, 1945), pp. 104-132. Aphraates, the Persian Sage (280-345?), is the earliest witness of any significance to the theology and liturgy of the East Syrian church and his *Demonstrations* are "representatives of the mind and practice of a church virtually uninfluenced by Greek and Roman culture, even in the fourth century," (Duncan, op. cit., p. vii). For the text of the *Demonstrations*, see, W. Wright, *The Homilies of Aphraates the Persian Sage: Edited from Syriac Manuscripts of the Fifth and Sixth Century in the British Museum* (London, 1864). J. Parisot, *Aphraates Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes*, in *Patrologia Syriaca*, I-II.

The Demonstrations Were written between 336 and 345. They are entitled: (1) "On Faith"; (2) "On Charity"; (3) "On Fasting"; (4) "On Prayer"; (5) "On Wars"; (6) "On the sons of the Covenant"; (7) "On Penitents"; (8) "On the Resurrection of the Dead"; (9) "On Humility"; (10) "On Pastors"; (11) "On Circumcision"; (12) "On the Pasch"; (13) "On the Sabbath"; (14) "On Admonition"; (15) "On the Distinction of Foods"; (16) "On the (Gentile) Nations Which Have Taken the Place of the (Jewish) People"; (17) "On Christ the Son of God"; (18) "Against the Jews on Virginity and Sanctity"; (19) "Against the Contention of the Jews That They Shall be Brought Together Again"; (20) "On the Support of the Poor"; (21) "On Persecution"; (22) On Death and the Latter Times"; (23) "On the Grape." (Editor).

1 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII- De Paschate* (PS I, 538).

2 Cf. Duncan p. 52.

the continuation, in the Christian, community, of the old Jewish festival,³ which had been only the figure of the true Pasch,⁴ inaugurated by Christ Himself at the last Supper:

Manducavit igitur Salvator noster cum discipulis suis pascha in nocte sacrata diei quarto decimi; et cum discipulis suis signum paschatis in veritate complevit.⁵

The Christian Pasch of Aphraates, then, is more immediately a repetition of this last Passover which Christ celebrated with His disciples, and its prevailing theme is that of the recollection of the Passion,⁶ with no emphasis whatever upon the Resurrection.⁷ The true Paschal Lamb is Christ,⁸ and in the New Dispensation the Paschal Supper is nothing else but the Eucharist.⁹

In arriving at the date for the Paschal festival, Aphraates employs the Jewish calendar.¹⁰ He tells us that whereas "the Passover of the Jews is carried out on this fourteenth (14th Nisan) i. e., night and day together, ours (is celebrated) on the Solemn day of the Passion, namely, the fifteenth, night and day."¹¹ Later on he stipulates that if the Pasch (*dies paschatis passionis Salvatoris nostri*) should fall on a Sunday, its celebration must be postponed until the following day.¹² From this we see that the Passover of

3 Cf. K. A. H. Kellner, *Heortologie* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1911³) 34: "Somit kann kein Zweifel sein, dass das jüdische Osterfest gewissermassen in das Christentum mit hinübergenommen wurde, wobei die in jenem enthaltenen Typen ihre Erfüllung fanden."

4 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 515): Audisti, carissime, quae tibi de illo paschate exposui, cuius mysterium priori populo datum est, veritas autem hodie inter gentes praedicatur.

5 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 515).

6 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 522): Nos vero Salvatoris nostri crucifixionem et opprobria commemoramus.

7 Cf. G. Bert, *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien* (TU 3, 3-4), 179, n. 1: "Hier bei Aphrahat fehlt in der Paschafeier die Feier der Auferstehung noch vollständig."

8 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 515): Porro verus agnus Salvator noster est...

9 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS 515): Manducavit igitur Salvator noster cum discipulis suis Pascha in nocte sacrata diei quarti decimi; et cum discipulis suis signum paschatis in veritate complevit. Postquam enim abiit Iudas ab eis, accepit panem, et benedixit, deditque discipulis suis, et dixit eis: Hoc est Corpus meum; accipite et comedite ex eo omnes, Etiam super vinum ita benedixit et dixit eis: *Hic est Sanguis meus, novum testamentum, qui pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum, similiter facite in meam commemorationem, quando congregabimini.*

10 Cf. K. A. H. Kellner, *Heortologie* 35: "Die Juden liessen den Tag mit Sonnenuntergang endigen, so dass die Abendstunden von etwa nach 6 Uhr schon zum folgenden Tage gehörten." From this it follows that by the "night" of the 14th Nisan (the first month of the Jewish ecclesiastical calendar, corresponding to March-April) Aphraates means the evening of the 13th Nisan, and by the "night" of the 15th Nisan he means the evening of the 14th. Therefore, while the Christian Passover is a commemoration of Christ's Last Supper with His disciples, it is celebrated rather on the day on which the Saviour, the true Paschal Lamb, died on the cross. This is understandable in view of the fact we have mentioned, that the prevailing theme of this feast was the recollection of the Passion. It is to be noted that throughout the *Demonstratio* Aphraates mistakenly assumes that the "night" of 14th Nisan (i. e. the evening of 13th Nisan), instead of the *evening* of 14th Nisan, was the time prescribed by the Law and the time observed by Christ for the eating of the Paschal meal.

11 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 522.)

12 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 534-535).

Aphraates was held on a certain day of the month, which might fall now on one weekday, now on another.

The duration of the Paschal celebration was not limited to the 15th Nisan, but extended throughout a whole week—"totam illam hebdomadem in passione Domini et in azymo observantes, quoniam septem sunt post pascha dies azymorum, ad vigesimam primam usque."¹³ Since, however, this Christian Passover in so many respects resembled that of the Israelites which was its sign or type, it is reasonable to suppose that as the Jewish festival opened with the Paschal Supper, so the Christian observance would begin with the celebration of the Eucharist.¹⁴ According to Aphraates' reckoning, then, this offering of the sacrifice of the New Law would take place on the "night" of 15th Nisan, that is to say the evening of the 14th Nisan.

Aphraates seems to make it clear, too, that just as Christ's institution of baptism at the washing of the disciple's feet preceded the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper,¹⁵ so the administration of baptism should precede the celebration of the Eucharist in the observance of the Paschal solemnity. This deduction is confirmed by the order in which he enumerates the various parts of the festal observance—fasting, prayer, the singing of psalms and "the giving of the sign, and baptism according to its due observance" and "the blessings of consecration," which expression undoubtedly refers to the Holy Eucharist.¹⁶

We may conclude that in the Church of Aphraates, baptism was solemnly administered on the evening of the 14th Nisan, and was followed immediately by the celebration of the Eucharist. Since Aphraates reckoned the timing of the Paschal festival by the Jewish calendar, the administration of baptism might fall, therefore, on any of the days of the week.

2. The Ceremonies of Baptism

To one interested in examining the sacramental ritual of the East Syrian Church during the time of Aphraates, it is naturally a disappointment to find that the Persian Sage apparently never wrote a treatise dealing *ex professo* with so important a sacrament as baptism. On the other hand, it is well to recall that such demonstrations as we have from the pen of Aphraates were written, as we have seen, in answer to the request of a friend

13 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 535)

14 Cf. G. Bert. *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien*, 183 n.: "Da die christliche Paschafeier ganz nach den Gesetzesvorschriften des A. T. und analog der jüdischen Paschafeier gestaltet war, so haben wir anzunehmen, dass, wie die jüdische Feier mit dem Paschamahl eröffnet wurde, so die christliche Feier mit dem neuteamentlichen Paschamahl, der h. Abendmahlsfeier."

15 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 531): Et postquam lavit pedes eorum et recubuit, dedit eis Corpus et Sanguinem suum.

16 Cf. G. Bert. *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien*, 195, n. 1: "Dies (blessings of consecration) haben wir wohl auf die Einsegnung des hll. Abendmahls zu beziehen..." Cf. also passages in which Aphraates speaks of the Eucharist as immediately following baptism: *Demonstratio IV—De Oratione* (PS I, 182), and *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 527).

who was already a Christian, and very likely one of the B'nai Qy'ama,¹⁷ and that therefore an exhaustive description of baptism and its rites would be unnecessary.

Since Aphraates, then, has no tract *De Baptismo*, it is understandable that the passing references which he makes to baptism, although valuable as witnessing to the nature of his sacramental doctrine, do not provide us with copious details about the rites and ceremonies employed in the administration of the sacrament of regeneration. In this chapter, however, we shall attempt to reconstruct the general sequence of the few ceremonies which our author mentions more or less explicitly. These are the anointing, the blessing of the baptismal waters, and the act of baptism itself. The celebration of the Eucharist will be mentioned incidentally, because of its intimate connection with the administration of baptism.

(a) *The Anointing*

The only passage in which Aphraates explicitly and directly refers to the administration of baptism as such is found toward the end of his Demonstration "On the Pasch." In relating how the annual Paschal celebration is to be observed in the Christian community, the Sage says that there must be fasting and prayer and the singing of psalms, "and the giving of the sign (*traditio signi*), and baptism according to its due observance; the blessings of consecration in their own time, and whatever is customarily carried out."¹⁸

In this quotation it is principally the phrase *traditio signi* which will occupy us for the present. This expression is what Schwen calls "das ratselhafte 'Zeichen geben,'"¹⁹ probably because so many different interpretations have been excogitated to explain its significance. Bert thinks Aphraates is referring to the giving of the Creed (*traditio symboli*) to the catechumens.²⁰ Antonelli,²¹ Forget²² and Parisot²³ all see in the *traditio signi*

17 In closing the Sixth Demonstration, "On the Sons of the Covenant," Aphraates writes to his correspondent: "Therefore, read what I have written to you, you and the brethren, Sons of the Covenant, who love virginity." (PS I, 311). Compare the translation of Bert in his Book *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien* 113: "Nun lies dieses, was ich dir geschrieben habe, du und die Bruder, die Sohne des Bundes diejenigen welche die Jungfraulichkeit lieben."

18 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 538): Ut vero festum singulis statuto tempore observatur, haec a nobis requiruntur: ieiunium cum puritate, oratio cum fide, laudatio cum sedulitate, et cantus psalmodum quemadmodum oportet; et traditio signi, cum baptismo iuxta ritum; benedictiones consecrationis in temporibus suis, et omnia quaecumque ex consuetudine perficiuntur.

19 P. Schwen, *Aphrahat; seine Person und sein Verstandnis des Christentums* (Berlin, 1907) 100.

20 G. Bert, *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien* 194, n. 2: "Unter dem Zeichen haben wir wohl das Symbolum zu verstehen. Nach der späteren Praxis wurde am Palmsonntag den Katechumenen in der Gemeinde das apostolische Symbolum feierlich übergeben (Conc. Agath. Can. 13 im Jahre 506; man nannte dies traders Symbolum ...)."

21 N. Antonelli, *Sancti Patris Nostri Jacobi Episcopi Nisibeni Sermones* (Rome, 1756) 350, n. 2.

22 J. Forget: *De Vita et Scriptis Aphraatis Sapientis Persae* (Louvain, 1882) 266.

23 J. Parisot, *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes* (PS I, iv): Confirmationem, cuius nullum hodie apud Nestorianos apparet vestigium, adeo ut ea carere ferme credantur, et nomen etiam ignorent, significare videtur Aphraates, 'impositionem signi' nominando, quae cum baptismo dabatur (Demorstr. XII, 13.)

the administration of confirmation. Diettrich calls it a *signatio ad christianum faciendum*,²⁴ and Schwen concludes that the meaning *obsignatio crucis* "wird dem Zusammenhang wohl am besten gerecht."²⁵

Since obviously no conclusive and satisfying decision could be rendered from the agreement of these authorities, we feel that a rather thorough investigation of the meaning of *signum* in the Demonstrations of Aphraates will be a help toward discovering exactly what part the *traditio signi* played in the baptismal ceremonies with which he was familiar, or at least what relation, if any, it had to the administration of the sacrament. Toward a better understanding of *signum*, then, we shall inquire, first of all, as to the general meaning of the word in Syriac literature. Secondly, we shall attempt to discover the exact sense or senses in which Aphraates employ the word in the Demonstrations. Then we shall draw our conclusions as to the meaning and place of the *traditio signi* in the baptismal ceremonies described by Aphraates. Lastly, we shall compare our results with other Syriac descriptions of the order followed in the administration of baptism.

The *Thesaurus Syriacus* tells us that the Syriac word *rushma*, which Parisot translates as *signum* in the quotation we have mentioned, has, among other meanings, that either of "baptism" or *obsignatio crucis*, a sealing with the sign of the cross.²⁶ Etymologically, therefore, the word *signum* (*rushma*) may be interpreted as standing for the whole rite of baptism, or it may indicate merely a signing with the cross, which may or may not be a part of the baptismal ceremony.

As we have seen above, Aphraates speaks of "the giving of the sign (*rushma*), and baptism according to its due observance."²⁷ It is quite clear from this passage that in the mind of our author, *rushma*, although intimately connected with baptism, is something distinct atleast from the act of baptism, for he plainly says "the giving of the sign and baptism." It is to be noted, however, that there is nothing here which would militate against the possibility that the *traditio signi* might be a part of the baptismal ceremony, in which case "baptism" would refer to the act of immersion. From the wording of Aphraates, we may conclude with reasonable certainty that the *traditio signi*, whatever it may be, precedes the act of baptism.

Since this is not a case of *rushma*=baptism, we may tentatively assume that the second general meaning of *rushma*, a signing or sealing with the cross, may be indicated. Were this true, we could conclude, from what evidence we have here, that in the baptismal rite as Aphraates knew it, the *baptizandi* were signed with the sign of the cross at some time before entering the baptismal font. At any rate, it does seem logical to decide that in this first quotation the *signum* or *rushma* indicates a signing or sealing in the form of a cross given to the candidates for baptism.

24 G. Diettrich, in: *Theologische Literaturzeitung* XXXII (1907) 610.

25 p. Schwen, *Afrahāt: seine Person und sein Verständnis des Christentums* (Berlin, 1907) 59.

26 R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* II (Oxford, 1901) c. 3988.

27 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 538).

In the Twenty-third Demonstration, "On the Grape," Aphraates is explaining how the world was preserved for the sake of the just, "donec tempus ab Altissimo praefinitum completeretur."²⁸ He then goes on to speak in figurative terms of the coming of Christ :

But the door was opened to ask for peace, and darkness fled from the minds of many ; the light of understanding dawned and there sprouted the fruit of the splendid olive tree, wherein is the sign of the sacrament of life, whereby Christians and priests and kings and prophets are perfected ; He (Christ) enlightens those in darkness, anoints the sick, and through His hidden mystery leads back the penitent.²⁹

Christ is here figuratively represented as the olive tree³⁰ but at the same time the latter term is taken realistically to indicate the use of olive oil,³¹ for Aphraates calls it "the sign (*rushma*) of the sacrament of life, whereby Christians and priests and kings and prophets are perfected."³² *The Didascalia Apostolorum* affords an interesting parallel to this quotation from the Persian Sage. Among the instructions concerning the anointing before baptism, we read the following rule for the bishop :

But where there is a woman and especially a deaconess, it is not fitting that women should be seen by men : but with the imposition of hand do thou anoint the head only. As of old the priests and kings were anointed in Israel, do thou in like manner, with the imposition of hand, anoint the head of those who receive baptism, whether of men or of women ³³

In the light of this passage we readily see the force of Aphraates' reference to the perfecting of "Christians and priests and kings and prophets" by the "sign of the sacrament of life." He is plainly referring to a baptismal

28 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—De Acino* (PS II, 7).

29 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—De Acino* (PS II, 10) : Sed ad rogandam pacem reclusa est porta, et caligo de mente multorum aufugit ; illuxit lumen intellectus, et fructus germinarunt olivae splendidae, in qua signum est sacramenti vitae, quo perficiuntur christiani et sacerdotes et reges et prophetae ; tenebras illuminat, ungit infirmos, et per arcanum suum sacramentum paenitentes reducit.

30 Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses Mystagogicae* II, 3 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta eucharistica et liturgica vetustissima* [Bonn, 1937] 82) :

31 Cf. Ephraem, *Hymni de Virginitate* VII, 14 (ed. Rahmani, 25) : Ex qualibet parte oleum contemplar, Christus mihi apparet. Hymns IV-VII treat of the comparison of oil and the olive tree to Christ. (ed. Rahmani, 10-25.)

32 Cf. a blessing of oil in Hippolyt's *Traditio Apostolica* (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta*, 30) : Ut oleum hoc sanctificans das, Deus, sanitatem utentibus et percipientibus, unde unxisti reges, sacerdotes et profetas, sic et omnibus gustantibus confortationem et sanitatem utentibus illud praebeat. The *Pontificale Romanum* to this very day in *Benedictione olei infirmorum feria quinta in Coena Domini* gives this prayer) Emitte quaesumus Domine, Spiritum Sanctum ut tua sancta benedictione sit omni hoc unguento caelestis medicinae peruncto tutamen mentis et corporis, ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnes infirmitates, omnemque aegritudinem mentis et corporis, unde unxisti sacerdotes, reges, prophetas et martyres ; sit chrisma tuum perfectum, Domine, nobis a te benedictum, permanens in visceribus nostris.

33 *Didascalia Apostolorum* (ed. R. H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum* [Oxford, 1929] 164). Cf. H. Elfers, *Die Kirchenordnung Hippolyts von Rom* (Paderborn, 1938) 144;

anointing, probably of the head, very likely the one which occurred before the actual immersion,³⁴ as we shall see. From an earlier Demonstration we know that the Persian Sage was familiar with an anointing of those who were converted to a belief in Christ. In the Fourth Demonstration, "On Prayer," Aphraates describes Jacob's vision of the ladder, and then continues :

And Jacob called that place Bethel, and Jacob erected there as a memorial a pillar of stone upon the top of which he poured oil. And Jacob, our father, prefigured another mystery by pouring oil on those stones : for the people who have believed in Christ, behold it is they who are anointed...³⁵

From this quotation we may easily infer that those who had come to believe in Christ were anointed or signed with oil, probably upon the head, as an indication that they were thereupon set apart from non-believers.³⁶ This conclusion is greatly strengthened by reference to a very similar, but even more pointed passage from Ephraem, who refers apparently to an unction of the entire body :

Of old Jacob poured oil up on a stone, that by this anointing he might consecrate it to God and offer there his tithes. (This is) a figure of your bodies which are sanctified by oil, that they might become temples for God, and that your oblations might be offered to Him."³⁷

The fact that these words of Ephraem are taken from the hymn treating of the anointing before baptism³⁸ would seem to indicate that Aphraates, too, had reference to a pre-baptismal anointing.

34 On the anointing before baptism cf. John Chrysostom, *In Epistolam ad Coloss. cap. II Homilia* 6, 4 (426 Montfaucon). *Constitutiones Apostolorum* VII 22, 2 (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* I, 406). *Ibid.*, VII, 42, I (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* I, 448). Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* [Cambridge, 1933] 54) : "After you have taken off your garments, you are rightly anointed all over your body with holy Chrism ..While you are receiving this anointing, the one who has been found worthy of the honour of the priesthood begins and says : 'So-and-so is anointed in the name of the Father, and of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' And then the persons appointed for this service anoint all your body." *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi* II, 8 (ed. Rahmani, 129) : postquam haec dixerit et professus fuerit, ungatur oleo exorcizato, dum ille, qui ipsum ungit, dicit : 'Ungo (te) hoc oleo ad liberationem ab omni spiritu pravo et impuro et ad liberationem ab omni malo.'

35 Aphraates, *Demonstratio IV—De Oratione* (pS I, 146).

36 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* III, 5 (ed. Lamy I, 30-31) : .. Oleum Christi separat fideles ejus ab alienigenis. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 46-47) : "And he signs you on your forehead with the holy Chrism and says : 'So-and-so is signed in the name of thy Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'...When the priest performs these things for you and signs you with a sign on your forehead, he separates you from the rest as a consequence of the aforesaid words, and decides that you are the soldier of the true King and a citizen of heaven. The sign (with which you have been signed) demonstrates that you have communion with, and participation in, all these things."

37 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* III, 9 ed. Lamy I, 34).

38 The responsory of this hymn of Ephraem is : Christus oleo obsignat agnos novos in grege suo. *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* III (ed. Lamy I, 28). In a note in column 27, Lamy says : "Nonnullae hujus hymni strophae recitantur in Ordine baptismi a Jacobo Edesseno disposito dum sacerdos totum corpus puellae baptizandae inungit oleo olivae benedicto."

In view of these arguments it seems that in the expression “the sign of the sacrament of life” Aphraates uses *rushma* in the sense of an anointing.^{38a} Taking into consideration the meanings we found in the *Thesaurus Syriacus*, we may be justified in saying further that very probably this anointing was given in the form of a cross, at least on the head, although Ephraem seems to imply that the whole body was anointed.³⁹

Later in the Twenty-third Demonstration, “On the Grape,” we again meet the term *rushma* (*signum*) used in connection with baptism. Aphraates exclaims :

O tu qui iuras per caput tuum et mentiris ! Si tibi vera sunt tria nomina illa inclita et laudanda Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti, super caput tuum commemorata, quando vitae tuae signum accepisti ; si verum tibi est baptisma, ne per caput tuum iuraveris, et scito potestatem tidi non esse per caput tuum iurandi.⁴⁰

At first glance it may appear that *signum vitae tuae* is equivalent to baptism. But we believe this passage will bear closer inspection. In the first place Aphraates seems to draw a parallel here between “the sign (*rushma*) of your life” and baptism, much the same as in the demonstration “On the Pasch” he distinguished between the *traditio signi* and “baptism according to its due observance.”⁴¹ Further, as we saw in our discussion of the previous quotation from Aphraates, *signum* apparently had reference to an anointing on the head in the form of a cross, which might well have been accompanied by the pronouncement of the “three glorious and the Holy Ghost.”⁴²

Were this interpretation correct, we might paraphrase Aphraates thus: if your anointing in the threefold name, if your baptism in the water means anything to you, do not swear by your head. Since the Holy Names were probably invoked at the anointing and certainly at the actual baptism in the water, and since at both the anointing and the baptism the hand of the

38a See above.

39 For a combination of both these elements, compare *The History of John, The Son of Zebedee* (ed. W. Wright. *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* II [London, 1871] 40): “And when he had stripped, the holy (man) drew nigh, and took oil in his hand, and made him a cross on his forehead, and anointed his whole body, and brought him nigh to the cistern, and said to him: ‘Descend, my brother!’”

40 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—De Acino* (PS II, 134).

41 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 538).

42 Cf. Ephraem, *Hymni de Virginitate* IV, 14 (ed. Rahmani, 14 ad unctionem cum aleo proclamatur tria nomina, praecones baptismi. Narsai, *Homily XXII, On Baptism* ed. R. H. Connolls, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* [Cambridge, 1609] 45-43): “The three names he casts upon the oil, and consecrates it, that it may be sanctifying the uncleanness of men by its holiness. With the name hidden in it he signs the visible body. With the name of the Father and of the Son and the Spirit he seals his words. The three names he traces upon his face as a shield; that the tyrant may see the image of the divinity on the head of a man.”

celebrant was laid on the head of the individual,⁴³ it is indeed difficult to decide in this instance just what Aphraates means by *rushma*. We should like to observe that it is altogether possible that Aphraates may have had in mind both the anointing and the baptism in the water, and that since the anointing was the first ceremony of the baptismal rite, he calls baptism here by the name *signum*, a *pars pro toto* concept. As a matter of fact, the editor of the *Thesaurus Syriacus* believes that *signum vitae* here is equivalent to "baptism."⁴⁴

Summing up the individual results of our investigation of the Persian Sage's usage of *signum* (*rushma*), we see that in the first case⁴⁵ *signum*, considered separately, was apparently equivalent to a signing or sealing in the form of a cross given to the candidates for baptism at some time before their immersion. In the second instance,⁴⁶ we found that there was added to the notion *signum* the concept of an anointing. The third passage from Aphraates,⁴⁷ although not entirely clear, reveals *signum* either as an anointing of the head with the invocation of the Blessed Trinity, or as a *pars pro toto* expression for the whole rite of baptism, more likely the latter.

In consideration of these data we feel justified in concluding that the *traditio signi* mentioned in the demonstration "On the Pasch"⁴⁸ is nothing other than an anointing, probably in the form of a cross,⁴⁹ which more or less immediately preceded the descent into the baptismal font. The *traditio signi* could not be understood as the handing over of the Creed, because the use of the Syriac word *rushma* excludes this meaning.⁵⁰ *Traditio signi* could hardly refer to Confirmation, because in no passage is there any indication that the *signum* was given after baptism. The *traditio signi* was in all likelihood not the *signatio ad christianum faciendum*, for it was evidently

43 At the anointing: cf. *Didascalia Apostolorum* III, 12, 2-3 (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* 1, 210): ... In manus impositione unges caput solum, quemadmodum olim sacerdotes ac reges in Israel ungebantur. Et tu iuxta hanc similitudinem in manus impositione ungas caput eorum, qui baptismum accipiunt ... At the baptism itself: cf. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 58): "The priest stands up and approaches his hand, which he places on your head, and says: 'So-and-so is baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' ..." Cf. also *The History of John, The Son of Zebedee* (ed. Wright, *AAA* II, 40): "And the procurator stretched out his hands to Heaven, and cried out, weeping and saying: 'I believe in the Father and in the Son and in the Spirit of holiness;' and he leapt down into the font. Then the holy man drew near, and placed his hand on the head of the procurator, and dipped him once, crying out, 'In the name of the Father;' and the second time, 'In the name of the Son;' and the third time, 'In the name of the Spirit of holiness.'"

44 Cf. R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* II (Oxford, 1901) 3988.

45 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 538).

46 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—De Acino* (PS II, 10).

47 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—De Acino* (PS II, 134).

48 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 538).

49 T. J. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones* I (Malines, 1882) c. 31, n. 1: "Baptizandi olim et adhuc hodie apud Syros . . oleo olivae signabantur tribus crucibus in fronte."

50 P. Schwen, *Afrahat* 59: "Unter dem Zeichen, das 'bei der Taufe gegeben wird'... will zwar Bert eine Übergabe des Taufbekenntnisses verstehen: aber... es ist hier vom Symbol nicht die Rede."

administered in close connection with baptism, which was not the case with the latter, given ordinarily at one's entrance into the catechumenate.⁵¹

With this explanation of the *traditio signi*, we may venture to give the general outline of the administration of baptism and the Eucharist as it was carried out in the Church of Aphraates during the Paschal celebration. "The giving of the sign, and baptism according to its due observance; the blessings of consecration..."⁵² indicate this order: first came an anointing of the *baptizandi*, then the actual baptism in the water, followed immediately by the consecration of the Eucharist⁵³ and Holy Communion.⁵⁴ Other quotations from Aphraates are ample confirmation of the fact that the baptismal bath is followed by the Eucharist without another anointing intervening.⁵⁵ In the Fourth Demonstration, "On Prayer," we read:

Sed si in aqua baptismil lavarentur, Corpusque et Sanguinem Christi acciperent, Sanguis Sanguine expiaretur, et corpus Corpore mundaretur; peccata aquis abluerentur, et oratio Maiestatem (Dei) alloqueretur.⁵⁶

Again:

Servus emptus homo peccator est, qui resipuit, ac sanguine Christi redemptus est; et ubi cor suum ab operibus malis circumcidit, tune procedit ad baptismum, consummationem verae circumcisionis; populo Dei coniungitur,⁵⁷ Corpus et Sanguinem participat.⁵⁸

51 Sermones S. Augustini Denis XVII (ed. G. Morin, *Sancti Augustini sermones post Maurinos reperti* in: *Miscellanea Agostiniana* I [Rome, 1930] 89, 2): Catechuminus es? Catechuminus. Alia frons tua accepit Christi signum, et aliam tollis ad theatrum? Ire vis? Muta frontem, et vade. Ergo frontem, quam non potes mutare, noli perdere. Nomen dei super te invocatur, Christus super te invocatur, deus super te invocatur, signum crucis Christi tibi in fronte depingitur atque figitur.

52 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 538): ... *traditio signi, cum baptismo iuxta ritum; benedictiones consecrationis* ...

53 G. Bert, *Aphrahat's des persischen Weisen Homilien* 195, n. 1, in referring to the words "blessings of consecration," says: "Dies haben wir wohl auf die Einsegnung des heil. Abendmahles zu beziehen."

54 Cf. Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* VIII, 22 (ed. Lamy I, 90): *Prophetae Altissimum appellarunt ignem vorantem. Quis cum eo stare poterit? Non potuit populus Israel habitare cum eo, ejus violentia oppressit populos eosque conturbavit. Estis omnes illo igne per oleum uncti, per aquam induti, per panem refecti, per vinum potati*, voce illum audistis mentis oculo illum contemplati estis. It is interesting to note that Justin describes the baptism in the water as followed immediately by the celebration of the Eucharist, without any intermediate anointing. Justin, *Apologia* I, 65 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 16-17):

55 Cf. R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, xlii: "Before the publication of Narsai's Homilies I had been struck by the absence in early Syriac accounts of the baptismal rite of any allusion to the use of oil, or chrism, after the immersion."

56 Aphraates, *Demonstratio IV—De Oratione* (PS I, 182).

57 On the ceremonial surrounding the reception of the newly baptized into the brotherhood of the Church cf. F. J. Dolger, "Das erste Gebet der Tauflinge in der Gemeinschaft der Bruder," *ACH* II (1930) 142-155.

58 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (PS I, 527). The order related here was foreshadowed by Christ Himself, according to Aphraates. Cf. c. 527 and 531: *Salvator noster etiam pedes lavavit discipulorum suorum nocte paschatis, quod est sacramentum baptismi ... Et postquam lavavit pedes eorum et recubuit, dedit eis Corpus et Sanguinem suum.*

That the order—anointing (*rushma*), baptism, Eucharist was characteristic of the rite of initiation in the Syriac Church is attested by third, fourth and fifth century documents, as R. H. Connolly points out.⁵⁹

In the *Acts of Judas Thomas* we read, in the account of the baptism of King Gundaphar and his brother by the Apostle Judas :

And they begged of him that they might receive the sign... 'For we have heard that all the sheep of that God whom thou preachest, are known to Him by the sign'... And Judas went up and stood on the edge of the cistern and poured oil upon their heads, and said : 'Come, holy name of the Messiah...' And he baptised them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit of holiness... And when it dawned and was morning, he broke the Eucharist and let them partake of the table of the Messiah...⁶⁰

At the baptism of Mygdonia, Judas proceeds in this manner :

And he took the oil and cast (it) on her head, and said : 'Holy oil, which was given to us for unction...' And when he had cast the oil on her head, he told the nurse to anoint her,⁶¹ and to put a cloth round her loins ; and he fetched the basin of their conduit. And Judas went up (and) stood over it, and baptized Mygdonia in the name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit of holiness. And when she had come out and put on her clothes, he fetched and brake the Eucharist and (filled) the cup, and let Mygdonia partake of the table of the Messiah and of the cup of the Son of God.⁶²

The procedure—anointing, baptism, Eucharist is followed also in the case of Sifur the general and his wife and daughter.⁶³ The *Acts* give the following account of the baptism of Vizan and the women Tertia and Manashar :

And he cast it (the oil) upon the head of Vizan, and then upon the heads of these (others)... And he commended Mygdonia to anoint them and he himself anointed Vizan. And after he had anointed them, he made them go down into the water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit of holiness. And

59 R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, xlii ff.

60 *The Acts of Judas Thomas* (ed. Wright, AAA II, 166-167).

61 Cf. *Didascalia Apostolorum* III, 12, 2-3 (ed. Funk *Didascalia* I, 208, 210) : Nam et in multis aliis rebus necessarius est locus mulieris diaconissae. Primo cum mulieres in aquam descendunt, a diaconissa oleo unctionis ungendae sunt in aquam descendentes... ac postea, cum tu baptizas vel cum diaconis praecipis baptizare vel presbyteris, diaconissa, ut praediximus, ungat mulieres...

62 *The Acts of Judas Thomas* (ed. Wright, AAA II, 258).

63 *The Acts of Judas Thomas* (ed. Wright, AAA II, 267-268).

after they had been baptized and were come up, he brought bread and the mingled cup And he brake the Eucharist, and gave to Vizan and Tertia, and to Manashar...⁶⁴

Certainly these descriptions of the rites of initiation form a striking and convincing parallel to the order of procedure we recognized in Aphraates. They also serve to enlighten us upon the manner of anointing, which the Persian Sage does not mention, but which he may well have known. Apparently the heads of the *baptizandi* were anointed first by the celebrant, who then commissioned women, when available, to anoint the bodies of the women, while he or some other man anointed the bodies of the men. This practice is also attested to by the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, with which Aphraates was quite possibly familiar :⁶⁵

As of old the priests and kings were anointed in Israel, do thou (bishop) in like manner, with the imposition of hand, anoint the head of those who receive baptism, whether of men or women ; and afterwards—whether thou thyself baptize, or thou command the deacons or presbyters to baptize—let a woman deacon, as we have already said, anoint the women.⁶⁶

Theodore of Mopsuestia describes the pre-baptismal anointing as follows :

You draw...nigh unto the holy baptism, and...after you have taken off your garments, you are rightly anointed all over your body with holy Chrism . While you are receiving this anointing, the one who has been found worthy of the honour of the priesthood begins and says : ‘ So-and-so is anointed in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ And then the persons appointed for this service anoint all your body.⁶⁷

In any case, it is reasonably safe to conclude that the head, (forehead) was anointed first, then the entire body.⁶⁸ So far as we can see, there is in

64 *The Acts of Judas Thomas* (ed. Wright, *AAA* II, 289-290).

65 Cf. R. H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum* xviii : “ In the notes to the translation I have cited a number of parallels to the *Didascalia* from the Homilies of the early Syriac writer Aphraates. These, while they are sufficiently close to attract attention, would hardly prove that Aphraates knew the *Didascalia* ; but taken together with two longer passages which are given in the Additional Notes (see pp. 265 f., 269 ff.) they create in my mind a strong impression that he must have known and used our document.”

66 *Didascalia Apostolorum* (ed. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum* 146-147). On the duties of the deaconess at baptism as seen in *Didascalia* cf. A. Kalsbach, *Die altkirchliche Einrichtung der Diakonissen bis zu ihrem Erloschen* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1926) 26-27.

67 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 54).

68 Cf. *The History of John, the Son of Zebedee* (ed. Wright, *AAA* II, 40) : “ And when he had stripped, the holy (man) drew nigh, and took oil in his hand, and made him a cross on his forehead, and anointed his whole body, and brought him nigh to the cistern...” Narsai, *Homily XXII, On Baptism* (ed. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* 44-45) : “ He calls the King’s servants by their names and causes them to stand (forth) ; and he makes them to pass one by one, and marks their faces with the brand of oil...The three names he recites, together with (the rubbing of) the oil upon the whole man ; that hostile demons and vexing passions may not harm him.”

Aphraates, as we have observed, no post-baptismal anointing. In addition to the evidence we have already quoted, we may be permitted to mention here several other testimonies which confirm our conclusion that the *traditio signi* was given before baptism, and, however difficult to explain, indicate that Aphraates and other East Syriac writers knew of no unction after baptism associated with the descent of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁹

First we may observe that Ephraem, who in his *Hymns for the Feast of the Epiphany*⁷⁰ has a great deal to say about baptism, mentions only one anointing, and that before the immersion. This order is particularly well brought out by the arrangement and subject-matter of Hymn III (*Christus et oleum*) which treats of the chrism, and Hymn IV (*Descendite, fratres obsignate*), which is concerned with the descent into the baptismal waters. It is clear, too, from Ephraem's language that the chrism precedes the water :

Christus et oleum simul convenerunt Oleum exterius, Christus vero interius unguunt agnos novos et spirituales, gregem scilicet cujus duplex est decus; concipitur enim ex oleo et nascitur ex aqua.⁷¹

That the order—anointing, baptism, Eucharist was familiar to Ephraem is evident from these words :

Quando purificabatur leprosus sacerdos oleo eum ungebat, et ad fontem adducebat. Transiit figura, advenit veritas. Ecce oleo obsignamini; in batismo perficimini; gregi Christi commiscemini ejus eorpoire nutrimini.⁷²

The *History of John, the Son of Zebedee* gives an account of the baptism of several heathen priests, who are anointed, then baptized, and,

69 Cf. J. Coppens, *Les impositions des mains et les rites connexes dans le Nouveau Testament et dans l'église ancienne* (Paris, 1925) 281. In attempting to prove from Syriac documents the existence of a distinction between baptism and confirmation, this author says: "Signalons enfin...l'importance que les *Actes de Thomas* accordent, même dans leur rédaction catholique, au rite de l'onction, et rapprochons de ces descriptions apocryphes les documents syriens qui semblent attester, d'après Connolly, une onction de confirmation même avant la réception de l'ablution." It is interesting for us to note that, even in putting forth so unusual an hypothesis as that of confirmation before baptism, which, incidentally, we do not find in Connolly, Coppens makes no attempt to show that in the cases he mentioned there was any post-baptismal anointing at all. Cf. also B. Welte, *Die postbaptismale Salbung: ihr symbolischer Gehalt und ihre sakramentale Zugehörigkeit nach den Zugehörigkeit der alten Kirche* (Freiburg in Breisgau, 1939) 25: "Ostsyrien durfte der einzige bedeutende Teil der Kirche sein, in welchem es vielleicht im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert eine Liturgie gab, die keine postbaptismale Salbung kennt." Cf. also H. Elfers, *Die Kirchenordnung Hippolyts von Rom*, 143-144.

70 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* I-XV (ed. Lamy I, 6-144).

71 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* III, 1 (ed. Lamy I, 28, 30). For a discussion of the baptismal symbolism of Christ as the Good Shepherd and the newly baptized as the sheep of His flock, cf. J. Quasten, "Das Bild des Guten Hirten in den altchristlichen Baptisterien und in den Taufkirchen des Ostens und Westens," *Pisculi, Franz Joseph Solger dargeboten* (Münster in Westfalen, 1939) 220-244.

72 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* III, 17 (ed. Lamy I, 38). Cf. also VIII, 22 (ed. Lamy I, 90): *Estis omnes illo igne per oleum uncti, per aquam induti, per panem refecti, per vinum potati...* Concerning passages in Ephraem sometimes cited as proof that he knew a post-baptismal anointing, cf. B. Welte, *Die postbaptismale Salbung* 26; 39; 90, n. 36.

after a great multitude have been baptized, “partake of the body and blood of the Messiah.”⁷³ In the story of the baptism of Rabbula, the bishop of Edessa (411–435 A. D.), we read that Rabbula, on his conversion, went to Palestine to be baptized in the Jordan :—

He persuaded the priests, and repeated before them the faith. And they anointed him, and baptized him... But when he had been communicated with the holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, and had been fully initiated in the whole divine mystery, he returned to his own city.⁷⁴

Connolly believes that this account is idealized—“The Syriac writer taking the baptismal rite with which he was familiar at Edessa as the basis of his description.”⁷⁵ There is also extant a Syriac account of the baptism of Constantine which tells how the font is blessed, the Emperor anointed with oil, and then baptized, whereupon the bishop says to him: “Now that thou art pardoned by the living waters, come and enjoy the supper of the King’s Son.” He then gives him Holy Communion.⁷⁶

Less than one hundred years after Aphraates, Narsai, who later moved to Nisibis, had begun his work in Edessa,⁷⁷ and his testimony is valuable as witnessing to the East Syriac liturgical practices of his time. Two of his homilies, the twenty-first and the twenty-second, Narsai devotes to a description and explanation of the rite of baptism. R. H. Connolly, who has given us an English translation of the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai, discusses Homilies Twenty-one and Twenty-two in his introduction, where he says :

On the contrary, when the contents of the Homilies are examined in the light of this evidence (that the post-baptismal *sigillum* is frequently omitted), three points become apparent : (1) that the two Homilies are complementary ; (2) that no. XXII should stand before no. XXI ; (3) that no post-baptismal anointing is contemplated at all.

In no. XXII the writer clearly begins at the very beginning of his rite. He speaks of the renunciation of Satan, the confession of faith, the sponsor who vouches for the sincerity of him who is to

73 *The History of John, the Son of Zebedee* (ed. Wright, AAA II, 54-55).

74 *The Life of Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa* (ed. J. Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni, Balaci Siorumque Opera Selecta* [Oxford, 1865] 165). The English translation is from R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* xliv.

75 R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* xliv.

76 *Homily on the Baptism, of Constantine* (ed. J. Overbeck, *op. cit.*, 355 ff.). Although in the late paper MS used by Overbeck this homily is ascribed to Ephraem, it was probably written by Jacob of Serugh. Cf. R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* xliv-xlv. Cf. also F. J. Dolger, “Die Taufe Konstantins und ihre Probleme,” *Konstantin der Grosse und seine Zeit* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1913) 400-401. Cf. also A. L. Frothingham, Jr., *L’omelia de Sarug sul battesimo di Costantino imperatore pubblicata, tradotta, od annotata*. [Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei: Anno 280 (1882-1883): serie terza: Memorie della classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche. Volume VIII. (Rome, 1883) 167-242].

77 R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* ix. See the next chapter (Editor)

be baptized, the latter's kneeling down with a piece of sackcloth about him, the blessing of the oil, the signing with oil on the forehead of the catechumen in the name of the Trinity, and the anointing, immediately afterwards, of his whole body. This anointing and its effects are spoken of in the most solemn terms and dwelt on at great length; but there is no account of the water of baptism. No. XXI, on the other hand, has no account of any anointing at all, nor of any of the earlier rites described in no. XXII; it gives a description of the ceremony of the water which is exactly parallel to that of the oil in no. XXII, and then passes straight on to give a brief account of the Liturgy which follows, at which the newly baptized receive the Holy Eucharist for the first time.⁷⁸

In short, the rite described by Narsai coincides to a remarkable degree with the ritual we have seen in various other East Syriac sources. All contain in general outline the order which we find in Aphraates—anointing, baptism, Eucharist. The manner of anointing, although only intimated by Aphraates, seems to have been fairly uniform. The forehead was first anointed in the form of a cross, and then the whole body was rubbed with oil. Thus it seems that we have found through at least three centuries of East Syriac literature ample confirmation of our conclusion that the *traditio signi* in the baptismal ritual of Aphraates was the pre-baptismal anointing, and that the three principal members of his rite of initiation—"traditio signi, cum baptismo...benedictiones consecrationis"⁷⁹ were simply the three important features of the East Syriac ceremony of initiation of the time—the anointing, the immersion and the Eucharist.

(b) *The Blessing of the Baptismal Water*

The Demonstrations of Aphraates afford substantial evidence that the baptismal rite of the East Syrian Church of his time included a blessing or consecration of the baptismal water. In his Sixth Demonstration, "On the Sons of the Covenant," the Persian Sage has this to say:

A baptismo enim accepimus Spiritum Christi; et eadem hora qua Spiritum invocant sacerdotes, aperit caelum et descendit, aquis incubat, eumque induunt qui baptizantur. Ab omnibus enim de corpore natis Spiritus abest, donec ad aquae regenerationem accedant; tunc accipiunt Spiritum Sanctum.⁸⁰

In this passage Aphraates speaks clearly of an invocation by the priests of the "Spirit," of the "Spirit of Christ," Who descends from heaven, "hovers over the waters," and is put on as a garment by those who are baptized in these waters.⁸¹ Such an invocation of the Spirit on the part

⁷⁸ R. H. Connolly, *op. cit.*, xlv-xlvii.

⁷⁹ Aphraates, *Demonstratio XII—De Paschate* (pS I, 538).

⁸⁰ Aphraates, *Demonstratio VI—De Monachis* (PS I, 291).

⁸¹ Cf. B. Neunheuser, "De Benedictione Aquae Baptismalis," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* XLIV (1930) 371,

of the priests can be nothing other than the consecratory prayer said over the baptismal waters.^{81a} That this *epiclesis*⁸² was not identical with the formula of baptism is clear from the fact, which we shall see later, that the sacrament itself was administered in the "three glorious and praiseworthy names of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."⁸³

In an earlier chapter⁸⁴ we treated the passage quoted from the Sixth Demonstration from the viewpoint of Christ's presence in the baptismal water, and we saw there a relation to the Pauline concept of putting on Christ. Here we are concerned more with the blessing whereby the divinity is called down, and the water is sanctified and made capable of a spiritual regeneration. The essence of this blessing, as we shall see, is an invocation of the Deity, Who communicates to the waters of baptism the power of sanctification, the capability of begetting children of God. In the early centuries of the Church this communication 'of life-giving power was often conceived of as being effected by the very presence of the Deity in the baptismal font.⁸⁵

Since the ideas associated by Aphraates with the blessing of the font afford an admirable summation of the concepts and notions of earlier Fathers, and show a striking similarity to those of his contemporaries, it will be interesting for us to compare his thought on the subject with the testimony of other ecclesiastical writers.

For Aphraates' words, "eadem hora qua Spiritum invocant sacerdotes, aperit caelum et descendit, aquis incubat...," we find a remarkable precedent in this explanation of Tertullian :

Sed ea satis erit praecerpisse, in quibus et ratio baptismi recognoscitur, primum illa, qua iam tunc etiam ipso habitu prae-notabant ad baptismi figuram dei spiritum, qui ab initio supervectabatur super aquas, super aquas intinctorum moraturum. Sanctum autem utique super sanctum ferebatur et ab eo, quod superferebatur id quod ferebat sanctitatem mutuabatur...Ita de sancto sanctificata natura aquarum et ipsa sanctificare concepit...Igitur omnes aquae de pristina originis praerogativa sacramentum sanctificationis consequuntur invocato deo. Supervenit enim statim spiritus de caelis et aquis superest sanctificans eas de semetipso, et ita sanctificatae vim sanctificandi combibunt.⁸⁶

81a For the later development of this prayer cf. H. Scheidt, *Die Taufwas-serweihegebete im Sinne vergleichender Liturgieforschung untersucht* (Münster in Westfalen, 1935).

82 On this concept of *epiclesis* cf. O. Casel, "Zur Epikles," *JL* III (1923) 100-102, and "Neue Beiträge zur Epiklesenfrage," *JL* IV (1924) 169-178.

83 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—Da Acino* (PS II, 134). Cf. below p. 131.

84 Cf. above pp. 43-49.

85 Cf. B. Neunhäuser, "De Benedictione Aquae Baptismalis," 412: Si ergo Patres benedictionem aquae baptismalis considerant tamquam primam partem sacramenti baptismi, revera et ritus ita se exhibet: Per invocationem nominis sui *Deus praesens fit*, et secundum preces in hac invocatione expressas et secundum ritus qui invocationem proseguuntur, ita se intimo coniungit cum aquis, ut aquae fecundentur; immo fecundae sint *ipsa Dei praesentia*.

86 Tertullian, *De Baptismo* 4 (CSEL 20, 203-204 Reifferscheid-Wissowa).

Indeed these two accounts of the invocation and descent of the "Spirit" agree almost word for word. Obviously, both Aphraates and Tertullian associate the coming of the Spirit upon the baptismal waters with the Spirit of God moving over the waters at the creation of the world. Again, both attribute to the Spirit the sanctification of the waters, Tertullian in so many words, and Aphraates when he says that those who are baptized in the waters put on the Spirit. Origen, too, seems to have had the picture of creation before his mind.⁸⁷

Origen conceives of the Spirit as moving over the waters of the font much the same as He moved over the newly-created waters in the beginning.⁸⁸ We find still another parallel to this thought in Ephraem :

In principio spiritus foecunditatis movebavit aquis ; et illae conceperunt pepereruntque dracones, pisces et aves. Spiritus sanctus incubavit aquis baptismi aquae pepererunt mysticas aquilas...⁸⁹

Elsewhere Ephraem discloses the deacons and the bishop as the instruments of the descent of the Holy Spirit :

Sacerdotium isti baptismali alvo dum parit, suum praestat ministerium Illabente et advolante Spiritu Sancto super fontis baptismalis undas corona Levitarum eum circumdat, praesidente ministerio sacro Pontifice.⁹⁰

87 Origen, *In Ioannem* VI, 33 (GCS Origen IV. 143 Preuschen).

88 Cf. Ambrose, *De mysteriis* III, 9 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 117-118). In speaking of various figures of baptism, he says : Considera autem quam vetus mysterium sit, in ipsius mundi praefiguratum origine. In principio ipso, quando fecit deus caelum et terram, *spiritus*, inquit, *superferebatur super aquas*. Qui superferebatur super aquas, non operabatur super aquas ? Sed quid dicam : operabatur ? quod ad praesentiam spectat. superferebatur. Non operabatur, qui superferebatur ? Cognosce, quia operabatur in illa mundi fabrica, quando tibi dicit propheta : *Verbo domini caeli firmati sunt, et spiritu oris eius omnis virtus eorum*. Utrumque prophctico subnixum est testimonio, et quia superferebatur et quia operabatur. Quia superferebatur, Moyses dicit ; quia operabatur, David testificatur.

89 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* VIII, 16 (ed. Lamy I. 86). Cf. Narsai, *Homily XXI, On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism* (ed. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* 49-50) : "He (the priest blessing the baptismal water) also imitates the fashion (of Him) that brought into being the world ; and he makes a voice to be heard like unto that which cried out in the world in the beginning. Like the Creator he also commands the common water, and instead of light there dawns from it the power of life... That Command which 'said, and there were made' things rational and senseless : the same commands by him, and men become a new being. That word which the waters heard, and brought forth creeping things : the same they hear from the mouth of the priest, and bring forth men. Greater is the fruit they bring forth now than that (former), by how much rational man is of more account than dumb things"

90 Ephraem, *Hymni de Virginitate* VII, 8 (ed. Rahmani, 23-24). Cf. Ambrose, *De mysteriis* III, 8 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 117) : Quid vidisti ? Aquas untiue, sed non solas : levitas illie ministrantes, summum sacerdotem interrogantem et consecrantem,

From these and other testimonies,⁹¹ it is clear that Aphraates, in describing the descent of the Spirit onto the waters of the baptismal font at the invocation of the priests,⁹² was merely giving expression to a concept familiar to Tertullian almost two centuries earlier and found frequently in the writings of the fathers.

Besides this power of sanctification conferred upon the waters of baptism by the descent of the spirit, Aphraates attributes to the presence of the Deity the effect of transforming the baptismal font, as it were, into a womb, whence men are born again, for immediately after describing the descent of the Holy Spirit he speaks of the "regeneration of the water." And elsewhere, speaking to the priests, he addresses them as "Nuntii Christi, praedicatores veri, qui (liberos) ex aqua generatis."⁹³ Obviously, this figure of speech would have no weight unless the font were conceived of as the womb of the new birth.

That this concept was not a strange one in Aphraates' time, and even before,⁹⁴ we see, for instance, from the *Euchologion* of Serapion. At the prayer of the blessing of the waters we read :

This plea that the Word may make the waters "capable of procreation" is simply another way of asking that by the coming of the Spirit the baptismal waters might become the *lavacrum regenerationis*. Ephraem speaks of the "baptismal womb" : "Sacerdotium isti baptismali alvo dum parit, suum praestat ministerium."⁹⁶ Elsewhere he expresses a

91 Cf. Cyprian *Epistula* LXXIV, 5 (CSEL 3, 2, 803 Hartel) : Peccata enim purgare et hominem sanctificare aqua sola non potest, nisi habeat et spiritum sanctum *Epistula* LXX, 1 (767 Hartel) : Oportet vero mundari et sanctificari aquam prius a sacerdote, ut possit baptismo suo peccata hominis qui baptizatur ablueri. *The History of John, The Son of Zebedee* ed Wright, AAA II, 53) : "And when the font was prepared, the procurator arose, and prayed, and said : 'Lord God Almighty, let Thy Spirit of holiness come, and rest and dwell upon the oil and upon the water ; and let them be bathed and purified from uncleanness ; and let them receive the Spirit of holiness through baptism .' " Ba il, *De Spiritu Sancto* XV, 35 (PG 32, 129). Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto* 1, 6 (PL 16, 752 B) : Si qua ergo in aqua gratio, non ex natura aquae, sed ex praesentia est Spiritus Sancti. Gregory of Nyssa, *Adversus eos qui differunt baptismum* (PG 46, 420) : Speaking of the water prepared for baptism as "my Jordan," Gregory says of it. Narsai, *Homily XXI, On the Mysteries of the Church and Baptism* (ed. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* 50 : "With the name of the Divinity, the three Names, he consecrates the water, that it may suffice to accomplish the cleansing of the defiled. The defilement of men he cleanses with water : yet not by the water, but by the power of the name of the Divinity which there lights down. The power of the Divinity dwells in the visible waters, and by the force of His power they dissolve the might of the Evil One and of Death."

92 Cf. Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto* 1, 7 (PL 16, 755) : Descensio sancti Spiritus sacerdotalibus invocatur precibus.

93 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XIV—Exhortatoria* (PS 1, 679) Compare Nursai, *Homily XXI, On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism* (ed. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* 46) : "An invention that had not been the divine nod discovered, that without seed man should beget (children) from the midst of the water."

94 Cyprian, *Ad Donatum* 4 (CCEL 3, 1, 6 Hartel) : Sed postquam undae genetalis auxilio superioris aevi labe deteresa in expiatum pectus ac purum desuper se lumen infudit, postquam caelitus spiritu hausto in novum me hominem nativitas secunda reparavit...

95 Serapion of Thmuis *Euchologion* XIX, 2 (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* II, 180-182).

96 Ephraem, *Hymni de Virginitate* VII, 8 (ed. Rahmani, 23).

notion substantially the same as that of Aphraates: "Illapsus est Spiritus ex alto ut foecundaret . aquas."⁹⁷

Theodore of Mopsuestia is most explicit on this point :

At the time we have indicated, you descend into the water, which has been consecrated by the benediction of the priest, as you are not baptised only with ordinary water, but with the water of the second birth, which cannot become so except through the coming of the Holy Spirit (on it). For this it is necessary that the priest should have beforehand made use of clear words, according to the rite of the priestly service, and asked God that the grace of the Holy Spirit might come on the water and impart to it the power of conceiving that awe-inspiring child and becoming a womb to the sacramental birth.⁹⁸

According to Aphraates, then, the two principal effects of the blessing of the baptismal waters are : (1) the descent of the Deity into the font; and (2) the transformation of the font by the divine power into a womb productive of children of the second birth, who "receive the Holy Spirit."⁹⁹ The invocation is made by the priests.

There is nothing in the Demonstrations to indicate at exactly what point in the baptismal rite this blessing of the waters took place. The Apostolic Constitutions place it immediately before the act of baptism.¹⁰⁰ In Pseudo-Dionysius, the bishop begins the anointing of the baptismal candidate, and then, while the priests anoint the whole body, he proceeds to the blessing of the water, which is followed immediately by the immersion.¹⁰¹ Aphraates says nothing whatever of any ceremonies which may have accompanied the blessing of the font, such as the immersion of a wooden cross in the waters,¹⁰² or the casting of oil upon them.¹⁰³

97Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* VI, 1 (ed. Lamy I, 54). Compare Narsai, *Homily XXI, On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism* (ed. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* 46): "This is a wonder, and, as we may say, full of astonishment, that the womb of the water should conceive and bring forth babes full grown."

98Theopore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 54-55). Cf also p. 56.

99Aphraates, *Demonstratio VI—De Monachis* (PS I, 291).

100*Constitutiones Apostolorum* VII, 42-44 (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* I, 448 and 450). The order cited here is anointing, blessing of the water and baptism.

101Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* II, 2, 7 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 282-283).

102Ephraem, *Hymni de Virginitate* XV, 6 (ed. Rahmani, 45): O te beatum, Simeon Petre O beatos et greges tibi traditos! Quam aucti sunt ex eo quod super aquas infixisti crucem, cujus dilectione flagrant es oves ecce pariant cujuslibet speciei natos virgines sanctosque

103Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* II, 2, 7 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 282-285). *The History of Joan, the Son of Zebedee* (ed. Wright, *AAA* II, 39): "And when the oil was consecrated, then the holy (man) drew near to the water, and signed it, and said: 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit of holiness, for ever. Amen.'" Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* VIII, 3 (ed. Lamy I, 76): Divina autem Misericordia miscuit per oleum mites suas vires aquis ut infirmus homo, aquis et oleo involutus, stare posset coram suprema Majestate. Cf also *Ritus baptismi apud Nestorianos* in H. Denzinger, *Ritus Orientalium, Coptorum, Syrorum et Armenorum in administrandis sacramentis* I (Wiirzburg, 1863) 373-374; Tum vero sacerdos tollit cornu chrismais, et signat super aquas oleo, quod in ipso cornu est, dicens: "Signantur et sanctificantur aquae istae oleo sancto, ut sint novus sinus, spiritualiter generans per propitiatorium baptismum, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti in saecula. G. Diettrich, *Die nestorianische Tauf liturgie* (Giessen 1903), 39ff.

C. The Immersion

Even in the matter of the actual baptism, Aphraates leaves us to some conjecture. Since our author has mentioned that "priests" invoked the Spirit at the blessing of the water, we may reasonably suppose that they also administered the sacrament of baptism. So far as we can see Aphraates makes no explicit mention, in this connection, of particular duties being assigned to different grades of the clergy. He speaks merely of the *sacerdotes*.¹⁰⁴

We may note, however that Ephraem, who in one place attributes the administration of baptism to the "sacerdotes,"¹⁰⁵ elsewhere mentions a "*corona Levitarum . praesidente ministerio sacro Pontifice*" surrounding the baptismal font.¹⁰⁶ And it is possible that Aphraates knew of such a procedure at solemn baptism, even though his Demonstrations give no direct evidence in support of this hypothesis. The most explicit reference he makes to the ministers of baptism is in his exhortation to priests, whom he addresses as "You messengers of Christ, true preachers, who beget (children) of the water."¹⁰⁷

Theodore of Mopsuestia, although mentioning only one priest as performing the anointing on the forehead¹⁰⁸ and officiating at the actual immersions,¹⁰⁹ refers to other persons, probably deacons, who attend to the minor tasks, such as enrolling the candidates¹¹⁰ and anointing the bodies.¹¹¹ *The Testament of Our Lord Jesus Christ* speaks of bishop, priest and deacon, all having part in the solemn administration of baptism.¹¹² The *Didascalia Apostolorum*, probably known to Aphraates,¹¹³ describes the duties of bishop, priests, deacons and deaconesses in the carrying out of the baptismal rite,¹¹⁴

104Aphraates, *Demonstratio VI—De Monachis* (PS I, 291).

105 Ephraem, *Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae* VI, 10 (ed. Lamy I, 58): *Domus e terra confecta ubi corruit aquis renovari potest; terrenus Adae corpus, quod corruerat in aquis renovatum est. Ecce sacerdotes veluti aedificatores renovarunt corpora vestra.*

106 Ephraem, *Hymni de Virginitate* VII, 8 (ed. Rahmani, 24): *Illabente et advolante Spiritu Sancto super fontis baptismatis undas corona Levitarum eum circumdat, praesidente ministerio sacra Pontifice. Cf. Ambrose, De mysteriis* III, 8 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 117): *Quid vidisti? Aquas utique, sed non solas: levitas illic ministrantes, summum sacerdotem interrogantem et consecrantem.*

107 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XIV—Exhortatoria* (PS I, 679).

108 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 46): "And he (the priest) signs you on your forehead with the holy Christ and says: 'So-and-so is signed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'"

109 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 58): "The priest stands up and approachas his hand, which he places on your head, and says: 'So-and-so is baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' while wearing the aforesaid apparel which he wore when you were on your knees and he signed you on your forehead, and when he consecrated this water."

110 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 24-25): "He, therefore, who is desirous of drawing nigh unto baptism .comes to the Church of God where he is received by a duly appointed person - as there is a habit to register those who draw nigh unto baptism..."

111 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 54): "While you are receiving this anointing, the one who has been found worthy of the honour of the priesthood begins and says...And then the persons appointed for this service anoint all your body."

112 *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi* II, 8 (ed. Rahmani, 127-129).

113 Cf. above p. 16, n 85.

114 *Didascalia Apostolorum* III, 12, 2-3 (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* I, 210).

as do the *Constitutiones Apostolorum*.¹¹⁵ In view of these numerous witnesses to Syrian usage around the time of Aphraates, we might safely say that the lack of absolute clarity in his language describing the ministers of baptism will permit us to presume that the rite of baptism as he knew it was very likely carried out with the cooperation of several ministers, not all necessarily priests, even though he does group them under the general designation of *sacerdotes*.

Aphraates, by his reference to the putting on of the Spirit of Christ,¹¹⁶ implies that the matter of baptism was an immersion in the waters of the font, an impression strengthened by his use of the Old Testament types of the Red Sea and the River Jordan, figures of baptism which could have their full force only under the supposition that the *baptizandi* actually descended into the water.¹¹⁷ That the Trinitarian baptismal formula¹¹⁸ accompanied the immersion we learn from the Twenty-third Demonstration:

O tu qui iuras per caput tuum et mentiris! Si tibi vera sunt tria nomina illa inclita et laudanda Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, super caput tuum commemorata, quanto vitae tuae signum accepisti; si verum tibi est baptisma...¹¹⁹

In an earlier discussion of this passage¹²⁰ we concluded that very likely the words *vitae tuae signum* are here equivalent to "baptism," in which case the clause *si verum tibi est baptisma* is simply a paraphrastic expression of the passage immediately preceding it. The phrase *super caput tuum commemorata* seems to indicate that the words of the form were pronounced by the celebrant, and that there is here no question of an interrogation¹²¹ such as Ambrose describes.¹²²

115 *Constitutiones Apostolorum* III, 16, 3-4 (ed. Funk, *Didascalia* I, 211).

116 Aphraates, *Demonstratio VI—De Monachis* (PS I, 294).

117 Cf. above pp. 50-62.

118 J. Parisot *Aphraatis Demonstrationes* (PS I, liv): Fit autem baptismus cum expressa trium Personarum invocatione. Cf. also P. Schwen, *Afrahat* 91.

119 Aphraates, *Demonstratio XXIII—De Acino* (PS II, 134).

120 Cf. above p. 115.

121 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *On Baptism* (ed. Mingana, *Commentary* 62): "The priest places his hand on your head and says 'of the Father,' and with these words he causes you to immerse yourself in water, while you obediently follow the sign of the hand of the priest and immediately, at his words and at the sign of his hand, immerse yourself in water. By the downward inclination of your head you show as by a hint your agreement and your belief that it is from the Father that you will receive the benefits of baptism, according to the words of the priest. If you were allowed to speak at that time, you would have said: 'Amen.'...You are, however, not allowed to speak at the time of baptism, as it behoves you to receive the renewal through the Sacrament, when you are baptized, in silence and fear..." Cf. also Narsai, *Homily XXI, On the Mysteries of the Church and on Baptism* (ed. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* 51): "Of the name of the Divinity he (the priest) makes mention, and he says three times: 'Father and Son and Holy Spirit, one equality.' The names he repeats with the voice openly, and thus he says: 'Such a one is baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit.'...Three times he (the one being baptized) bows his head at Their names..."

122 Ambrose, *De Sacramentis* II, 7, 20 (ed. J. Quasten, *Monumenta* 149): Interrogatus es: Credis in deum patrem omnipotentem? Dixisti: Credo, et mersisti, hoc est, sepultus es. Iterum interrogatus es: Credis in dominum nostrum Iesum Christum et in crucem eius? Dixisti: Credo, et mersisti; ideo et Christo es consequutus;...Tertio interrogatus es: Credis et in spiritum sanctum? Dixisti: Credo, tertio mersisti ut multiplicem lapsum superioris aetatis absolveret trina confessio.

Four Fathers on Baptism

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The Purpose of this study is to examine briefly four works of the Syriac fathers on baptism, the baptismal instructions of St. John Chrysostom, the Hymns on the Epiphany attributed to St. Ephraem Syrus, the Mystagogical Catecheses of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and the Liturgical Homilies of Narsai. I have chosen these works because of the preeminent positions of their presumed authors in the Development of the thought and practice of the Syrian Church. My purpose will not be to deal with the details of the rites themselves, that both others and I have done elsewhere, but to see what they say about the meaning of the rites, and particularly to examine the figures, metaphors, and types which they use to explain the initiatory rites to their readers.

I believe that there is in these four writers a consistent pattern of liturgy, and of theological interpretation, a pattern of which the East Syrian tradition is the heir. We have been all too accustomed to impose Western or Byzantine standards of interpretation on the rites of the Syrian Church, and we need to hear again the voices of the great Syrian doctors expounding their own liturgy of Christian Initiation. I have dealt only with the baptismal rite, and not with the baptismal eucharist which was an integral part of that rite, since the subject of eucharistic theology is too vast for any consideration here.

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

In 1961 *Anglican Theological Review* published my attempted reconstruction of the baptismal liturgy known to St. John Chrysostom, on the basis of Antoine Wenger's then recently published edition of eight new baptismal catecheses.¹ Since then Thomas M. Finn has produced a much more extensive study² and Paul W. Harkins has translated into English

1 Mitchell, L. L., "The Baptismal Rite in Chrysostom" in ATR 43 (1961) 397-403; Wenger, A., *Jean Chrysostome: Huit Catéchèses Baptismales* (Sources Chrétiennes 51) Paris, 1957. Homilies from the Stavronikita series edited by Wenger will be cited as St.

2 Finn, T. M., *The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instructions of John Chrysostom* (Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 15), Washington, 1957.

not only Wenger's series of homilies but also those published by Papadopoulos-Keraemeus in *Varia Graeca Sacra*.³ My purpose here is not to go back over this ground, but to consider Chrysostom's explanations of the rite he describes, and particularly, the types and figures in which he expounds it.

The first figure which Chrysostom uses of baptism is "spiritual marriage," and he addresses the newly enrolled *photizomenoi* as "a bride about to be led to the holy nuptial chamber."⁴ He compares the complete change in life style which the bride underwent in her culture with the change which baptism will work in the life of the catechumen. As the bridegroom comes at night to bring the bride back to his own house, so the Lord comes at night to calim the initiate for his own.⁵ Commenting on Psalm 45: 10-11, Chrysostom identifies the "father's house" which the Psalmist urges the bride to forget with the old life of sinfulness and idolatry which the catechumen must put away.⁶

The figure loses something of its relevance to us whose customs of marriage differ so widely from those Chrysostom knew but in a society in which the bride had never seen her intended husband until he arrived at her house on the wedding night, the "mystery" in her leaving her father and mother and cleaving only to her husband "suddenly in a single moment" is a striking analogy for the new life which the Christian begins in the font. In a passage reminiscent of Ezekiel 16, Chrysostom contrasts the love of the Bridegroom with the depravity of the bride:

He came to her who was about to become his bride and found her naked and disgracing herself. He threw around her a clean robe, whose brightness and glory no word or mind will be able to describe. How shall I say it? He has thrown himself around us as a garment: *For all you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*. Suddenly the beggar and outcast has become a queen and stands beside the King.⁷

Chrysostom then passes over into a description of the union of Christ and the Church into which the neophyte is born. He refers his description of her beautiful clothing to the verse, "All glorious is the princess within,"⁸ to show that he is not speaking of outward things. He also speaks of the dowry gifts which Christ bestows upon his bride, citing Ephesians

3 Harkins, P. W. *St. John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions* (Ancient Christian Writers 31) Westminster, Md., 1963; Papadopoulos-Keraemeus, A., *Varia Graeca Sacra*, St. Petersburg, Russia, 1909. The homilies from this series will be cited as P. K. For the convenience of the reader, page numbers in Harkins' translation, which includes both series, will follow the citation with the symbol H.

4 St. 1: 1, 3 (H. 23).

5 P. K. 3: 1 (H. 161)

6 St. 1: 6-10 (H. 125F)

7 P. K. 3: 6-7 (H. 162F)

8 Psalm 45: 12

5 : 25-7, to show that it is by the bath of baptism that he takes away the former ugliness, and cleansing the bride with his own precious blood, presents her to himself in the beauty of regeneration.⁹

Chrysostom also speaks of the enrollment for baptism as an enlistment in military service,¹⁰ and refers to the catechumens as "new soldiers of Christ."¹¹ He describes the armor which Christ provides for combat against the incorporeal powers: the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit.¹² He does not really develop this idea, however, and speaks more often of the Christian as an athlete arrayed for combat in the spiritual arena.

The pre-baptismal anointing and signing with the cross mark the candidate for baptism as a spiritual combatant,¹³ just as a wrestler before his combat is rubbed down with oil. The catechumens, he says, are in a wrestling school, where they practice and exercise, but with baptism the contest itself begins:

These thirty days are like the practice and bodily exercises in some wrestling school. Let us learn during these days how we may gain the advantage over that wicked demon. After baptism we are going to strip for the combat against him; he will be our opponent in the boxing bout and the fight.¹⁴

The roots of this idea are clearly in the Pauline epistles, and it is a theme to which Chrysostom continually returns.

Another striking figure is that of the smelting furnace in which God melts down our corrupted nature, and "lets the grace of the Spirit fall upon it instead of flames." The old nature is broken down and a new man produced.¹⁵ Chrysostom says clearly that the Holy Spirit is the sacramental agent of baptism, "For it is not a man who does what is done, but it is the grace of the Spirit which sanctifies the nature of the water and touches your head together with the hand of the priest."¹⁶ His figure of the smelting furnace fed with the fire of the Spirit speaks eloquently of the personal action of God the Holy Spirit in the baptismal water.

Chrysostom follows this figure by a reference to the breaking of the potter's vessel in Psalm 2.¹⁷ His point is that the potter's vessel is of unfired

9 St. 1: 16-17 (H. 29); P. K. 3: 9-10 (H. 163F)

10 St. 1: 1 (H. 23); 1: 8 (H. 25-); 2: 1 (H. 43)

11 St. 1: 18 (H. 30); 1: 40 (H. 39); 4: 6 (H. 68)

12 St. 3: 11 (H. 59)

13 St. 2: 23 (H. 51F)

14 P. K. 1: 29 (H. 140F), cf. St. 3: 8 (H. 58)

15 P. K. 1: 22 (H. 138F)

16 St. 2: 10 (H. 47)

17 P. K. 1: 23-26 (H. 139F)

clay and can be remoulded in to a different shape, whereas a vessel that had been fired would be irremediably destroyed. It is, of course, the action of the Holy Spirit in baptism which fires us, but Chrysostom's point is that even then God's power is great enough to lead us back through repentance to our former state. He does not explain how God forgives post-baptismal sin, but he states clearly that he does.¹⁸

Perhaps the best statement of Chrysostom's view of the sacramental efficacy of baptism is this passage :

After this anointing the priest makes you go down into the sacred waters, burying the old man and at the same time raising up the new, who is created in the image of his Creator. It is at this moment that, through the words and the hand of the priest, the Holy Spirit descends upon you. Instead of the man who descended into the water, a different man comes forth, one who has put off the old garment of sin and has put on the royal robe.¹⁹

He goes on to explain that it is not only the priest who touches the head of the candidate, "but also the right hand of Christ."²⁰ In an earlier passage in the same homily he says, "It is the grace of the Spirit which touches your head together with the hand of the priest."²¹ His point is that the priest is only a minister. "The one fulfilling all things is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the undivided Trinity. It is faith in this Trinity which gives the remission from sin; it is this confession which gives to us the gift of filial adoption."²²

This is the very heart of Chrysostom's theology of baptism. It is the action of the Triune God, joining us to the likeness of the death and resurrection of Christ so that we become new men, filled with the Holy Spirit, united with Christ, children of the Father. The teaching of St. Paul in Romans 6 : 5-8 underlies what Chrysostom is saying, and all of his figures converge on seeing the divine gift of the heavenly washing as the passage from death to life. "We arise", he boldly proclaims, "at the same moment that we are buried."²³

Chrysostom also compares baptism to the Exodus from Egypt. This is, of course, a patristic common place. The figure is developed as an allegory. Egypt is the world of sin the Christian leaves behind. The demons, like the host of Pharaoh, are drowned in the water; slavery is ended; and we are led by the new Moses, not into the desert, but into heaven.

18 St. 3: 23 (H 63)

19 St. 2: 25 (H. 52) We find the same idea in St. 2: 11 and P. K. 1: 20; 2: 10

20 St. 2: 26 (H. 52)

21 St. 2: 10 (H. 47) cf. P. K. 2: 12-14

22 St. 2: 26 (H. 52F)

23 P. K. 2: 12 (H 152)

Moses' face was veiled from the Israelites, but we see the glory of God in the face of Christ. Moses fed them with manna and water from the rock. Christ feeds us on the food of eternal life.²⁴

Of greater interest is the passage which precedes this, in which Chrysostom comments on St. John 19 : 34. He calls the water and blood which came from the side of Christ symbols of Baptism and the Mysteries. Amazingly he says, "He did not say : There came out blood and water, but first water came forth and then blood, since first comes baptism and then the mysteries." The accepted reading of the Gospel text is, nonetheless, "*aima kai hudor*." Wenger, in his notes, comments that Chrysostom has been confused by 1 John 5: 6, but goes on to note that he cites the words in this same inverted order in his major commentary on St. John's Gospel.²⁵

But for Chrysostom the symbolism of the Gospel sacraments streaming from the side of the dying Christ suggests a still greater mystery.

It is from both of these that the Church is sprung through the bath or regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, through baptism and the mysteries. But the symbols of baptism and the mysteries come from the side of Christ. It is from his side, therefore, that Christ formed his Church. Just as he formed Eve from the side of Adam.²⁶

As God created Eve from the side of the sleeping Adam, so from the side of the new Adam sleeping in death, he brings forth the Church, constituted by the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist. Baptism, therefore, is for Chrysostom constitutive of the Church.

We may now proceed from the consideration of Chrysostom's theology of baptism to an examination of his interpretation of the different actions of the rite.

We have already seen that he likens the enrollment of the *photizomenoi* to enlistment in Christ's army and to be betrothal to the heavenly Bridegroom. The enrollment is followed by daily instruction and exorcism.²⁷ For the exorcism the catechumens stand naked and barefoot, with outstretched arms.²⁸ This is because we are the booty and spoils of war. We are the devil's captives, And are about to be freed by Christ. The King has conquered the devil in battle and we are now led into his captivity, which is a passage from slavery to freedom. Those to be exorcized therefore appear as captives, acknowledging the sovereignty of God, into whose control they have been brought. The purpose of the exorcisms is to banish the devil who has held them captive, and to prepare the hearts of the catechumens for the royal presence.

24 St. 3: 23-27 (H. 63-5)

25 Wenger, *op. cit.*, p. 160, n. 1

26 St. 3: 16-17 (H. 61f)

27 St. 2: 12 (H. 47)

28 St. 2: 14 (H. 48); P. K. 2: 14 (H. 153f)

The catechumen, according to Chrysostom, is truly defenseless. His slavery to the devil has been ended, but he has not yet been brought under the Lordship of Christ. He is, in fact, "a sheep without a seal," a barren and deserted inn, which must be prepared to become a royal palace.²⁹ Chrysostom uses the term *seal* (*sphragis*), as Ephraem does, to designate the pre-baptismal anointing and signing with the cross, and the reference here clearly is to the seal of the King which the sheep will receive in baptism.

He speaks of the baptism as taking place at the celebration of the Pascha, so that the neophytes may be a part of the victorious King's triumphal procession, and also be partners in his crucifixion and resurrection.³⁰

The first act of the actual baptism takes place on Good Friday at the ninth hour, the hour in which the good thief entered paradise, and at which the darkness which had covered the earth during the crucifixion was dissolved.³¹ It is at this hour that the renunciation of Satan and the adherence to Christ takes place. This is described as a contract, the wedding contract with the Bridegroom.³² It marks the catechumen's actual change of sides in the cosmic warfare, and is therefore also his entry into the spiritual arena. The adherence is immediately followed by the anointing with "spiritual myron." The priest anoints the forehead, placing the seal, that is the sign of the cross.³³ The "sheep without a seal" has now passed into the ownership of the Good Shepherd, and is sealed with the cross, the mark of the King whose service he has now entered.

There is no indication in the text that the Holy Spirit is given by the sealing with myron. It is called *pneumatikon*, spiritual, but Chrysostom always speaks of the Spirit as being given at the actual moment of baptism. The anointing is to prepare the athlete for his combat, and the bride for the wedding.³⁴ The use of the perfumed oil is thereby identified with his figures of baptism. The sign of the Cross is a sure defence against the wrath of the devil, who cannot look upon it.³⁵ It is therefore the chief weapon of the Christian warrior/athlete,

The following events are described as taking place "in the full darkness of night."³⁶ Presumably there was the lapse of a day between the renunciation and the actual baptism, since we know that the baptism took place at the Pascha, but the text is somewhat less than clear on this point. The catechumens strip off their clothes and their bodies are completely

29 P. K. 3: 16 (H. 155)

30 P. K. 2: 7 (H. 150)

31 P. K. 3: 19 (H. 166)

32 P. K. 3: 26 (H. 168)

33 St. 2; 23 (H. 51f) P. K. 3: 27 (H. 169) Harkins translates *sphragis* as "the sign [of the Cross]" in St. 2 which obscures the reference to the seal. P. K. 3 uses the word *stauron*, and so he is correct that the outward form of the *sphragis* was the sign of the Cross.

34 P. K. 3: 27 (H. 169)

35 *ibid.*, and St. 2: 23 (H. 52)

36 St. 2: 24 (H. 52)

anointed.³⁷ The continuation of the anointing begun with the signing of the forehead links the following baptism with the preceding renunciation and adherence. Chrysostom introduces the image of Adam and Eve naked and not ashamed in Eden as a type of this removal of clothing. It is symbolic of a return to innocence and of the new creation about to be accomplished, as man stands once again naked and unashamed before his Maker. "Do not feel shame here," he warns, "There can be no serpent here, but Christ initiating you into the regeneration that comes from the water and the Spirit."³⁸ The actual baptismal washing follows at once, and

As soon as they come forth from those sacred water, all who are present embrace them, greet them, kiss them, rejoice with them, and congratulate them, because those who were heretofore slaves and captives have suddenly become free men and sons and have been invited to the royal table.³⁹

The baptismal washing completes the initiatory act and the neophyte is welcomed into the eucharistic fellowship of the Church with the kiss of peace, symbolic of the joining of souls in Christ, so that the Christian community became, like its apostolic model, of one heart and one soul.⁴⁰

Wenger, in commenting upon this rite mentions the obvious fact that it does not contain a post-baptismal consignation. It should be clear, however, that in the context of the Syrian baptismal liturgy this is normal, rather than exceptional.⁴¹ The *sphragis* is given before baptism. The imposition of hands occurs at the moment of baptism. The Spirit is given in baptism "through the words and hand of the priest," so that the neophytes are temples of the Holy Spirit. They are partners of the new Adam, reborn into the new humanity, as athletes and soldiers for Christ, in whose death and resurrection they now share.

EPHRAEM SYRUS

THE HYMNS ON THE EPIPHANY

Ephraem Syrus has not left us a set of catechetical lectures like those of Chrysostom or Theodore of Mopsuestia, but he has expounded his understanding of baptism in his sermons and especially in his hymns. Edmund Beck, O. S. B., the distinguished editor of much of Ephraem's work, contributed to the first volume of *L'Orient Syrien* an article "Le Baptême chez S. Ephrem," which examined the baptismal teaching of the great Syriac

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ P. K. 3: 28-9 (H. 170)

³⁹ St. 2: 27 (H. 53)

⁴⁰ P. K. 3: 32 (H. 171)

⁴¹ Wenger, *op. cit.* p. 99f. This question has been much discussed, most recently in Siman, E. P., *L'Experience de l'Esprit par l'Eglise D'après la Tradition Syrienne d'Antioche*, (Theologie Historique 15) Paris, 1971, p. 88f.

doctor.¹ There would be little profit in attempting to repeat or improve upon his work, which the interested reader may consult directly. Dom Beck, however, excludes the hymns On the Epiphany from his discussion, because he is uncertain of their genuineness, and his desire is to make clear the teaching of Ephraem himself, not that of the Syrian Church.² We shall therefore content ourselves with looking at the explanations of baptism given in the hymns On the Epiphany,³ without entering into the question of their authenticity, since it is precisely the teaching of the Syrian Church with which we are concerned.

It is clear, not only from these hymns, but from the other works of Ephraem, that the liturgy of baptism consists principally of a pre-baptismal chrismation (*rushma*) and the baptismal washing. Hymn 3 sings of the chrism and Hymn 4 of the washing.

Ephraem's 7th hymn On Virginity also sings of the chrism, and is in many ways parallel to Epiphany 3 in content, although not in structure.⁴ Virg. 7: 5 says, "With visible oil is painted the hidden image of the hidden king;" Epiph. 3: 1, "The secret with the visible is mingled: the chrism anoints visibly—Christ seals secretly." Clearly the anointing is seen as "sacramental," that is as an efficacious sign. "By chrism," the bodies of the baptizands, "are sealed as holy and become temples for God."⁵

The structure of Hymn 3 On the Epiphany appears to be simply a catalogue of Scriptural uses of oil applied to the anointing of those about to be baptized. It is the oil which Elijah multiplied, which Jacob poured upon the Rock, with which Moses sealed and anointed Aaron and his sons, with which Saul was anointed king, with which David was anointed with the Spirit, and with which the sinful Mary anointed Jesus.

Naaman is introduced as an example of how a man may be separated from the unclean, and the Christian is described as separated from those outside by the chrism, just as the dirt Naaman took home with him separated him from the unbelievers. Later the hymn mentions the sealing with oil of lepers at their cleansing, before the priest leads them to the washing.

The type has passed and the truth has come; Lo! with chrism have ye been sealed, in baptism ye are perfected.⁶

1 Op. cit., *L'Orient Syrien* 1 (1956), 111-137

2 Ibid. p. 111, see also E. Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem Des Syrers Hymnen De Nativitate* (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 187) Louvain, 1959, ix-xi.

3 Syriac text ed. E. Beck, CSCO 186, pp. 144-191. German Trans. CSCO 187, pp. 131-177; English trans. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (2nd series) 13, pp. 265-289.

4 Syriac text of de Virg. 7 in CSCO 223, pp. 24-28, Latin and French trans. in Beck, *act. cit.*, pp. 125ff, 134f, German trans. CSCO 224, pp. 24-29.

5 Epiph. 3: 9

6 Epiph. 3: 18

the Three spiritual Names, wherein the Evil One is put to flight."¹¹ The baptism of Naaman by Elisha which cleansed his leprosy, and of Israel by Moses in the sea are types of the forgiveness of sin in Christian baptism.¹² The anointing of King David by Samuel after which he put on the armor to slay Goliath is a type also, for Christians are anointed as heirs of the Kingdom, and the armor we receive from baptism humbles the devil.¹³

Hymn 7 is a collection of Spiritual references to water all seen as types of Baptism: Rebecca watering her flock, Moses with the flock of Jethro, baptizing the Chosen people in the sea, and seeking to buy water from the sons of Lot, Gideon choosing His soldiers by how they drank the water, David at the well of Bethlehem, God in the vision of Isaiah 63 coming as one who has trodden the winepress of Edom (i. e. as deliverer of his People), Jeremiah burying his linen girdle in the water, Solomon anointed as King at the river Siloam,¹⁴ Jesus with the Samaritan woman, and sending the blind man to wash in Siloam, Pilate washing his hands, and Peter drawing in the fish. It adds to these some general remarks about the desirable properties of water, and urges;

The diver brings up—out of the sea the pearl.
Be baptized and bring up from the water—
Purity that therein is hidden—
The pearl that is set as a jewel—
In the crown of the Godhead.¹⁵

Almost any reference to water, no matter how remote is sufficient to bring the mystery of baptism into view.

A more interesting reference is found in Hymn 8: 5-6, to the three Hebrew children of Daniel 3 who were thrown into the fiery furnace:

That visible fire that triumphed outwardly,
Pointed to the fire of the Holy Ghost,
Which is mingled. Lo! and hidden in the water,
In the flame baptism is figured,
In that blaze of the furnace.

We might conclude our discussion of these hymns by citing the 12th which deals with the fall of Adam. "In baptism," it sings, "Adam found again that glory that was among the trees of Eden." It is, in fact, an undoing of the harm that was then done. Instead of the leaves of trees with which Adam and Eve had to clothe themselves after the fall, God clothes them with glory in the water. "Baptism is the well-spring of life, which the Son of God opened by his Life; and from his side it has brought forth streams."¹⁵

¹¹ Epiph. 5:2

¹² Epiph. 5:6-7

¹³ Epiph. 5:9-11

¹⁴ 1 Kings 1:38. So the Peshitto, The Hebrew has Gihon.

¹⁵ Epiph. 12:5

For the Epiphany hymns, the Holy Spirit is active both in the chrism and in the water, and he causes the Holy Trinity to dwell in him who is baptized. The water and oil act outwardly, but God acts inwardly to claim the neophyte for his own and to protect him from Satan. Incorporated into the flock of the Good Shepherd, freed from sin, and made a temple for the divine indwelling, the new Christian is for Ephraem the fulfilment of the old Covenant and the fruit of the Gospel poured out upon men.

We might conclude this brief study by citing two passages from other, and undisputed, works of Ephraem, which seem to sum up his teaching :

In those who are signed in baptism, which conceives them in its breast
In place of the form of the first Adam, which has been corrupted,
Baptism forms a new image and begets them with a triple birth,
In the worshipful name of the Trinity,
Father and Son and HoLy Spirit.¹⁶

We note the close connection of the signing with the baptism itself, and the importance of the Threefold Name which accomplishes the rebirth.

Therefore, because the Spirit was with the Son, he came to John to receive from him baptism, that he might mingle with the visible waters the invisible Spirit ; that they whose bodies should feel the moistening of the water, their souls should feel the gift of the Spirit ; that even as the bodies outwardly feel the pouring of the water upon them, so the souls inwardly may feel the pouring of the Spirit upon them.¹⁷

What is said in Epiphany 3 : 1 of the chrism is here said of the water of Baptism. The visible and invisible are mingled and through the external signs God acts to renew man's fallen nature, as the Holy Spirit brings man into union with the Trinity.

THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA

Theodore of Mopsuestia was a contemporary and friend of John Chrysostom, and in his mystagogical lectures we find a description of the rite of baptism parallel to that of John Chrysostom. The lectures were composed in Greek, but survive only in Syriac translation.¹ The only substantial difference between the rite described by Theodore and Chrysostom

16 Hymnus De Virginitate 7 : 5

17 *Sermo de Domino Nostro* 53 (Post Nicene Fathers 13, p. 329. Syriac text, CSCO 270, p. 5 If (This is no. 55 in Beck's text.)

1 Mingana, A., *Woodbrooke Studies* 6, Cambridge 1933. We shall cite his English translation. There is also a French version, Tonneau, R., and Devreese, R., *Les Homilies Catechetiques de Theodore de Mopsueste*, (Studi e Testi 145) Vatican, 1949.

is the inclusion by Theodore of a post-baptismal consignation. There appears to be some doubt as the genuineness of the passage, however.² Theodore also describes more ceremonial elaboration in the rites themselves.

Theodore begins his explanation by stating that every sacrament consists in the representation of unseen and unspeakable things through signs and emblems.³ Commenting on this Danielou has remarked :

Rejecting typology because he refused to see a relationship between historic realities, he was led to interpret sacramental symbolism in a vertical sense, as the relationship of visible things to invisible. Nevertheless, this is not the only aspect under which he sees them : symbols of heavenly realities, the sacraments are for Theodore also a ritual imitation of the historic actions of Christ.⁴

We will not, then, be surprised to hear Theodore say :

We draw nigh unto the sacrament because we perform in it the symbols of the freedom from calamities from which we were unexpectedly delivered, and of our participation in these new and great benefits which had their beginning in Christ our Lord.⁵

Theodore describes baptism first as a participation in the Ascension of Christ, in which he raises us to his heavenly Kingdom. The candidate for baptism comes to enroll as a new citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem. In order to enter into this new citizenship he must be freed from the service of the Tyrant, and this has been accomplished by the death of Jesus Christ, who now intercedes on his behalf against Satan.⁶

He also describes baptism as a symbolic second birth, "because you will in reality receive the true second birth only after you have risen from the dead."⁷ In the sacrament we receive the signs and symbols, and the assurance through the word of Christ that we shall indeed participate in the second birth in the future. In support of this Theodore cites our Lord's words to Nicodemus, commenting that he expounded to him only the symbolic birth, since the reality of the resurrection would have been too much for Nicodemus' hearing.⁸

He called baptism a second birth because it contains the symbol of the second birth, and because through baptism we participate

2 cf. Sinan, *L'Experience de L'Esprit par l'Eglise*, pp. 78, 88; Mitchell, L. L., *Baptismal Anointing* London, 1966, p. 41.

3 Mingana, p. 17

4 Danielou, J., *The Bible and the Liturgy*, Notre Dame, 1956, p. 14

5 Mingana, p. 22

6 Mingana, p. 24ff.

7 Mingana, p. 49

8 Mingana, p. 50f

as in symbol in this second birth. Indeed, we receive from baptism participation in this second birth without any question or doubt.⁹

Again Theodore reminds his hearers that it is the death of Christ which accomplishes this, and quotes Romans 6: 3-4 and 1 Corinthians 15: 20. Death has been abolished by Christ, "And we are baptized with such a faith because we desire to participate in his death, in the hope of participating also in the resurrection from the dead."¹⁰

All of this, for Theodore, is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, whose grace is an earnest of the benefits which we shall receive.¹¹ He quotes Ephesians 1: 13-14, Romans 8: 23, and 2 Corinthians 1: 21-22 in support of this. The last passage might be rendered this way in English, "God has *confirmed* us with you in Christ, and has *anointed* us: he has *sealed* us and given us the *earnest of the Spirit* in our hearts." Whether or not St. Paul intended these to be technical terms, they are certainly so taken by Theodore, who sees here the basis of his baptismal theology:

The power of the holy baptism consists in this: it implants in you the hope of future benefits, enables you to participate in the things which we expect, and by means of the symbols and signs of the future good things, it informs you with the gift of the Holy Spirit, the firstfruits of whom you receive when you are baptized.¹²

Looking at Theodore's description of the actual rites, we find his figure of new citizenship carried through his explanation of the enrollment of the catechumens, and of the duties of their sponsors. The determination of the catechumen to seek baptism shows his intention of separating himself from the servitude of the Tyrant, and the ensuing struggle is symbolized by the exorcisms. "You have," he says, "in the ceremony of exorcism, a kind of law-suit with the Demon, and by a Divine verdict you receive your freedom from his servitude."¹³ He sees in the attitude of the catechumen during the exorcism, standing silent, naked and barefoot, on garments of sackcloth, as a sign of his captivity to Satan and quotes Isaiah 20: 3-4 which speaks of Isaiah going naked and barefoot as a sign of captivity.¹⁴

At the end of the second homily he likens the priest to a major domo in the house of the Lord and says that we make our contracts with the Master through him, since it is unbecoming for the master, even of a great earthly house, to condescend to making contracts with servants.

9 Mingana, p. 51

10 Mingana, p. 52

11 Mingana, p. 53

12 Mingana, p. 53f.

13 Mingana, p. 35

14 Mingana, p. 32

The abjuration of Satan is described in great detail. The one recurring typological theme in the account is the fall of Adam, to whom the conduct of the catechumen, through the power of Christ, is to be a contrast. The renunciation of Satan is followed by the engagement to follow Christ:

I abjure Satan and all his angels, and all his service, and all his deception, and all his worldly glamour, and I engage myself, and believe and am baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵

This is, for Theodore, a very practical thing and he does not hesitate to identify the “angels of Satan” with the pagan poets, the philosophers, and the heretics, among whom he names Mani, Marcion, Valentinus, Paul of Samosata, Arius, Eunomius, and Apollinarius.¹⁶

The priest then draws near, and in Theodore’s description of his vestments, we see a clear example of his approach to the explanation of the rites :

The priest draws near to you...clad in a robe of clean and radiant linen, the joyful appearance of which denotes the joy of the world to which you will move in the future, and the shining colour of which designates your own radiance in the life to come, while its cleanness indicates the ease and happiness of the next world.

He depicts these things to you by means of the garments in which he is clad, and by the hidden symbol of the same garments he inspires you with fear, and with fear infuses love into you, so that you may through the newness of his garments look into the power which it represents.¹⁷

Theodore then describes the signing of the forehead with the chrism. It is a sign that “you have been stamped as a lamb of Christ and a soldier of the heavenly King.”¹⁸ Both of these are, of course, familiar figures, but Theodore contents himself with the obvious explanations of the seal as a sign of ownership and service and of citizenship in the Kingdom of heaven. The godfather then places a linen cloth over the head of the initiate as a sign of his freedom, since a slave is not allowed to do military service.¹⁹

The candidate then removes his garments, and Theodore returns to the Adam theme to explain this. The removal of the clothing is symbolic of the putting off of mortality, since it was by the sin of Adam, resulting in the

15 Mingana, p. 43

16 Mingana, p. 40

17 Mingana, p. 45f

18 Mingana, p. 46

19 Mingana, p. 49

decree of death, that the necessity for wearing clothing arose. Man, like Adam in Eden, then comes to the font naked and unashamed.²⁰

The anointing of the whole body follows at once. Theodore calls the chrism the "covering of immortality" and the total anointing symbolizes that our whole nature will put on immortality in the resurrection "according to the working of the Holy Spirit which shall then be with us."²¹ Clothing is a sign of mortality and our incorporation into Adam in sin. The removal of the clothing signifies innocence and a return to Eden. It is then covered with the chrism, the robe of immortality, which we receive symbolically in baptism, and finally at the resurrection.

Before the actual baptism, which follows at once, Theodore says the priest must invoke the Holy Spirit upon the water to "impart to it the power both of conceiving that awe-inspiring child and becoming a womb to the sacramental birth."²² In the womb of the font, the neophyte is spiritually reborn and becomes potentially immortal and incorruptable by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is, of course, only at the resurrection that these potentialities are realized.

Theodore makes use of two figures we found also in Chrysostom. He calls the water a furnace where the neophyte is remade and refashioned, and he speaks of the potter's vessel which is remade and refashioned in water, and then hardened by the fire of the Spirit.²³

The actual baptism is described as it was by Chrysostom. It is seen as conforming to the symbolic pattern of our Lord's own baptism:

When therefore the priest says "in the name of the Father" remember the sentence "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," and think of the adoption of children which is conferred upon you by the Father; and when he says "and of the Son" think of the One who was near to the One who was baptized, and understand that he became to you the cause of the adoption of children; and when he says "and of the Holy Spirit" think of the One who descended like a dove and lighted upon him, and expect from him the confirmation of the adoption of children.²⁴

Baptism is, therefore, the action of the Holy Trinity. It is summed up this way, by Theodore:

You have now received baptism which is the second birth; you have fulfilled by your baptism in water the rite of the burial, and

20 Mingana, p. 54

21 Mingana, p. 54

22 Mingana, p. 55

23 Mingana, p. 57f

24 Mingana, p. 67

you have received the sign of the resurrection by your rising out of the water; you have been born and have become a new man; you are no more part of Adam who was mutable and burdened and made wretched by sin, but of Christ who was completely freed from sin through resurrection.²⁵

Following the baptism the neophyte wears a "wholly radiant" garment. When he receives the resurrection "in reality" he will not need any clothes, as Theodore indicated when he described the removal of the garments before baptism, but since he has now only received them "sacramentally and symbolically" he needs garments, and those which he wears symbolise the happiness which is his in symbol now, but is in the future in reality.²⁶

The post-baptismal signing of the forehead follows, we have seen that this is not in Chrysostom, and may be an addition to the text of Theodore. Its meaning in the text as we have it, nonetheless, is quite clear :

When Jesus came out of the water he received the grace of the Holy spirit who descended like a dove and lighted on him, and this is why he is said to have been anointed. It is right therefore that you should also receive the signing on your forehead.²⁷

The signing itself is a doublet of the pre-baptismal signing, but the explanation carries through the symbolic conformity of the liturgical rite to the baptism of Christ. This is the same explanation of the post-baptismal signing found in the mystagogical lectures attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem, although probably written by his successor John.²⁸ In any case, Theodore appears to ignore this consignation in explaining the effects and meaning of the sacrament. The neophyte proceeds to the eucharistic banquet, and Theodore to a description of the rite of the Eucharist.

Although he approaches the theology of baptism differently from Chrysostom, his only real difference is in ascribing the gift of the Spirit to the post-baptismal unction, instead of to the baptism itself, but Theodore is sure that it is the power of the Spirit which makes us in baptism children of God and one body of Christ. He does not, therefore, disconnect the Spirit from the action of baptism, but rather sees it as central to the sacrament.

NARSAI

The final author we shall consider is the Nestorian poet Narsai who founded the school of Nisbis in the latter half of the fifth century. His

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Mingana, p. 68

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *Myst. Cat.* 3: 1-2 (ed. Cross, London 1960) p. 22f

poetic homilies on baptism and the eucharist follow so closely the account of Theodore of Mopsuestia that they might almost be described as poetic renditions of Theodore's text. The similarity is so great both in the structure of the rites described and in the details of their interpretation that the lack of a post-baptismal consignation in Narsai itself suggests that there was none in Theodore's original text. *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* have been edited and published in English translation by the late Dom R. Hugh Connolly.¹

Like Theodore, Narsai sees the meaning of baptism in the rescue of man by Christ from the effect of the fall of Adam :

By Adam did the Deceiver, who sows error in the world, lead (men) astray; and a Son of Adam was jealous and avenged the wrong of all his race... and he consented to die that they should not be styled slaves of the evil ones. As an athlete he went down to the contest on behalf of his people; and he joined battle with Satan and vanquished and conquered him. On the summit of Golgotha he fought with the slayer of men, and he made him a laughing-stock before angels and men. Over the death of men the arrogant-minded was boasting; and by the death of one Man his boasting came to naught. His death and his life men depict in baptism, and after they have died with him they have risen and been resuscitated mystically. In the new way of the resurrection of the dead they travel with him; and they imitate upon earth the conduct of the heavenly beings... As athletes they have gone up from the vat of baptism; and watchers and men have received them lovingly.²

The identity of thought with that of his master Theodore seems clear. Narsai also stresses the relationship of the visible oil and water to the inward actions of Christ and the Spirit. "By outward things," he says, "God gives assurance of his works (done) in secret."³ He uses the familiar figure of the furnace in which men are remoulded :

The furnace of the waters his purpose prepared mystically; and instead of fire he has heated it with the Spirit of the power of his will. His own handiwork has made a craftsman over his creation, that it should recast itself in the furnace of the waters and the heat of the Spirit.⁴

The priest is an important figure in Narsai's exposition, again following Theodore's lead. "Ah, priesthood," he exclaims, "how greatly is it exalted above all." To the priest God has committed the "great signet of his divinity" with which he will seal the Lord's sheep committed to his care. He

1 op. cit. (Texts and Studies 8. 1) Cambridge, 1909

2 Connolly, p. 53f

3 Connolly, p. 45

4 Connolly, p. 41, cf. pp. 36, 48

has taught him the art of tracing the image of life on the tablet of the waters, of being a "painter of the Spirit."⁵ The priest is a physician who mixes the divine drug given into his hands. "With the external sign (*rushma, sphragis*) he touches the hidden diseases that are within; and then he lays on the drug of the Spirit with the symbol of the water."⁶ Narsai uses an extended figure of the priest as a general in the army of the King of kings who instructs the faithful in spiritual archery. The arrows are words with which they renounce the devil and adhere to Christ, and the priest "stands at the head of their ranks and shews them the mark of truth that they may aim aright."⁷

It is unnecessary to follow in detail the many points at which Narsai simply restates what Theodore has already said. We shall therefore look briefly at Narsai's explanation of the *rushma*, the pre-baptismal signing, and the washing itself.

Oil and water and the word of the priest are the means by which the door of the treasure-house of life are opened. They remake the clay of human nature into pure gold.⁸ The power is not in the oil, however, but in the Triune Name hidden in it, which cuts into the soul as the oil touches the body. The oil is a shield, "the image of Divinity on the head of a man," armor against evil spirits, and "the great brand of the King of kings."⁹

By the voice of (the priest's) utterances he proclaims the power that is hidden in his words, and declares whose they are, and whose name it is with which they are branded...The name of the Divinity he mixes in his hands with the oil; and he signs and says 'Father' and 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit.'¹⁰

It is not accurate to say that Narsai considers the *rushma* to be the giving of the Holy Spirit in the sense that later Romans or Byzantines would understand the phrase, but he says that the Spirit gives power to the holy oil:

The Spirit gives power to the unction of the feeble oil, and it waxes firm by the operation that is administered in it. By its firmness it makes firm the body and the faculties of the soul, and they go forth confidently to wage war against the Evil One. The sign of his name the devils see upon a man; and they recoil from him in whose name they see the Name of honour. The name of the Divinity looks out from the sign on the forehead; and the eyes of the crafty ones are ashamed to look upon it.¹¹

5 Connolly, p. 34

6 Connolly, p. 43

7 Connolly, p. 44

8 Connolly, p. 42

9 Connolly, p. 43

10 Connolly, p. 44

11 Connolly, p. 45

The reference here must surely be to the *sphragis* of Revelation 7 : 3, and perhaps to the *tau* of Ezekiel 9 : 4. It is God's brand, his signature upon the forehead of the initiate which marks him as his forever. This is completely in line with the explanations of Chrysostom and Theodore. It is not what modern writers usually mean by the seal of the Spirit, but it is certainly more than a simple exorcism. It seals the servant of the living God to the day of redemption, and is to be taken in close connection with the immediately following baptismal washing.

Narsai begins his description of baptism proper, in the homily called C by Connolly, by rhapsodizing upon the power of the Spirit come into the baptismal water, and upon the ministry of the priest who, striking the water like Moses, commands it to bring forth life, by the power of the Creator. "That word which the waters heard, and brought forth creeping things : the same they hear from the mouth of the priest and bring forth men."¹²

With the name of the Divinity, the three Names, he consecrates the water, that it may suffice to accomplish the cleansing of the defiled. The defilement of men he cleanses with water : Yet not by the water, but by the power of the name of the Divinity which there lights down.¹³

The effect of the washing is, of course, the participation in the death and resurrection of Christ :

In the grave of the water the priest buries the whole man; and he resuscitates him by the power of life that is hidden in his words. In the door of the tomb of baptism he stands equipped, and he performs there a mystery of death and of resurrection. With the voice openly he preaches the power of what he is doing .. how it is that a man dies in the water, and turns and lives again....

He verily dies by a symbol of that death which the Quickener of all died; and he surely lives with a type of the life without end. Sin and death he puts off and casts away in baptism, after the manner of those garments which our Lord departing left in the tomb. As a babe from the midst of the womb he looks forth from the water; and instead of garments the priest receives him and embraces him.¹⁴

¹² Connolly, pp. 47-50

¹³ Connolly, p. 50

¹⁴ Connolly, p. 51f

We might note here the reference to the font as both a tomb and a womb, picking up the ideas of both resurrection and new birth. Narsai says that the neophyte is received from the font and adorned as a bridegroom on the day of his marriage-supper. We have already seen this image in Chrysostom, and the identification of the eucharist with the marriage-supper of the lamb is common. The image of the bride-chamber is also common among Syrian gnostics.¹⁵ As we have already seen, there is no post-baptismal consignation in Narsai, and the neophyte is adorned and welcomed into the eucharistic assembly for the celebration of the marriage-feast, the spiritual food for the newborn.

At this point we conclude our brief examination of the rite of baptism in the Syrian fathers. Even in this sketchy form it should be clear that there is a real Syrian theological and liturgical tradition with roots in Antioch as well as Edessa, and that John, Ephraem, Theodore, and Narsai are witnesses to the same tradition.

¹⁵ cf. Catanzaro, C. J. de, "The Gospel of Philip," J. T. S. 13 (1962) 35-71 et alibi,

Baptism in the Acts of Thomas*

A. F. J. KLIJN,

LEIDEN.

If we survey the descriptions of Baptism in the *Acts of Thomas*, we have to face the following questions. In the first place we see that in describing Baptism the Greek and Syriac text differ considerably. Next we are struck by the contents of the epicleses. On the other hand we are also struck by the great number of parallels in the *Acts of Thomas* with liturgies in the Syriac and Greek church. Finally we see that the descriptions themselves differ very much among each other. This means that we are not dealing with a fixed liturgical practice.

The following order of events is met in baptism :

1. c. 25-27

c. 25, Greek: cleansing them with thy washing and anointing them with thine oil from the error that encompasseth them.

Syriac: and anoint them and purify them from their uncleanness.

c. 27, Gr.: And the Apostle—sealed them.

And the Apostle took the oil and poured it upon their heads—and began to say : give them the added sealing of the seal—.

Syr.: Judas—poured oil upon their heads—. And he baptized them.

2. c. 49

Gr.: Then he caused her to come near unto him, and laid his hands upon her and sealed her in the name of the Father—.

Syr.: And he went to a river which was close there and baptized her in the name of the Father—.

3. c. 121

Gr.: and he took the oil and poured it on her head—and there was a fountain of water—and baptized—.

Syr.: idem

* A. F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text, Commentary* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962) pp. 54-60. *The Acts of (Judas) Thomas* is an apocryphal book of the early third century, of which the early extant text is manuscript Sinai 30 of the fifth/sixth century. For its editions of various versions, see, *The Apostle Thomas in India according to the Acts of Thomas* (Kottayam: The Syrian Churches Series, I, 1972), p. iii. For its English translation, Klijn, *op. cit.*, pp 5-154; W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, trans. R. M. Wilson (Philadelphia, 1964), I, pp. 442-531. Chapter (c.) reference to *The Acts of Thomas* given in this article is based on A. F. J. Klijn's work.

4. c. 132

Gr.: he poured oil over their heads—
 he commanded a vessel to be brought and baptized them.
 Syr.: idem (but Ms. Sinai omits the anointment).

5. c. 157

Gr.: he poured it (oil) first upon the head of Iuzanes—
 let him down into the water—
 Syr.: idem.

The course of events in 3, 4 and 5 is quite clear. Both in Greek and Syriac the anointing is followed by baptism with water. The unanimity of Greek and Syriac seems to imply that in these cases the original text is still available. This order is known from Syriac sources.¹

The description c. 49 is much more difficult. Syriac and Greek are deviating. Though Syriac seems to be secondary, we also get the impression that the Greek version does not give a complete description of the baptismal rite. We leave this passage out of consideration.

Finally we have to deal with c. 25 and 27. In c. 25 the Syriac version is in agreement with the order found in 3, 4 and 5. The Greek version renders the opposite order. Syriac seems to be original. In c. 27 the Syriac version is quite clear. First of all a voice is heard followed by the anointing and baptism with water. The order of events is in agreement with c. 25 and 3, 4 and 5. In Greek we meet a rather complicated state of affairs. The apostle seals, next a voice is heard and finally "the added sealing of the seal" is given. The question is what is meant with the "seal" at the beginning and next where the term "added sealing of the seal" comes from. The term is not known from other sources. Before going into this question we first of all have to deal with the word *seal* in these Acts.²

In c. 26, Greek only, is spoken about the seal of the word. The meaning of the word is not clear. Next we see that in this chapter is spoken about the sheep known by the seal. In the Greek version it is said

1 See R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, in: *Texts and Stud.* VIII 1909, p. XLII-XLIX, J. Coppens, *L'Imposition des Mains*, Wetteren-Paris 1925, p. 281-282, T. W. Manson, *Entry into the Membership of the early Church*, in: *JTS* XLVIII 1947, p. 25-33, T. W. Manson, *Miscellanea Apocalyptica III*, in: *JTS* XLVIII (1947), p. 59-61 and W. Nauck, *Die Tradition und der Charakter des ersten Johannesbriefes*, in: *Wissensch. Unters. z. N. T.* 3, Tubingen 1957, p. 155-159.

2 The real nature of the word "seal" is still a matter of dispute. Greek influence was supposed by E. Hatch, *The influence of Greek Ideas upon the Christian Church*, London 1894 and G. Wobbermin, *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien*, Berlin 1896. Jewish influence by G. Anrich, *Das antike Mysterien-wesen in seinem Einfluss auf das Christentum*, Gottingen 1894, p. 122 and A. V. Stromberg, *Studien zur Theorie und Praxis der Taufe in der freichristlichen Kirche*, in: *Neue Stud. z. Gesch. der Theol. u. Kirche* XVIII 1913. W. Heitmüller, *Sphragis* in: *Neutestamentl. Stud. G. Heinrich-dargebracht*, in: *Unters. z. N. T.*, H. 6, p. 40-59, Leipzig 1914, supposes that the word goes back to the idea 'sealing with a name'. F. J. Dolger, *Sphragis*, in: *Stud. z. Gesch. u. Kultur des Altertums*, V. B., 3/4 H., Paderborn 1911, p. 170, supposes that the word must be taken "als Name fuer den Schluß- und Siegelakt bei einem Dekret, Vertrag, Testament usw".

that Thomas commanded them to bring oil. C. 27 goes on to say that they were sealed. This seems to imply that the seal meant in this chapter consisted of the anointing. In c. 49 is asked for the seal that the devil will not return. In Syriac the baptism with water follows, in Greek the Apostle lays on his hand. In c. 87 is asked for the seal that one may become a holy temple. In c. 120 the seal is asked which is followed by the anointing and the Baptism with water. The same is found in c. 131. In the last two cases the seal circumscribes the whole baptismal rite. This means that in c. 27 the seal may be both the anointing and the Baptism with water. It is quite possible that originally the seal was confined to the anointing and that later on the whole rite was rendered with this word.³ How it may be, it is clear, that in c. 27 is spoken of an anointing at the beginning. This explains why the term "added sealing of the seal" had to be introduced. Thus we get the awkward course of events of two anointings after each other.⁴ This is not in agreement with the rest of these acts. We are surely dealing with a later development of the text. This is still to be seen at the end of the epiclerisis. In the Syriac version the Baptism with water is given with the words: "And he baptized them in the name of the Father and of the Son end of the Holy Spirit." This means that the same formula is used as in the other passages which deal with Baptism with water. In the Greek version these words are part of the epiclerisis on the oil: "and give them the added seal in the name of the Father—". It seems as if the Greek version leaves out baptism with water at the end deliberately. The idea is strengthened by the Greek version in c. 25 speaking about baptism with water followed by the anointing. Thus we may conclude that the Greek version tried to make the anointing the last part of the baptismal rite in c. 27. This was done by omitting the Baptism with water at the end. In doing so the Greek version was forced to add another part of the twofold rite before this anointing. This part was circumscribed by the words "and sealed him". From this development we may draw the conclusion that the first "seal"

3 Dolger, *o. c.*, p. 95, writes with regard to c. 131-132: Der Name in der Bedeutung von Taufe im Vollsinn ist also noch gelauefig". G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit*, London 1951, p. 187-189, remarks that no uniformity can be seen in the use of the word seal in the *Acts of Thomas*. A. v. Stromberg, *o. c.* p. 99-102, gives a number of places in which the word 'seal' is met in ancient christ. lit. It appears that the word means the whole baptismal rite as well as the gift of the Spirit only. Dolger, *o. c.*, p. 73, n. 2, supposes that in the oldest passages known the word circumscribes the rite as a whole,

4 It is often supposed that in the *Acts of Thomas* a baptism with water only was known, see already Turibus of Asterga, *ad Idacium et Cetoniam* (P. L. 54, c. 694). See also F. C. Baur, *Das manichäische Religionsystem*, Göttingen 1928 (Neudruck—von 1831), R. Liechtenhan, *Die Offenbarung im Gnostizismus*, Göttingen 1901, p. 156, R. Liechtenhan *Die Pseudepigraphische Literature der Gnostiker*, in: *ZNW* III 1902, p. 222-237 and 286-299, p. 293, W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*, in: *Forsch. z. Rel. u. Lit. des A. u. N. T.* 10, Göttingen 1907 p. 298-299 and E. v. d. Goltz, *Apostellegenden als Geschichtsquellen*, in: *Harnack-Ehrung*, Leipzig 1921, p. 155. It is not quite clear in which way this supposition could be proved. S. Maasz, *Segnen Weihen Taufen*, in: *Arch. f. Rel. W. Sch.* XXI 1922, p. 241-286, writes on p. 281-282: "In der Wiederholung erst liegt heur die Vollwirkung des Taufaktes, das ist der Konsekration." We are, however, not dealing with a real repetition. In any case the second part appears to be much more important. According to Dolger, *o. c.*, p. 95-98, the first seal must be considered to be "Das Kreuzzeichen machen". This must be rejected. Lipsius, *Apokr. Apostelgesch.*, I. p. 333, is justified in pointing to c. 52, from which appears that from the beginning the element water played an important part in the circles in which the Acts of Thomas originated.

was probably meant to be the whole rite including the Baptism with water. As the anointing was included in this rite also the rewriter had to invent a new word, viz. "the added sealing of the seal"⁵.

From all this it is clear that the order of Baptism in the *Acts of Thomas* is in agreement with the one found in the other ancient Syriac literature. Next we see that the anointing is very much emphasized. It is even possible to circumscribe baptism as a whole by the word "seal", originally used to render the idea "anointing" only.⁶ Finally we see that the Greek version tries to give a more Western course of events.

Next we have to deal with the *epicleses*

The epicleses differ very much among each other. The most important are found in c. 27 on the oil and in c. 50 on the Eucharist. Both of them show marked agreement. This agreement is a well known phenomenon in ancient christian literature.⁶ Going into these epicleses we see that the constituent parts are rather heterogeneous. Both masculine and feminine substantives are used. Nevertheless we must say that generally spoken the different parts do not render insuperable difficulties. Usually we find words which are often used in liturgical passages circumscribing the Holy Spirit. This applies to the words "name", "power", "gift". The same words are found in the other epicleses: c. 121: "Let Thy power come", c. 157: "Let Thy gift come—let it abide upon this oil, over which we name Thy name." It is more difficult that also the "mother" is invoked. In these cases we are probably dealing with remnants of ideas going back to the semitic female being which was closely related with God (see especially Hymn I). The influence and identification of this "mother" with the Holy Spirit can be found in Syriac authors, but especially in gnostic systems. The different ways in which this "mother" is described are dealt with in the commentary. Most difficult of all is c. 50: "the holy dove that beareth the twin young." The real mythological background is unknown, but it seems that Cyril of Jerusalem knew the expression as appears from his explanation of *Song of Songs* 4, 2, saying that the baptism renders twofold grace in both water and the H. Spirit. This must be a later explanation, but it is quite possible that it was already known to the author of the *Acts of Thomas*.

We may say that in any case the epicleses were not yet available in any fixed form. This resulted in a rather free rendering in which the author was able to give his imagination free play.

Next we have to deal with the *significance of Baptism*.

The significance is clearly seen in c. 118. Mygdonia tries to pass the keepers of the prisoners who have to be identified with the guardians between

⁵ In the 9th century the anointing was given after the baptism with water see W. de Vries, *Sakramentstheologie bei den Nestorianern*, in: *Or. Chr. Anal.* 133, Rome, 1947, p. 183. Cf. also Didascalia III 3-4 (ed. Funk, p. 210) and Constit. Apost. III 16 (ed. Funk, p. 211).

⁶ See W. de Vries, *Sakramentstheologie*—, p. 181: "Ja die Salbung kann sogar, wie scheint, die Taufe ersetzen." This was especially the case in infant baptism.

heaven and earth. When she thinks to see one of the rulers she is afraid because she does not yet possess the seal. This means that Baptism possesses a protective value. This idea is often found. In c. 25 is asked whether they may be guarded from the wolves, in c. 49 a woman asks for the seal that the enemy may not come back. The seal is a sign by which the devil knows that man belongs to God. He bears the name or the stamp of Christ, he belongs to His flock (c. 25, 26, 13 and 156). We are probably dealing with the oldest meaning of the word seal. First of all man has to give up his former way of life (see c. 26 and 131), next he is baptised by which man is guarded from influence of the devil in the future. At the same time Baptism gives forgiveness of the sins (c. 25, 48, 121, 132, 157). This is given by both the Baptism with water and the anointing. It is impossible to say that the baptism should possess a negative quality and the anointing a positive quality.⁷ This, however, means that the significance of the Baptism with water is severely lessened. As far as it is mentioned we see that nothing of any importance is said about it (cf. c. 27, 49, 121, 132, 157). This is in accordance with the Syriac liturgy in which the Baptism with water plays a subordinate part only. One of the most important gifts in Baptism is freedom, sometimes circumscribed as boldness (c. 25, 26, 120, 121). One gets an insight in the mysterious things (c. 17), one becomes a dwelling place of Christ (c. 156), the soul is mingled with the Spirit (c. 121 gr.), man is renewed or born again (c. 131).

From all this it appears that a number of gifts are connected with Baptism. It is striking to see that each different description offers a different picture also. This brings us to a comparison with what is known about baptism in Syria.

With regard to the *relation with other descriptions of Baptism* we noticed already that the order of baptism is in agreement with Syriac practice. From the commentary it appears that in general the way in which baptism is described and evaluated is in conformity with other descriptions. The idea that man becomes by Baptism a sheep of the flock of Christ, that baptism gives hidden powers of purification and protection, that baptism renews man is known from the liturgies which are available. The same applies to the relation between oil-tree of life and the cross (c. 121 and 157). For the rest

⁷ G. Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, Göttingen 1894, p. 197: "Nimmt man hinzu, dass Cyrill und Gregor von Nyssa Epiklese und beim Abendmahl hinsichtlich ihrer Wirkung mit der Konsekration des Chrysmas zusammenstellen (Cyr., *cat. Myst.* 3, 3; Gr. Nyss., *Or in diem lum.* (46, 581), so tritt aus all dem klar hervor, wie bei Taufe und Abendmahl im Grunde ein- und dieselbe Anschauung bezüglich der Elemente obwaltet, die nämlich, dass sie durch eine göttliche Kraft irgendwie zu einer über natürlichen, magisch wirkenden Substanz umgeschaffen werden." See for the relation between the liturgy of Baptism and Eucharist, G. Diettrich, *Die nestorianische Taufiturgie* Giessen 1903, p. XXVIII, and A. Baumstark, *Rev. of Diettrich, Taufiturgie*, in: *Or. Christ.* III 1903, p. 219-226, p. 223: "Das Gebet der Taufwasserweihe dem grossen eucharistischen Hochgebete nachzubilden - und mit einer der eucharistischen Epiklese entsprechenden Herabruß des Fil. Geistes zu schließen ist schon altchristlich und ist gemeinchristlich." See also B. M. Wooley, *The Liturgy of the primitive Church*, Cambridge 1911, p. 33-34.

we can not say whether the author renders a faithful picture of the baptismal rite in his own days. It is quite possible that his own taste played an important part.⁸

⁸ Ir., *adv. Haer.* I 21 2:

In this connexion it is necessary to deal with the question on whom the Holy Spirit is invoked. No uniformity can be discerned. In c. 27 the epiclesis seems to be on those receiving Baptism. In c. 121 in Syr. on the oil, and in Gr. on Mygdonia. In c. 157 on the oil. 131 it can not be made out. In c. 59 the epiclesis seems to be on the bread. The same applies to c. 133. In c. 52 (the story of the exorcistic water) the epiclesis is on the water in Greek, but Syriac is far from clear. The original practice can not be established. This phenomenon, however, is known in the Syriac church. This applies to the eucharist, see B. Botte, *L' Epicle'se dans les Liturgies syriennes orientales*, in: *Sacris Erudiri* VI 1954, p. 48-72 and to baptism, see G. Kretschmar, *Studien zur frühchristlichen Trinitätstheologie*, in: *Beitr. z. hist. Theol.* 21, Tübingen 1956, p. 204: "Bei einem Teil der Syrer und in Rom wurde Gott Vater, Sohn und Heiliger Geist über dem Tauffling angerufen, die Namen und damit die Personen wirken also auf den Menschen ein. Dagegen wird bei andern Syrern und in Mail and diese 'Epiklesen' aus Mt 28, 19 über dem Wasser ausgesprochen, stehet also in einer gewissen Nahe zur Wasserweihe." The difference can be seen in Apraates, *Dem.* XXIII 63 (ed. Parisot II, c. 131-134) on the person, and in Lit. Hom. Narsai (ed. Connolly) p. 50 and Ephrem, *Hymni Epiphaniae* (Lamy I, c. 85-86) VIII 16 on the elements.

Postbaptismal Anointing in the Ancient Patriarchate of Antioch*

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The publication of the baptismal catecheses of St. John Chrysostom, edited by A. Wenger,¹ has focused attention upon a problem of liturgical history. "Chrysostom," says Wenger, "raises a serious difficulty for us, for he makes no mention of the consignation after baptism in which present day Catholic theology sees the sacrament of confirmation."² The easiest solution is to accuse the speaker of an omission, for the preacher cannot speak of everything. While it is true that the argument from silence must be handled delicately, in this case, however, it seems to fit. Chrysostom has described and carefully commented on all of the rites without exception from the exorcisms of the catechumenate to the greeting and kiss of peace. But the gift of the Spirit is associated, not with a special rite, but with the very act of baptism by immersion:

It is at this moment that, through the words and the hand of the priest (*Iereus*, i. e., the bishop), the Holy Spirit descends upon you. Instead of the man who descended into the water, a different man comes forth.³

The descent of the Holy Spirit takes place, therefore, in the baptismal font before the neophyte comes forth, and the gesture with the hand can only be that which accompanies the immersion—the one who baptizes places his hand on the head of the candidate and immerses him in the water. In these circumstance there is no place for a special rite of consignation or anointing.

* Bernard Botte, OSB, "L'onction postbaptismale dans l'ancien patriarchat d'Antioche," in *Miscellanea Liturgica in onore di sua Eminenza Il Cardinale Giacomo Lercaro*, v. II. Rome: Desclee & C (1967), 795-808. Translated by: Rev. David F. Wright, O. P., Aquinas Institute, Dubuque, Iowa.

1 Jean Chrysostom, *Huit catéchèses baptismales inédits*, ed. A. Wenger (Sources chrétiennes 50). Paris, 1957. Cf. St. John Chrysostom, *Baptismal Instructions*, tr. Paul W. Harkins (Ancient Christian Writers 231). Westminster, Maryland; and London, 1963.

2 Wenger, p. 99.

3 *Instruction* II. 25, Harkins, p. 52.

It is not wise to base one's conclusions on a single text, and to isolate the case of St. John Chrysostom from its total historical context and [other] parallel documents is an even greater departure from the norms of sound critical method. But, *de facto*, the problem arises in the patriarchate of Antioch independently of the newly discovered catecheses. There is an impressive series of witnesses who describe a baptismal rite in which there is a prebaptismal anointing, but none after the baptism. Such is the case with the *Didascalia* whose provenance is Syria about the middle of the third century. When treating of the ministry of deaconesses, baptism is described succinctly:

In the first place, when women go down into the water, those who go down into the water ought to be anointed by a deaconess with the oil of anointing; and where there is no woman at hand, and especially no deaconess, he who baptizes must of necessity anoint her who is being baptized. But where there is a woman, and especially a deaconess, it is not fitting that women should be seen by men; but with the imposition of hand do thou anoint the head only. As of old the priests and kings were anointed in Israel, do thou in like manner, with the imposition of hand, anoint the head of those who receive baptism, whether of men or of women; and afterwards—whether thou thyself baptize, or thou command the deacons or presbyters to baptize,—let a woman deacon, as we have already said, anoint the women. But let a man pronounce over them the invocation of the divine Names in the water.

And when she who is being baptized has come up from the water, let the deaconess receive her, and teach and instruct her how the seal of baptism ought to be (kept) unbroken...⁴

One might believe that this is an isolated instance, but a number of convergent witnesses exist, notably the Clementine *Recognitiones*⁵ and the *Acta Thomae*.⁶ Besides there is no known evidence of a postbaptismal anointing in the patriarchate of Antioch before the last quarter of the fourth century. It is found, indeed, in the mystagogical catecheses attributed to St. Cyril of Jerusalem, but their authenticity is doubtful (they are probably to be attributed to John of Jerusalem) and, in addition, the rite of Jerusalem is unique enough and diverges on more than one point from usages which are properly Syrian.⁷

4 R. H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum*. Oxford (1929), 146–147.

5 *Recognitiones* III, 67. PG 1, 1311–1312.

6 R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, *Acta apostolorum apocrypha*. Hildesheim (1959), II, 2, pp. 230–231. Cf. other witnesses: R. H. Connolly, *The liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, Cambridge (1909), xlii–xlix. St. Ephrem knew no other anointing than that which preceded the baptism and the same is true of Narsai.

7 The mystagogical catecheses have a different manuscript tradition from that of the preparatory catecheses, and early evidence attribute them to John of Jerusalem. All the indications which permit us to date the catecheses are found in the first part. With regard to the dismissals which are found in both series, they form part of the literary genre. In any case the preparatory catechesis ought to be completed by a mystagogical catechesis, and when St. Cyril promises an explanation of the rites, he is not referring to any written text.

When and where does the postbaptismal anointing appear in the patriarchate of Antioch? An examination of the early witnesses will perhaps suggest an answer. The *Apostolic Constitutions*, an apocryphal writing dating from the end of the fourth century, mentions baptism three times.

The first duplicates the text of the *Didascalia* mentioned above.⁸ It reproduces its source faithfully enough, but contains two interpolations. The first concerns the meaning of the prebaptismal anointing: "You shall anoint the head of those to be baptized as a sign of spiritual baptism (*Eis Tupon Pneumatikov Baptismatos*.)" Then after the baptism it adds: "and after that, let the bishop anoint the baptized with ointment (*Tw Murw*.)" Thus, the writer knows of two anointings, the one following the baptism employing ointment (*Muron*) rather than oil (*Elaion*.) The meaning which this gives to the prebaptismal anointing is important, for this anointing indicates that the baptism is a spiritual one, i. e., a baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The second passage is in the section which borrows from the *Didache*. The ritual of this work is simpler. The redactor has placed it in his own time and there are two anointings:

First you shall anoint with holy oil (*Elaion*), then you shall baptize with water, and finally you shall seal with ointment (*Murw*), that the anointing may be the participation of the Holy Spirit, the water the symbol of the death (of Christ), and the ointment (*Muron*) the seal of the commitments."⁹

Here, still more clearly than in the preceding text, the first anointing, done with oil, is seen in terms of a relationship with the Holy Spirit. It is this anointing which denotes the participation while the symbolism of the ointment (*Muron*) is derived from the gesture which accompanies it—the sealing (*Sphragis*.)

Finally, there is a third passage,¹⁰ a sufficiently complete ritual whose origin is unknown. Thus, it is impossible to compare this text of the *Constitutions* with its source and to determine what the redactor has added of his own. It is possible that he added nothing, since there does not seem to be any connection with the two preceding passages. The ritual [described] has two anointings, the first of which preserves for us a prayer for the blessing of oil. It is no longer a question of the Holy Spirit, [for] the oil is blessed for the remission of sins and as the preparation for baptism. There is also a blessing for the ointment, but the Holy Spirit is no longer a consideration. The entire symbolism is based on its fragrance: God has diffused the fragrance (*Osma*) of the knowledge of the gospel; he preserves in the baptized the aroma (*Euwdia*) of Christ.

8 *Apostolic Constitutions* III, 16. 1-4. Cf. *Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum*, ed. F. X. Funk. Paderborn (1905) I, pp. 209-211.

9 *Apostolic Constitutions* VII, 22. 2. Cf. Funk, p. 406.

10 *Ibid.* VII, 39-45. Cf. Funk, pp. 440-452.

Thus the compiler of the *Constitutions* knew of the postbaptismal anointing which is mentioned in the three passages cited. But his explanations betray a certain difficulty: the first passage has no commentary, while the other two offer differing symbolizations. The first depends on the sealing which accompanies the anointing and emphasizes the idea of the seal; the second is based on the fragrance of the ointment and develops the image of the aroma of Christ. But in neither case is there an allusion to the gift of the Spirit. This is explained by the fact that the gift of the Spirit was associated with the prebaptismal anointing. This is clearly evident in the first two passages: the prebaptismal anointing is given as the sign of spiritual baptism and signifies the participation in the Holy Spirit. In such circumstances it was difficult to associate the postbaptismal anointing with the gift of the Holy Spirit. It seems the redactor finds himself in the midst of two traditions, the ancient Syrian usage which only knows of the prebaptismal anointing and the more recent usage whose meaning he still does not understand very well. Is it possible to pinpoint when this change occurred? The examination of contemporary documents will, perhaps, suggest an answer.

The first canonical document which speaks of a postbaptismal anointing is the Council of Laodicea.¹¹ This document appears under very extraordinary circumstances: it contains no superscription or indication which might help to date it precisely. If the reference to the Photinians in one of the canons (this will be examined further on) is authentic, it could be dated no earlier than 380. Photinus, [bishop] of Sirmium, occupied that see from 342 until 376, but it is only after his death that his followers became a concern of the councils, e. g., that of Aquileia in 381.¹²

However, about the year 450 the Council of Laodicea is cited by Theodoret as constituting an authority.¹³ The council, [then], must be dated somewhere between the years 380 and 450, probably nearer the former than the latter. The canon which is of immediate interest to us is the last of a series concerning baptism (45-48). It prescribes that the candidate for baptism (*Phwtiswmenous*) be anointed after baptism with heavenly chrism and be made members of the kingdom of God.¹⁴

It is evident that the council did not legislate with regard to a usage universally accepted and respected. Moreover, since we know that the Syrian tradition originally had only a prebaptismal anointing, we can conclude that the council was concerned with the new usage.

However, two canons of the same council are of indirect interest to us. They deal with the baptism of heretics who are divided into two groups:

11 Cf. H. T. Bruns, *Canones apostolorum et conciliorum*, I, pp. 83-80.

12 Cf. Mansi III, 618. Socrates, *Church History* V, 2 (PG 67, 568) likewise speaks of an edict of Gratian which concerns the Photinians.

13 *In Col* 2, 18. Cf. PG 82, 613. He treats canon 35 of Laodicea concerning the worship of angels.

14 *Canon* 48. Cf. Bruns, p. 78

the first, the Novatians, the Photinians, and the Quartodecimans¹⁵; the second, the Phrygians, i. e., the Montanists.¹⁶ This latter group are to be simply rebaptized; such is not the case for the former group. They must anathematize the heresy, learn the Creed, and then, after having been anointed with holy chrism, communicate in the holy mysteries.¹⁷

What is the meaning of this anointing? Theodoret makes an allusion to the Novatians: he believes that they do not practice postbaptismal anointing and that it is necessary to administer this anointing to those who had been baptized in their sect.¹⁸ But this is certainly not the meaning of the canon. There is no reason to believe that the Novatians, the Photinians, and the Quartodecimans might have had different usages for baptism. Besides, we know how this canon was officially interpreted in the church of Constantinople.

In the editions of the Council of Constantinople I (381) there is a canon concerning the baptism of heretics. In fact, this canon is not authentic for it is absent in the earliest collections.¹⁹ Fortunately, we know its origin: it is an extract from a letter to Martyrius, patriarch of Antioch, from the patriarch of Constantinople, probably Gennadius, which puts us back in the middle of the fifth century.²⁰ Again we find the distinction between the two groups of heretics, but the heresies are no longer exactly the same. Among those who need not be rebaptized are the Arians, the Macedonians, and the Apollinarians; in the second group are the Sabellians. It is evident that the distinction does not rest on a difference of rite, but on a doctrinal difference. The Sabellians must be rebaptized because they confuse the Father and the Son, and as a consequence do not believe in the Trinity.

The writer of the letter returns to the prescriptions of Laodicea concerning the rite itself, but states them more precisely: after the renunciation, those who need not be rebaptized are sealed or anointed with holy ointment (*Murw*) on the forehead, the eyes, the nostrils, the mouth and the ears. The letter adds [anointings on] the breast and all the senses which are omitted in the editions of the councils. Then it continues: "In sealing them we say: The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit." We know that this is the formula which accompanies the postbaptismal anointing in the Byzantine rite for conferring the gift of the Spirit on the neophyte. There is, it seems to me, only one possible interpretation: these heretics have been validly baptized

15 *Canon 7*. Cf. Bruns, p. 74. It is in this canon that there is a question of the Photinians. This reference is omitted in Ferrandus, *Breviatio Canonum* 177 (PL 67, 958), but is attested to by Dionysius Exiguus and Photius.

16 *Canon 8*. Cf. Bruns, p. 74.

17 I have adopted here the reading of Photius which Dionysius Exiguus assumes: *Agiwn Mysteriwn* instead of *Agiw Mysteriw*.

18 *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* III, 5. Cf. PG 83, 408.

19 Cf. The text of the council in Bruns, p. 23. It is omitted by Dionysius Exiguus (Mansi III, 565-572), by the Arabic version (*ibid* 575-580), and by Simeon Metaphrastes (PG 114, 235).

20 The letter is given in the collection of the synodal sentence of the patriarchs of Constantinople among those which are anonymous. The fact that it is addressed to Martyrius of Antioch suffices to fix an approximate data. Cf. PG 119, 900.

and cannot be rebaptized, but they have not received the gift of the Spirit, nor have they been anointed. We find the same idea even earlier in the West. The Council of Arles (314) prescribed that, if a heretic had been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, it was not necessary to rebaptize him, but only to impose hands on him "ut accipiat Spiritum Sanctum."²¹

There is no doubt that the letter to Martyrius is inspired by canon of Laodicea. What we have, then, is an interpretation of this canon which may be considered official, since it comes from the patriarch of Constantinople. Nor is it doubtful that this canon contributed towards making the postbaptismal anointing the general practice throughout the ancient patriarchate of Antioch. However, this raises a question: What are the reasons which prompted the introduction of the anointing? Was it the influence of the West? Possibly, but could there not have been another motive? Did not the problem of reconciling Christians baptized in heresy also have a determining role? Here we enter the realm of hypothesis, and I do not intend to demonstrate anything, but only to try to understand the problem. It is remarkable that the first document which prescribes the postbaptismal anointing also bears witness to a preoccupation with the subject of accepting heretics into the Church. Is it a coincidence?

Let us examine the situation of the patriarchate of Antioch. Christian initiation, excluding the Eucharist, comprised two rites: the prebaptismal anointing and the baptism. There is no anointing after the baptism, nor any imposition of hands other than that of the celebrant when he immerses the candidate. Nevertheless, this rite, indeed, includes a gift of the Spirit. St. John Chrysostom says so explicitly. This notion of the gift of the Spirit is linked to the symbolism of the oil, as the redactor of the *Constitutions* states in two passages, thus witnessing to the early Syrian tradition.

This tradition manifests a rich biblical symbolism. Lk 4: 18, borrowing from Is 66: 1, applies these words to Christ: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor," [RSV] And Acts 10: 38 "You know how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power." [RSV] And St. Paul, 2 Cor 1: 21-22: "But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee." [RSV]

If we take account of this fact, we can understand the thinking of the ancient Syrians: the prebaptismal anointing signified the intention of conferring, at the same time as the baptism, the gift of the Spirit. It is not a separate rite, rather the two effects are produced conjointly by the same rite. Unless we suppose that they intended to confer the gift of the Spirit before the baptism—which seems absurd to me and is excluded by St. John Chrysostom—I do not see any other explanation for this practice.

21 Cf. *Concilia Galliae*, ed. C. Munier in *Corpus Christianorum* 148, pp. 10-11. Here it is canon 9; in Bruns II, p. 108, it is numbered canon 8.

However, the reconciliation of heretics [also] poses a problem. The conflict in which St. Cyprian opposed Pope Stephen in the middle of the third century is well known. The extreme position of St. Cyprian, according to which the sacraments of heretics are radically invalid, enjoyed little success outside of Africa. In 314, as we have seen, the Council of Arles took a position that recognized the validity of baptism conferred in heresy provided that it had been conferred in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. But does it follow that the heretics were also able to confer the gift of the Spirit by the imposition of hands? This was another problem. Indeed, it appears that the Fathers of Arles pronounced in the negative and, therefore, prescribed the imposition of hands so that those already baptized might receive the Holy Spirit. The baptism of heretics was valid, but it was unfruitful as long as the baptized person did not enter the true Church, because he had not received the gift of the Spirit. Such also seems to be the position of the Council of Laodicea and of the church of Constantinople in the sixth century.

The problem was not difficult to resolve for the Fathers of Arles, since the gift of the Spirit was conferred by a separate rite. But the Syrians were embarrassed, because they did not have a distinct rite for the gift of the Spirit. The imposition of hands which was done in the very act of baptism could not be repeated. In addition, the symbolism of oil served to express the intervention of the Spirit. It is quite natural that one might propose the introduction of an anointing which would give the candidate this gift which he had not been able to receive. From that time on it would appear that initiation comprised two realities, not only distinct, but separable, as in the churches of the West. After that it was only a step to extend this anointing to all the baptized. This is what the council of Laodicea did.

All this, of course, is merely an hypothesis, but it seems to be the only possible explanation of a fact which is itself incontestable, namely, that a change of usage has been effected in the patriarchate of Antioch. It was not accomplished everywhere at the same time; and indeed, it seems that the East Syrians have retained the ancient usage up to modern times. However, the edition of the homily of St. John Chrysostom by Wenger allows us to fix an approximate date for Antioch itself. According to Wenger the homily was delivered at Antioch. St. John Chrysostom was ordained a priest in 386, and became bishop of Constantinople in 397. The homily must be placed between these two dates. Wenger proposes 388. It would then be necessary to place the introduction of the postbaptismal anointing at Antioch after 388.

There is, however, a difficulty: Theodore of Mopsuestia, a contemporary of St. John Chrysostom, described an identical baptismal rite which included in addition a consignation—and probably an anointing—after the baptism.²²

22 Homily XIV, 27. Cf. *Les homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopseueste*, ed. R. Tonneau and R. Devreese (Studi e testi, 145) Rome (1949), 457,

Theodore was ordained a priest at Antioch in 383 and became bishop of Mopsuestia in 392. But he had already left Antioch to join Diodore of Tarsus some time before he was ordained bishop. In any case the period from 388 to 392 is very short. If his catecheses had been delivered at Antioch, we could presume that the change had been affected around 390. But, in fact, we have no certitude concerning the date of the catecheses. The arguments adduced by the editors appear to me extremely weak.²³ That the rites described in these catecheses presume a large church which could only be that of Antioch seems to me to be an argument totally devoid of value. More serious is the argument inferred from an allusion to the catecheses by Theodore in his tract against the Macedonians which records a public debate held in 392. But by this time it had already been several years since Theodore had left Antioch, and his catecheses could very well have been delivered at Tarsus and, as a result, represent a different usage from that of Antioch. Whatever the case may be, it seems, indeed, that the introduction of the postbaptismal anointing among the West Syrians only became general practice in the last years of the fourth century.

Let us sum up by distinguishing what is certain from what is only hypothesis. It is certain that the patriarchate of Antioch knew a rite of initiation which comprised only a prebaptismal anointing which had reference to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, from the fifth century the postbaptismal anointing is general practice, even among the East Syrians. Can the moment when the change was effected be accurately determined? or at least the time when the change asserted itself at Antioch? The Council of Laodicea takes us back to 380. The homily of St. John Chrysostom demonstrates that in 388 this anointing was still not employed at Antioch. It is vain to suppose that the silence of the preacher is due to a lapse of memory. The care with which he describes all the rites excludes this explanation. Besides, it is equally surprising that in none of his sermons—and they are numerous—is there the slightest allusion to a postbaptismal anointing or to the gift of the Spirit outside of baptism.²⁴ But above all it would be contrary to sound methodology to isolate St. John Chrysostom from the Syrian milieu we know from other writers. We can conclude, then, that the reform had only affected Antioch at a late date, in the last years of the fourth century.

A final question remains: what were the factors which determined this reform? Here we enter into the domain of hypothesis. There is no doubt that the Council of Laodicea had exercised considerable influence. But what were the underlying reasons which inspired its action?

23 *ibid.* Cf. the introduction, p. xvi. The two arguments are: (1) that the rites described presuppose a large church; (2) in his tract against the Macedonians (*Patrologia Orientalis* 9, p. 642) Theodore makes an allusion to one of his works which could be his catecheses. This tract relates a public debate which would have been held in 392. The allusion is not clear, but by 392 Theodore had already resided at Tarsus for some time, and if, indeed, he is speaking of the catecheses, they could have been preached at Tarsus.

24 Wenger (*op. cit.*, p. 100) is troubled by this fact since he admits an omission by St. John Chrysostom.

It is necessary to take into account a problem which preoccupied the ancient Church, namely, the reception of Christians baptized in heresy into the Church. The position of the Council of Laodicea, as it had been understood at Constantinople in the fifth century, was that, if the baptism conferred in heresy was valid, the gift of the Spirit was not communicated, and it was necessary to supply it after the baptism. The first time the formula "Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit" appears is precisely in this act of reconciliation. From that time on the question could be asked whether this fact did not give rise to the theological reflexion which attempted to show that the gift of the Spirit was separable from baptism and that it was necessary to express this fact by a rite which followed the baptism? Such is the hypothesis that I wish to submit to historians and theologians.

What I have said concerns only the patriarchate of Antioch. In the West from the time of Tertullian the postbaptismal anointing was practiced, but the gift of the Spirit was conferred by the imposition of hands. The doubling of this anointing first appears in Hippolytus: it is begun by the priest before the imposition of hands and is completed by the bishop after the imposition of hands. With regard to the patriarchate of Alexandria, we know nothing of its ancient usage. The *Euchologion* of Serapion presumes a postbaptismal anointing with a formula identical with that of the Byzantines. But the authenticity of this document is questioned and it does not date from the middle of the fourth century as is generally believed.²⁵ It is possible that the author might have been influenced by the Syrian tradition.

²⁵ Cf. B. Botte, "L'eucologe de Sérapion est-il authentique?" *Oriens Christianus* 48 (1964) 50-56.

A New Syrian Baptismal Ordo Attributed to Timothy of Alexandria*

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The baptismal service that has always been in general use among the Syrian Orthodox is that attributed to the Patriarch Severus (referred to below as 'Severus') of which several slightly variant forms are found¹. In addition to these, however, there was once current a completely different service (of the second half of the sixth century), attributed to Timothy, Patriarch of Alexandria (probably Timothy II (†477) is meant), which survives only in two early manuscripts—British Museum Add. 17129 of the 7th or 8th century and Add. 17128 of the 10th or 11th century—Despite the attribution, this service follows the general Antiochene (as opposed to Alexandrian) pattern of the baptismal rite, and in structure it is very similar to 'Severus'; the individual prayers, however, are almost all different, and instead show several points of contact with other Antiochene baptismal services, in particular the Maronite one attributed to Jacob of Serugh, but, to a lesser extent, also the original Antiochene form of the Melkite service, attributed to Basil. In this way the baptismal service attributed to Timothy serves as an important link between the Syrian Orthodox and the other Western Antiochene baptismal rites.

In comparison with 'Severus', the following points in the service attributed to Timothy may be noticed: the candidate's renunciation of Satan and greeting of Christ (§§ 4-8)² *precede* the first consignation and exorcism (§§ 10-13), rather than follow these (as one would have expected); between the second consignation (§§ 16-17) and the blessing of the water (§§ 28ff) there are several elements interpolated from the eucharistic liturgy (these are, however, also found in most early manuscripts of 'Severus'), the epiclesis (§ 36) conforms with East Syrian phraseology, using the words "May thy living and holy Spirit *come*—" (rather than the Western pattern "Do thou *send* thy Holy Spirit..."); the third consignation (§40, immediately before the baptism) has no formula (in texts of 'Severus' there is great variation in practice here, some even omitting this consignation altogether).

* Adapted from *Le Muséon*, LXXXIII (1970), 367-431.

¹ See my "Studies in the Early History of the Syrian Orthodox Baptismal Liturgy", in *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series XXIII (1972), pp. 16-64.

² Paragraph reference is to the second part of this article.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE

The service opens with the *sedro* of incense § 2, for whose text, however, only a cross reference to the *ordo* of Mar Severus is given. At the end of this *sedro* an *'etro* is added § 3. Proper responses § 4 follow, after which the candidates, completely naked, approach the priest, who turns them towards the West; they raise both their hands aloft § 5, and each in turn makes his renunciation of Satan, repeating the words after the priest § 6. After the renunciation the priest turns the candidates towards the East, with their hands still raised; he pronounces the name of each candidate § 7, and they repeat, in turn the words of the greeting of Christ § 8.

The priest prays for the candidates § 9, and then makes the sign of the cross over their faces § 10; while he does this he calls upon God as he "lays his hands on them" and "seals them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit", so as to ward off from them evil spirits § 11. He then invokes God to rebuke the evil spirits and cleanse his servants § 12, and there follows a very long series of exorcisms § 13 in which the unclean spirit is directly addressed.

When the exorcisms are completed the creed is said § 14 and the priest faces East and prays for the sending of "the spirit of mercifulness", so that the candidates may be delivered from the "tyranny of the adversary" and be "fashioned with the spirit" § 15. The priest then takes the "holy oil" and signs their foreheads with his thumb three times with a cross § 16, using the formula "N is signed in the name of..." § 17.

The priest censes § 18, and prays over the baptismal water § 19. Responses follow § 20, and the deacon bids all who have not received the "sign" to depart § 21, after which the creed is said § 22. After the baptismal litany § 23, there follows the Gloria § 24, and a brief Anamnesis § 25. Following on the exhortation § 26 the priest prays for the washing away of sins § 27.

The consecration prayer of Mar Timothy now begins § 28-29, at the end of which the people say the Sanctus § 30. The priest blows on the water in the form of a cross three times § 31, and prays for the driving away of evil spirits from the water, and for his own unworthiness § 32. He then prays for the sending of the Holy Spirit § 33, and for the consecration of the water § 34, and the warding off of evil spirits § 35. Kneeling, the priest finally invokes the Holy spirit § 36, after which he pours oil on to the water three times, accompanied by "Halleluia" § 37; then, raising his right hand over the font, he pronounces that the waters are consecrated § 38.

There follows the prayer for the anointing of the "lambs of Christ's flock" § 39, after which the priest anoints the head of each candidate, while the deacon anoints the rest of the body § 40. The candidates are then taken down to be baptized § 41, with a passive baptismal formula § 42.

The priest prays for the newly baptized § 43, and they reclothe themselves § 44. The prayer over the myron follows § 45, and the priest then imprints the forehead, left and right thumb, left and right big toe, of each candidate § 46, accompanied by a formula § 47.

The rubric § 48 states that the Our Father follows, but this § 50 is in fact introduced by a prayer for the baptized § 49. The end of the Lord's prayer is then expanded § 51. At this point the newly baptized receive communion § 52, after which the priest prays for their continued protection by the Holy Spirit § 53. The baptized are then dismissed § 54, with a final prayer § 55.

This summary will show at once that the new *ordo* has, despite the attribution to Timothy of Alexandria, far closer links with Syria than with Egypt; this is made abundantly clear by the presence of the exorcisms (absent in the Coptic and Ethiopic *ordines*), the four consignations, and finally, the passive baptismal formula (active in the Coptic and Ethiopic *ordines*). An Antiochene origin is further confirmed by the presence of various prayers and formulae which are also to be found in the Antiochene *ordines*: Syrian Orthodox *Ordo* attributed to Severus (e. g., Denzinger, *Ritus orientalium*, II, 302–309),³ Marenite *Ordo* attributed to Jacob of Serugh (ibid. 334–50), and Melkite *Ordo* attributed to basil (Denzinger, 318–27).

*Now the order of holy baptism of mar Timotheus
Patriarch of Alexandria the great. The order
of the church is thus, and ordains thus :*

1. That all those who have been prepared to be baptized, and who can (*i. e.* are of an age to) speak, should first learn the creed of the holy fathers, and the Our Father who art in heaven. And when they draw near to be baptized the priest turns them towards the west, with their hands raised aloft, and being naked, with their loins ungirt, and barefoot, and like captives who are rescued. And they renounce (*lit.* give the “woe” to) Satan over against the earth. And the priest learns the name of each one of them, and pronounces their names, while he who has been prepared for baptism repeats after the priest as follows :

2. (*But*) first of all the priest says the *sedro* of the incense, which has been written down above, adding to it his prayer below, as follows :

3. O Lord ! our God, we offer to thy great mercifulness this odour of incense on behalf of these thy servants who have been prepared for holy baptism, in order that they may be signed in thee unto life, and be (re) born at this time to spirituality, and be inscribed in the association of thy promises. And may all the harms of the enemy be far removed from their lives, and may they have thy holy seal as a guide and guardian ; and may they be rejuvenated by means of all kinds of good things, and may they be

³ See the table of content of the Baptismal rites in the next chapter.

victorious over the evil one, and may they cleave to thy divine commandments, and offer up to thee praise and thanksgiving: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People* Amen.

4. *And then they say the responses proper to the occasion.*

5. *And when they approach the priest to be baptized he turns them towards the West, with their hands raised aloft, and naked without anything on, as we specified above; and they renounce (lit. give the "woe" to) Satan over against the earth. And the priest learns the name of each one of them; and he who is to be baptized says after the priest as follows:*

6. I, N, renounce thee, Satan, and all thy powers, and all thy works, and all service of thee, and all worship of thee, and all thy pomp and all thy festivals.

7. *And then the priest turns them to the East, in the same manner, with their hands raised; and he pronounces over each of them his name, and he (the candidate) repeats after him (the priest), saying as follows:*

8. I, N, greet thee, Christ God, and all the teaching that has been entrusted by thee, in divine fashion, into the hand(s) of the prophets and apostles and holy fathers. And I acknowledge (thee) and believe in thee and in thy Father and in thy living and holy Spirit.

And then the priest prays (using) this prayer:

9. O God, who in the abundance of thy grace didst send thy Son into the world, that he might deliver it from error and from deathly works: do thou, O Lord, illumine with the word of truth these thy servants who have been instructed into knowledge of thee and into thy faith, preparing beforehand their souls and their bodies for the reception of the washing of rebirth, and of thy holy, immortal, and heavenly mysteries, and keeping them in upright reverence and in righteousness all the days of their lives; by the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son and thy beloved one; to whom, along with thee and thy living and holy Spirit, we offer up praise and honour, now and always and to eternal ages, Amen. *People* Amen.

10. *Immediately he makes the sign of the cross over against their faces and recites over them this adjuration, saying as follows:*

11. Thee do we call upon. O Lord God Almighty, before whom the whole assembly of cherubs and of seraphs stands in fear and trembling; me too, a servant of thine (made) of dust, although unworthy, thou hast called me to stand before thee at this time. And to thee, eternal God—whose wisdom is unfathomed by all perceptible and tangible powers—along with them I offer up at this time pure prayer, and praise that has been purified of all human thoughts, and rational service of thy life-giving name. I place (my) hand on this thy creature, and I seal it in the name of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and I keep back from it, and make impotent, all demons and evil and unclean spirits, so that they may remove themselves far away from the creation of thy hands and from thy image.

12. Hear us, and rebuke them, and cleanse thy servants from every working of the adversary.

13. i. I adjure thee, unclean spirit, by the mighty name of God, by which everything was created and established.

ii I adjure thee by him who stretched out the heavens as a veil, and fixed the earth over the deeps.

iii. I adjure thee by him who sits on the fearful chrystal throne with wheels of fire and beasts of flame yoked to it.

iv. I adjure thee by him whom a thousand thousand, attend, and ten thousand times ten thousand serve.

v. I adjure thee by him who looks upon the earth and it quakes, and the mountains dissolve before him like wax; who brings to nothing the might of the seas and the sound of their raging.

vi. I adjure thee by him who strikes open the sea with his mighty hand and with his exalted arm for the deliverance of the children of Israel.

vii. I adjure thee by him who drowned Pharaoh in the bottommost depths, while his own people he delivered.

viii. I adjure thee by him whom Isaiah saw, resplendent in the sanctuary to which he was close; and whom Daniel saw as the ancient of days.

ix. I adjure thee by the wonderful, the counsellor, the mighty God of ages, who became man and brought low thy dominion.

x. I adjure thee by the fearful one who subdued his own will and came for the purpose of suffering and the cross and death: that thou depart from this creature that has been betrothed to the living God, and cease, and expire, and be not found in any limb, great or small, that belongs to any of these servants who have been invited to this feast of the only begotten, God the Word—neither in the bones, nor in the joints, nor in the marrow.

xi. It is thee I address, unclean spirit; see, the groom is alive, the bride is ready, the guests stand by, the heavens are open, the angels hasten, the archangels cry out, the hosts proclaim "holy", the armies of the angels of the height are in attendance, the spiritual beings cry out, the fiery ones proclaim "holy", the Father rejoices, the Son exults, and the Spirit hovers by; baptism is set aflame with fire and the spirit, the mysteries are sealed, and the flock attends, the church quakes and the harlot mourns. See, do not dare not to vanish.

xii. I adjure thee by that fearful time of retribution that is coming as a result of thy audacity, do not remain in any of these servants who have been summoned to this feast of the only begotten, God the Word; and thou shalt not harm them at all when thou comest out, not a single one of their limbs. But if thou art so bold as not to leavet he sanctuary in which thy Lord dwells, then I curse thee and I bind thee by the mouth of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—do not harm them at all when thou comest out. But do thou come out and go to the lowest depths, where thy torture is. I am addressing thee' unclean spirit.

xiii. I adjure thee by him who rebuked the legion of your ranks, and drowned him in the depths of the sea.

xiv. I adjure thee by him who commanded the upper sea and it stood still on the crown of the height above.

xv. I adjure thee by him at whose nod at the power of whose command the upper and lower beings stand, along with the assembly of fiery beings.

xvi. I adjure thee by the great and powerful name that was hidden from the angels, but was revealed to Moses.

xvii. I adjure thee by the seven signs that were written in the book of Moses.

xviii. I adjure thee by him whom John saw by the river Jordan, and he cried out and said to the crowds "Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world".

xix. I adjure thee by him who was baptized in the river Jordan by John, and the heavens opened up to him, and there descended upon him the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, with the Father's voice crying out from above saying "This is my beloved Son in whom I am pleased."

xx. I adjure thee by the voice that cried out on the cross, and the earth's foundations shook and the temple's veil was rent from top to bottom.

xxi. I adjure thee by the Holy Trinity that thou neither remainest nor delayest before the precious seal of the holy cross of the only begotten God, whom we worship and serve, (and) who has wrought salvation for his creature.

xxii. I adjure thee by him who planted paradise in the land that provides the boundary to the great sea, Okeanos,—him for whom the souls of the children of Adam wait.

xxiii. I adjure thee by him from beneath whom the great sea of flame flows out.

xxiv. I adjure thee by him (before) whom <the seraphim> hide their faces with wings of fire and flame, so as not to behold him,

xxv. I adjure thee by the mystery that took place between the Father and his Son, and he descended and put on a body from the virgin Mary.

xxvi. I adjure thee by him who put on the body of Adam, and ascended and sat by the right hand of him who had sent him and had made him a hostage between heaven and earth; and he broke down the barricade of enmity and made peace between the Father and his creatures.

xxvii. I adjure thee by him who gave a hand to Simon, and (who) walked on the waves of the sea.

xxviii. I adjure thee by him who cast down the walls of Jericho; and again I bind thee by the word that was given to the apostles, and which the apostles handed on to the priests, by which the sea is bound, and mighty waves are put in chains, by which the heaven is suspended without ropes and the earth stands without pillars—which is of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, which was given to the apostles, and they handed it on to the priests.

xxix. I adjure thee by the right hand which took the rib from Adam's side, and made it the "mother of every living thing", from whom there runs forth the path of our humanity.

xxx. I adjure thee by him who contained beneath the earth and heaven the sea of fire and brimstone, and cast in (*lit.* between) them the accursed dragons and Leviathan while in it—and at the end of days—he opens a well on earth, by which all their forces go down, and there is the troop of your (*ex* their) ranks.

xxxi. I adjure thee by the Tree of Life in the middle of Paradise; and again I bind thee by him who sits in Jerusalem, in the heavenly aether: I and the whole holy church, that if there should be here any of the house of Behemoth within these doors of the sanctuary, let him leave and depart from what is the dwelling place of men, and not of beasts. Flee, unclean spirit, at this time, when the church is signing her children with the name of the only begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, along with his hidden begetter and his spirit the Paraclete: three persons, one God, unsearchable, unknowable, incomprehensible, to whom be praise now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

14. *Immediately they say "I believe in one God" etc. And then the priest faces East and prays as follows:*

15. Almighty God, king of powers, who alone over all ages is good, and saviour of the whole race of mankind, we pray thee, Lord, send the spirit of thy mercifulness upon these thy servants who have been prepared for holy baptism, and give them strength and wisdom, and knowledge and understanding against all the wiles of the evil one, so that they may be completely delivered from the whole tyranny of the adversary. Confirm them in thy faith, keep them in thy hope, seal them in thy love, put on them thy seal, form them with thy spirit, in the likeness of thy Christ, making them worthy of the new incorruptible birth; to whom, along with thee and thy living and holy Spirit, let us offer up praise, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen,*

16. *And then the priest takes the holy oil with the thumb of his right hand and signs three crosses on the forehead of each of those being baptized; and the priest says as follows :*

17. *N is signed in the name of the holy Father, Amen. And he makes the sign of the cross. In the name of the saving Son, Amen. And he makes the sign of the cross. In the name of the living and holy Spirit, the propitiator of sins, unto life, Amen. And he makes the sign of the cross.*

18. *And then he censes and prays over the water to be sanctified; and immediately the priest utters this prayer :*

19. *Before thee, Father of mercies, and before thy Christ, and before thy living and holy Spirit, I burn (lit. place) this fragrant incense, in the place where thy hiddenness dwells, for thou hast created these herbs for the use of thy creature. Even we, Lord, in prudence come and approach before thee for thy pleasure and for the absolving of our souls; receive, Lord, our request, and may our incense be pleasant before thee; and drive the evil one from thy servants, and may we offer up praise to the Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. People Amen.*

20. *And then they say the responses ;*

21. *and afterwards the deacon says " Let everyone who has not received the sign go forth".*

22. *People I believe in one God etc.*

23. *And afterwards the deacon utters the baptismal litany ;*

24. *and then the priest begins to consecrate the baptismal water, and he raises his voice, saying as follows :*

Praise to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. People Amen.

25. *Priest The remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his crucifixion and of his burial and of his resurrection do we make in the glorious mysteries of holy baptism, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. People Amen.*

26. *Priest Let us stand aright, let us stand in reverence, let us stand in modesty above in the uppermost heights; let the minds and hearts of us all be (directed) towards the Lord of all. People Towards thee, O God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob and of Israel, O ! glorious king.*

27. *Priest Towards thee, O God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel, are the eyes of our mind raised up and the hands of our heart stretched out; and like a stag that yearns for the spring of water, so do our souls,*

Lord, yearn for thee, that living and spiritual water may flow for us from the fountain on high, so that through it our thirst that (results) from the burning of sin may be assuaged. And as the East is distant from the West, so may our wickedness be removed from us; and may we confess thee and praise thee at all times, O merciful and pitiful, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

28. *Here the priest begins the consecration (prayer) of the holy Mar Timothy, inclined gently:*

29. O Lord God of our salvation, Father of our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, the living immortal power, the giver of all good things, who for our salvation didst send thy living Word into the world, who became flesh by the Holy Spirit and by the virgin Mary, and became man; who was baptized by John in the river Jordan although he was without sin, so that he might sanctify us by means of holy baptism. For of old, when the earth was covered with the depths of much water, thou, O Lord, didst punish sinners with death, but now thou dost purify in the water of the washing of rebirth the souls and bodies of those who approach in faith. But do thou, Lord, by thy invisible and fearful might drive out from this water every unclean spirit and every power of the enemy; *and he raises his voice* and may the holy angels gather over this water—they who are steadfast and continuous in serving thee perfectly, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as they cry out aloud, saying:

30. *People* Holy, holy, holy etc.

31. *Here the priest blows on the water, to his right and to his left and in front of him, in the shape of the cross, three times. And the priest prays, and raises his voice saying as follows:*

32. Yea, Lord, the Lord of beings that are above and below, the mighty one who overcome through his strength the mighty one and bound him on earth, and took from him the crown of armour in which he trusted, and subdued him beneath his feet and drove him back from all those who call upon his (own) name and the name of the Father and the name of his living and holy Spirit. In the name of thy holy Trinity, drive away from this water all unclean spirit, and every power of the enemy, and let not my faults and sins be a veil against those who are being baptized, and do not withhold from thy great and unspeakable gift because of my faults and my sins; for thou alone art without fault and canst forgive sins, and no living being is innocent before thee. And it was because of our faults and our sins that thy Father sent thee to be a propitiation for us; and thy body and blood purifies us from all our sins, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

33. *Priest inclined* Yea, we beseech thee, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, send thy living Spirit and sanctify this water, and may it become the womb of the Spirit that gives rebirth anew to mankind who are baptized in it: not by blood, not by the will of the flesh, and not by the will

of man, but by thee may they be (re)born, O God who lovest mankind. For nothing that is created or made is sufficient to repay thee ; for who is able to pray or confess in a manner that is fitting, except he who was born of thee, he who lives at all times, and offers up prayer for us continually, because of our wickedness which had become strong and rebelled and reached the heart, and which cannot be healed by man. Thus it was necessary for us (to have) a priest who was pure and spotless, and without stain, free from sins, who suffered and died for our sins, in the flesh, subject to suffering, mortal, and who took on our sufferings, and who rose from the dead in truth on the third day, and was raised up above heaven ; and thou didst glorify him, O Father, with the same glory which he had with thee before the world came into being, after he had glorified thee on earth ; now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

34. *And he raises his voice* And now, O Father, our Father and the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorify thy son Jesus Christ with miracles and mighty deeds and manifold acts of power and with healings of all kinds of sicknesses, both hidden and manifest, of the soul and of the body, by the coming of thy living and holy Spirit into this water, that it may be <consecrated (?)> in the holy name of thy Son, to whom with thee and thy holy and living Spirit, we offer up praise and and honour, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

35. *Priest, inclined* O Father almighty, keep back from this water every unclean spirit and every power of the enemy, and likewise from those who are baptized in it, and from this place ; and in accordance with the fair promises of thy only begotten (Son), sanctify it, and instead of the womb of Eve which produced children who were mortal and corruptible, may this womb of water produce children who are heavenly, spiritual and immortal.

36. *Here the priest kneels and invokes the Holy Spirit* And may thy living and holy Spirit come, O Lord, and dwell and rest upon this water, and sanctify it and make it like the water which flowed from the side of thy only begotten one on the cross ; that it may be a propitiation for the faults, and a forgiveness of the sins, of those who are baptized in it, (that it may be) a keeping of thy holy commandments, and the elimination of all evil things in thy living and holy name, and an inheritance of the kingdom in heaven, and a good end, along with all thy chosen ones. *He raises his voice* because the power and dominion in heaven and on earth belong to thee and to thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and to thy living and holy and sanctifying Spirit ; both now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

37. *And immediately the priest says "Halleluia" three times, and at every "Halleluia" he pours out some of the oil in the horn once over the water. And immediately he raises his right hand above the font, and raises his voice, saying as follows :*

38. Blessed and sanctified be this baptismal water, so that it may be a propitiation of faults and forgiveness of sins, a rebirth into a new life and

into the kingdom of heaven ; in the name of the living Father, unto life, Amen ; in the name of the living Son, unto life, Amen ; in the name of the living and holy Spirit, unto eternal life, Amen. *People Amen.*

39. *Priest* Thou, O God, Father almighty, didst set up of old priests Levites and kings for thy people, and didst command the sons of Aaron that they be anointed with oil ; now, because we have been called by thy great name, and thou hast appointed us, thou unworthy, as priests, through the heavenly grace of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and hast commanded us through thy apostles to anoint with oil the lambs of thy flock, with it do we sign and anoint these thy servants and maidservants, and we ask and beseech that, being anointed and baptized, they may be partakers in thy beloved Son, through thy Holy Spirit, and be united to thy true flock, so that the power of the adversary may have no dominion over them ; for thou art mighty and hast dominion over all and to thee is fitting praise and honour, and to thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and to thy living and holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

40. *The priest immediately puts some oil into a bowl, and the priest anoints the head of each of those being baptized in turn and the deacon (anoints) the whole body.*

41. *And then two deacons take each one down for baptism, holding him, on either side of the priest ; and the priest baptizes him three times in the water ; and if there are many, they cover him who is being baptized, or he throws (water) on his head. And the priest says as follows :*

42. N is baptized in the name of the living Father, unto life, Amen ; in the name of the living Son, unto life, Amen ; in the name of the living and holy Spirit, unto eternal life, Amen. *People Amen.*

43. *And when they have been baptized the priest utters this prayer :*

Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, through whose great and unutterable gift the baptismal water has been sanctified by the coming of thy living and holy Spirit, so as to become the spiritual womb which gives birth to the new man in place of the old. And, as thou hast made these thy servants worthy of the resurrection through water and the spirit, do thou, therefore, Lord, in thy great mercy make them worthy of thy heavenly kingdom, and may they and we together offer up to thee praise and honour and worship, to the father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

44. *And when they have clothed themselves they stand in order, and then the priest says this prayer over the holy myron.*

45. O God, whose gifts are very great, Father of our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who raisest up to adoption by thee these men who are filled with the scent of thy Christ, who hast given the symbol

of him in this myron, which through invisible power thou art wont to sanctify; grant through this imprint the union of thy living and holy Spirit, and the honour of priesthood, and the heavenly kingdom to those who are sanctified; and grant, in the coming of thy Christ, glorious honour and priestly produce, since to thee all things are simple and easy; and may they be made worthy to offer up, together and in company and companionship with us, praise for thy mercies towards us, Father Son and Holy Spirit, now and always, and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

46. *And then the priest takes the holy myron with the thumb of his right hand and imprints each one of those who have been baptized on the forehead, and on the thumb of the right hand and on that of the left hand, and on the big toe of the right foot and on that of the left foot; and as he makes the imprint the priest says as follows:*

47. With the holy myron of Christ God, the pleasant scent of holy faith, the imprint and perfecting of the grace of the Holy Spirit, is N imprinted, in the name of the living Father, unto life, Amen; in the name of the living Son, unto life, Amen; in the name of the Holy Spirit, unto eternal life, Amen. *People Amen.*

48. *And after the imprint of the holy myron the priest says the prayer of "Our Father who art in heaven".*

49. O Lord God almighty, begetter of the true light, Father of our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who even now art pleased through this our service to give rebirth to these thy servants by means of water and the spirit, and hast given forgiveness of the sins and wrongs and faults that were previously theirs, and through the participation of thy holy mysteries thou hast made them for thyself partakers in thy faith, through thy uncontainable and unutterable mercy; be pleased, O Lord, being swayed by the supplications of thy saints who pleased thee of old, to be their and our guardian together, as we pray in the contest of good things and complete our course in righteousness, and keep the faith up to the last hour and breath, that we may be found worthy of the kingdom of heaven which thou didst promise to those who love thee; so that with a pure heart and a clear soul, and a face without shame, we may be bold to call thee heavenly God, Father almighty, holy, and say:

50. *People Our Father who art in heaven etc.*

51. *Priest* Yea Lord, thy church beseeches and thy flock requests thee not to lead its children into temptation, but do thou deliver us from the evil one, and from his power and from everything that resembles him; for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, the strength and the might in heaven and on earth and in the ages that exist and in those that are to come, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *people Amen.*

52. *And then he gives them the sacrament; and when they have received the holy mysteries the priest utters this prayer, saying:*

53. The power of God which has come to rest upon you, and the Holy Spirit which has hovered over your bodies, be with you, and may the baptism by which you have been baptized remain in you, and may the body and blood which you have received be unto you eternal life, and may you be numbered amongst the firstfruits of the church of Christ, and may you be splendid in the true faith, an offer up praise to the Father Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen. *People Amen.*

54. *And then the priest says this prayer when those who have been baptized are dismissed, saying:*

55. O God, the great, the everlasting, the knower of hidden things, the holy one who rests with the saints, thou who hast given us the knowledge of thy truth, and hast granted that we may become thy children through water and the spirit, who hast cleansed these thy servants by the washing of water; do thou sanctify them in thy truth, fill them with the gift of thy Holy Spirit, so that, travelling on paths of righteousness, they may find confidence to stand before the fearful tribunal of thy Christ, along with whom to thee is fitting praise and honour and power, together with thy Holy Spirit, now and always and for eternal ages, Amen.

*The order of holy baptism of the holy and God-clothed
and venerable Mar Timotheos, bishop of Alexandria the
great, is ended.*

The Old Syrian Baptismal Tradition and its Resettlement Under the Influence of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century*

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It is well known that the old Syrian, or to give it a more comprehensive description, the old Eastern liturgical usage of Baptism differed markedly from that which obtained in the West. The most obvious difference is one of pattern, and appears in connection with the ceremony known to us as Confirmation. In Western usage, as we find it in North Africa, described by Tertullian at the beginning of the third century in his *De Baptismo*, the act of baptising is followed by two ceremonies. The first of these is an anointing with oil. Tertullian connects this anointing with that of Aaron by Moses, and ascribes to it an undefined spiritual benefit.¹ The second ceremony is the last of the rite, and its culmination; it conveys, according to Tertullian, the gift of the Holy Spirit. 'Dehinc,' he says, 'manus imponitur per benedictionem advocans et invitans spiritum sanctum Tunc ille sanctissimus spiritus super emundata et benedicta corpora libens a patre descendit.'² Shortly after the writing of *De Baptismo*, we meet with evidence for the existence of a similar rite at Rome. The text of *Apostolic Tradition*, as it has been put together from its several versions, requires to be treated with caution; but there is no doubt that Hippolytus knew a postbaptismal ceremony, comparable with the use of oil after the bath, and held to apply, the powers of the Holy Spirit, to those who have newly come up from the 'bath' of Baptism.³ In the East, the pattern is reversed. Anointing precedes the act of baptising; and that act, in and by itself, is understood to impart to those who submit to it the full and final effect of Christian initiation.

* Studies in Church History, II (1965), 19—37

1 *De Baptismo* vii, 2.

2 Ibid. viii, 1, 3.

3 Hippolytus, *Commentary on Daniel* i, 16. For the baptismal rite of *Apostolic Tradition* see the edition of G. Dix (1937), 33—9, or of B. Botte (*La Tradition Apostolique*, Paris 1946), 49—53.

Although the old Eastern baptismal pattern may not be unfamiliar, there is probably less acquaintance with the rite embodying it and expressing its meaning. In its earlier stages the study of the rite is not entirely straightforward. We possess for it no such convenient starting point as the baptismal liturgy included in *Apostolic Tradition*. Indeed, we meet with no formal Eastern *Ordo baptismi* before the fourth century, when we find it set out in book VII of *Apostolic Constitutions*, a work compiled towards the end of that century in the area of Antioch. For the preceding period we are obliged to depend upon descriptions of Baptism and baptismal liturgical allusions occurring in three early documents. The first document is *Didascalia Apostolorum*. Of its original Greek, only a part, and that edited, has been preserved in *Apostolic Constitutions*. We know the document through a complete Syriac, and an incomplete Latin version.⁴ *Didascalia* may be taken as having originated in the region of Antioch towards the middle of the third century.⁵ Our second document is the apocryphal *Acts of Judas Thomas*.⁶ It is now generally accepted that these *Acts* were written in Syriac, and that the Greek version is a rendering of the Syriac.⁷ The alleged Gnostic character of the document rests upon certain interpolations; broadly, the doctrine of the *Acts of Thomas* exhibits, as its latest commentator observes, a 'close affinity' with the pre-Nicene orthodoxy of the Syriac-speaking Church.⁸ In date the *Acts* are not far distant from *Didascalia*; they are probably somewhat earlier.⁹ For the *lieu d'origine* of the *Acts of Judas Thomas* we may look to Edessa, or 'Urhai, the centre of ancient Syriac-speaking Christianity and later the resting-place of the Apostle Thomas's reputed remains.¹⁰ Our third document has received considerably less attention than either of the other two. It is the so-called *History of John the Son of Zebedee*,¹¹ sometimes cited as the Syriac *Acts of John* but not to be connected or confused with the Greek *Acta Joannis*. According to a statement occurring in the title of one of the two MSS used by W. Wright for his edition of the document, 'this history was composed by Eusebius of Caesarea concerning S. John, who found it in a Greek book, and it was translated into Syriac.'¹² Because this statement is found in the older of the two MSS, it has been accepted as trustworthy and the interest of the document has consequently been underrated. Some fifty years ago, Don R. H.

4 *Didascalia Apostolorum Syriace*, ed. P. de Lagarde, Leipzig 1854 (Anastatischer Neudruck, Göttingen 1911). For an edition of the Latin version with an English translation of the Syriac, see R. H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, Oxford 1929.

5 For a review of the question, see F. X. Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, Paderborn 1906, I, iii-v; cf. Connolly, op. cit. lxxxvii-xci.

6 W. Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 1871, I (Syriac text) 272-333 and II (English tr.) 146-298.

7 F. C. Burkitt, 'The original language of the Acts of Judas Thomas,' *JTS*, 1 (1900), 280-90; A. F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, Leiden 1962, 3-7, 15-16.

8 A. F. J. Klijn, op. cit. 38.

9 Klijn's dating is 'the beginning of the third century,' op. cit. 26.

10 Socrates states that at Edessa and notes that it attracted the interest of the Emperor Valens c. A. D. 371 (*Hist. Eccl.* iv, 18).

11 W. Wright, op. cit. I, 4-65; II, 3-60.

12 Ibid. II, 3; for an account of the two MSS, see I, vii-ix.

Connolly submitted the Syriac *History* to a close examination.¹³ He concluded that in modes of expression, in theological ideas, and in Gospel quotations, which derive from or reflect the Diatessaron, as well as in general style, the *History of John* shows itself to be not a translation from the Greek (of which no trace exists, apart from the reference in the title of the MS), but an original Syriac composition. Of its date, Connolly judged that it 'can scarcely be much later than the end of the fourth century and may be earlier.'¹⁴ Connolly's conclusion may be accepted as fully established; and the *Syriac Acts of John* may be admitted as affording authentic evidence concerning old Syrian baptismal usage. It may be added that if there be a grain of fact in the alleged connection with Eusebius, it will follow that the approximate date Eusebius's death, A. D. 340, must be taken as the *terminus ad quem* of the *History*.

We may now inquire what information these three documents afford concerning liturgical detail, whether of ceremonial performed or of formula spoken. *Didascalia* being primarily a manual of pastoral guidance, its liturgical references are incidental. It refers twice to the baptismal rite. The longer reference occupies the main portion of ch. xvi,¹⁵ which in the Syriac version is entitled, 'on the appointment of deacons and deaconesses.' The Bishop is instructed to appoint deaconesses as well as deacons, because the assistance of a woman at the pre-baptismal anointing of women ensures the preservation of modesty. The matter is made clear by the twofold method of anointing prescribed in the chapter. First, the bishop is directed to lay his hand upon, and to anoint with oil, the heads of those receiving Baptism, men and women alike. Then, when they have stripped, their naked bodies are anointed all over by another minister. Deacons anoint the men; and 'as it not fitting,' says the Didascaliast, that women should be seen by men,' a woman 'and especially a deaconess,' should discharge the office for the women. Where no deaconess or other woman is present to assist, 'he who baptizes must of necessity anoint her who is being baptized.' The deaconess, therefore, was becoming or had already become, a pastoral and liturgical necessity. Yet although a woman might anoint women, the performance of the baptismal act is reserved to men. Either the bishop, or deacons or presbyters commanded by him, must 'pronounce over them (*sc.* women) the invocation of the divine Names in the water.' The phrase, 'the invocation of the divine Names,' contains a reference to the baptismal formula. It was unnecessary to quote the formula; the Didascaliast's readers were acquainted with it.

What we learn from *Didascalia* has its counterpart in the *Acts of Thomas*, in which we have five descriptions of Baptism. In all except one (the meaning of which is not entirely clear)¹⁶ anointing with oil precedes the baptismal act, and Thomas himself begins the anointing by pouring the oil upon the heads of those being baptised. When he anoints the head of a

13 'The original language of the Syriac Acts of John,' *JTS*, I (1907), 24-61.

14 Ibid. 261.

15 Lagarde, *Didascalia*, 70-2; Connolly, *Didascalia*, 146-7.

16 C: 49; Klijn, *op. cit.* 90, and see the comment on 244; W. Wright, *op. cit.* I, 217; II, 188,

woman, he orders another woman to anoint the rest of her body.¹⁷ In the matter of formulae, however the *Acts* are more informative than *Didascalia*. On one occasion, Thomas, at the moment of anointing, utters an invocation over the person being anointed. 'Come, holy name of the Messiah...come, messenger of reconciliation: and communicate with the minds of these youths; come, Spirit of holiness, and purify their reins and hearts.'¹⁸ On another occasion, Thomas addresses 'Our Lord Jesus' and prays 'let Thy power come abide upon this oil, and let Thy holiness dwell in it.'¹⁹ We need not suppose that the author of the *Acts of Thomas* is here reproducing official liturgical formulae; but it is reasonable to assume that, in introducing formulae in connection with the anointing, he reflects contemporary, and still fluid, liturgical usage. About the formula accompanying the baptismal act, the author of the *Acts of Thomas* is no more explicit than the Didascaliast. It may be said of both documents, however, that they reveal no trace of the Western practice, attested by Tertullian²⁰ and prescribed in *Apostolic Tradition*,²¹ of identifying the baptismal formula with the three credal questions, which are addressed to and answered by the person being baptised, when he has gone down into the water. In the *Acts of Thomas* the same phrase is used in each of the descriptions of the rite, 'and he baptized them (or her) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit of holiness.'²² The form of the statement suggests the inference that the words, 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit of holiness,' were themselves the baptismal formula.

We have yet to look at the Didascaliast's shorter reference to Baptism. It occurs in a passage in ch. ix which sternly condemns any reviling of the bishop, 'through whom the Lord gave you the Holy Spirit, and through whom you have learned the word and have known God, and through whom you have been known of God, and through whom you were sealed, and through whom you became sons of the light, and through whom the Lord in baptism, by the imposition of the hand of the bishop, bore witness to each one of you and uttered His holy voice, saying: *Thou art my son: I this day have begotten thee.*'²³ The concluding words of the passage will be recognised as being a quotation from Psalm ii, 7. They are also a *varia lectio* of the pronouncement of the Divine Voice in the Lucan account of the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan (Lk. iii, 22). The variant occurs in the Codex Bezae. It first appears in a writing of Justin Martyr,²⁴ and from him

17 Cc. 121, 157; Klijn, op. cit. 130, 149; W. Wright, op. cit. i, 291, 324; ii, 258, 289.

18 C 27; Klijn, op. cit. 77; W. Wright, op. cit. i, 191; ii, 166-7

19 C 121; Klijn, op. cit. 130; W. Wright, op. cit. i, 291; ii, 258.

20 Dehinc ter mergitur amplius aliquid respondentem quam Dominus in euangelio determinavit (*De corona militis*, 3). Tertullian is here referring to Matt. xxviii, 19; for the 'amplius aliquid' see J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 1950, 82-8.

21 Dix, *Apostolic Tradition*, 36-7; Botte, *La Tradition Apostolique*, 50-1.

22 Klijn, op. cit. 77 (where Klijn introduces before 'Spirit' the adjective 'Holy' which is absent from the Syriac), 90, 130, 136, 199; W. Wright, op. cit. i, 194, 217, 291, 301, 324; ii, 167, 188, 258, 267, 289-90. 'Spirit of holiness' is the old Syriac rendering of Pneuma Agion, To Pneuma To Agion, To Agion Pneuma.

23 Connolly, *Didascalia*, 93; Lagarde, *Didascalia*, 39.

24 *Dialogue with Trypho* 88 103 (written c. A. D. 155),

may have passed into Tatian's *Diatessaron*, through which knowledge of it could have been transmitted into Syria. It may have been the reading accepted at Antioch, where it would have been congenial to the mind of the 'Adoptionist Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch from c. A. D. 260 until his over-throw twelve years later. From whatever source the words were understood to be derived, the Didascaliast plainly asserts that the words were recited as a formula by the bishop, when laying his hand upon the head of each person being baptised. The hand-laying to which the Didascaliast's passage refers is presumably that performed before the pouring of the oil upon the head. The use of the formula appears to have been confined to the Didascaliast's own Greek-speaking area; there is no trace of it in the Syriac-speaking areas represented by the *Acts of Thomas* and the *History of John*.²⁵ Further, there is no evidence to show that the formula continued in use in the Antiochene area beyond the Didascaliast's time. We may suppose that the affair of Paul of Samosata led to the relinquishment of a form of words which was patient of unorthodox construction.²⁶ Nevertheless, within its own time and place, the formula had its own value and importance. The two brief statements, 'Thou art my son: I this day have begotten thee,' sum up succinctly and dramatically the old Eastern baptismal tradition in doctrine and rite.

Before we consider the meaning of that tradition, we must first notice what is contributed to it by the *History of John*. In the century following the composition of the *Acts of Thomas*, the rite has been formalised and slightly amplified, but not altered in substance. The *History* contains two descriptions²⁷ of Baptism. In the first description, the oil and the water are formally consecrated in succession. John makes the sign of the cross over each element, saying over the oil first, 'Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Spirit of holiness, Amen,' and then, three times, 'Holy is the Father and the Son and the Spirit of holiness, Amen.' Over the water he says, 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Spirit of holiness for ever, Amen.' But these formulæ do not consecrate the two elements, and they are not consecrated by any words pronounced by John. Fire blazes out from heaven; and two angels, who are the Seraphs of Isaiah vi, 3, suddenly appear. Covering the oil with their wings, and so preventing it from igniting, they chant the Sanctus over it, and thus effect the consecration of the oil by their utterance of the divine Name, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord Almighty.'²⁸ The water is consecrated in similar fashion, the two angels this time chanting,

25 In a note on the Old Syriac of Lk. iii, 22, F. C. Burkitt wrote, 'There is no Syriac evidence known for the introduction here of Ps. ii, 8' (*Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe* Cambridge 1904, 1 (text) 263).

26 There is, perhaps, a reminiscence of a baptismal connection between Ps. ii, 7 and Lk. iii, 22, and of an erroneous interpretation of the words, in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* ix, 9.

27 W. Wright, op. cit. 1, 43-6; 11, 39-42.

28 This story, or the tradition which inspired it, left its mark, in curious fashion, on subsequent Syrian liturgical usage. According to Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, the veil covering the Muron at its consecration was made in the form of the Seraphs' twelve wings, and the Sanctus was sung as an accompaniment to the consecration (*De ecclesiastica hierarchia* IV, ii, iii, 5; Migne, PG, 3, cols. 473A, 479B).

'Holy, holy, holy, Father and Son and Spirit of holiness,' to which John responds, 'Amen.' Then follows a feature, which, though it is not discernible in *Didascalia* or in the *Acts of Thomas*, is not necessarily new. It is a formal profession of belief, 'We, believe in the Father and the Son and the Spirit of holiness.'²⁹ The confession of faith immediately precedes descent into the water for the 'dipping,' which is expressly stated to be threefold.³⁰ When he comes up out of the water, the newly baptised person is clothed in white garments, and receives the kiss of peace from John. The second description³¹ is closely parallel to the first. In the second description, however, the oil and water are consecrated together, and John recites over them a prayer which expresses the meaning of the baptismal rite. The prayer deserves to be quoted in full :

Lord God Almighty, let thy Spirit of holiness come, and rest and dwell upon the oil and the water ; and let them (*sc.* the persons being baptised) be bathed and purified from uncleanness ; and let them receive the Spirit of holiness through baptism ; and henceforth let them call thee, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'³² Yea, Lord, sanctify this water with Thy voice, which resounded over the Jordan and pointed out our Lord Jesus (as) with the finger, (saying) 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.'³³ Thou art here who wast on the Jordan. Yea, I beseech thee, Lord, manifest Thyself here before this assemblage who have believed on Thee with simplicity, and let the nations of the earth hear that the city of Ephesus was the first to receive Thy Gospel before all cities, and became a second sister to Urhan (Edessa) of the Parthians.

At this point, the fire and the angels reappear from heaven. The assembled multitude chants the Sanctus, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord Almighty, of whose praises Heaven and earth are full.'

It will now be convenient to inquire, What is the meaning of the Syrian baptismal rite ? and, in particular, to ask, What is the significance of the pre-baptismal anointing ? Is that anointing to be regarded as the equivalent of the Western Confirmation anointing ? Is it to be understood, that is to say, as conveying the Holy Spirit to those being baptised ? If so, why does it precede the baptismal act ?

Western Christians of this early period were accustomed to see in the baptismal water the means of cleansing from sins. Without such cleansing the Holy Spirit could have no place in the candidate for admission to the

29 We may assume that, in the earlier period, a formal profession of belief was made before the rite began.

30 At each dipping John says, 'In the name of' (the Father, etc).

31 W. Wright, *op. cit.* 1, 58-9 ; 11, 53-4.

32 An allusion to a Syrian usage whereby the newly baptised at the end of the baptismal rite recited the Lord's Prayer, see below, p. 35.

33 The voice of the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii, 5) is here transferred to the Baptism.

Church. The Eastern Christian viewed the matter otherwise. In the *Acts of Thomas*, as we have noticed, the Apostle invokes the Spirit at the moment of the anointing: 'Come Spirit of holiness,' he prays, 'and purify their reins and hearts.' The Spirit of holiness is the agent of cleansing from sins, and the Spirit's operation in this respect is an essential preparation for the baptismal act. Through the laying-on of the bishop's hands and the anointing with oil, therefore, the Spirit of holiness is conveyed to the individual before he goes down into the baptismal water. The Didascaliast compares the pre-baptismal anointing with that of the priests and kings 'in Israel,'³⁴ expecting his readers to recall those passages of the Old Testament in which the spiritual effect of the anointing is described.³⁵ The liturgical anointing, then, is not a Confirmation or Completion, but an Inception; the giving of the Spirit is the beginning of initiation. This inverted order, as it seems to Western Christians, could claim Apostolic authority. In Acts x, 44-8, St. Peter commands the baptism of certain Gentiles, after it had become evident that the Holy Spirit had already 'fallen upon them.' In Acts ix, 17-18, St. Paul himself first receives the Holy Spirit through the laying-on of Ananias's hands, and then is baptised. T. W. Manson has suggested that certain passages in St. Paul's Epistles imply the same order.³⁶ He has also suggested that we have testimony to the order in 1 John v, 8. There are three witnesses: the Spirit, the water and the blood (RSV).³⁷ It may be said, therefore, that Syrian baptismal usage has its roots in the Apostolic past. In the earliest period, we may suppose, the laying-on of the bishop's hand was unaccompanied by anointing with oil. From teaching catechumens about the nonmaterial unction of the Spirit, it is but a short step to representing that unction by an anointing with material oil. The next step is to explain the material anointing as the means of effecting spiritually that which it represents. The practice of consecrating the oil is the corollary of the explanation.

If the anointing with oil is in some sense a *Mysterion* or sacrament of the Spirit, what is the significance of the ceremony enacted in the water? We have already observed that there is a hint in *Didascalia* that the Baptism of Jesus in Jordan is the archetype of the Baptism of the Christian.³⁸ The prayer of consecration of the oil and water which is found in the *History of John*, leaves no doubt about the matter. The scene at the Jordan is dramatically recalled. God who was present at Jordan and who pointed to Jesus as his 'beloved Son' is declared to be present at the Baptism of the Christian.³⁹ What God there does is declared in the two sentences quoted by the Didascaliast, 'Thou art my son: I this day have begotten thee.' The *Acts of Thomas* expresses the same idea in a different way. In a short eulogy of Baptism, preceding the penultimate description of the rite, Thomas

34 Lagarde, *Didascalia* 71; Connolly, *Didascalia* 146.

35 E.g. Levit. viii, 12; 1 Sam. x, 1-6; xvi, 13; 1 Kings i, 39.

36 'Entry into membership of the early Church,' *JTS*, XLVIII (1947), 25-33.

37 Ibid.

38 Above p. 23.

39 Above p. 25.

says, 'This is the baptism of the remission of sins; this is the bringer forth of the new man ... and the establisher of the new man in the Trinity. Glory to thee, hidden power, that dost communicate with us in baptism... Glory to you, new creatures, who are renewed through baptism, who draw nigh to it in love.⁴⁰ Establishment in the Trinity is accomplished, we infer, by the pronouncement of the baptismal formula, the "invocation of the divine Names" (as the Didascalia terms it), over the person being 'dipped' in the water. In short, the Christian's Baptism is a *mimesis* of Christ's. What was done at Jordan is done again, *mutatis mutandis*, in the water of the font. A man comes out of that water reborn as a 'son' of God, and having 'communication with the Father and his son Jesus Christ.'⁴¹ So deeply did the Baptism of Jesus impress itself upon Syrian liturgical imagination, that in the later liturgical books the font is named 'the Jordan.' Some commentators, in allusion to the idea of rebirth, refer to the font as a 'womb,'⁴² It is never called 'the grave' or 'the sepulchre.' The idea of Romans vi, 3-5 in which St Paul likens the baptismal ceremony to Christ's death and burial, made no mark upon early Syrian thought about Baptism. The idea was not in evidence elsewhere.⁴³ It was to be introduced eventually, however; and to be introduced at Jerusalem, where certain topographical features gave it a special relevance to the baptismal rite.

When Cyril, consecrated bishop of Jerusalem in A. D. 348, delivered his five memorable Mystagogic Catecheses,⁴⁴ or Lectures on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, to the newly baptised in Easter week of c. A. D. 350, he spoke, not in the old cathedral church on Mount Sion, but in the new colonnaded precinct erected by Constantine to enclose the sacred sites of Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection.⁴⁵ prominent to the east of the precinct, with its facade facing eastward, was the Martyrium or church. To the west of the church, and possibly connected with its south aisle by a stairway, was the Monticulus Calvariae, or Golgotha, the site of the crucifixion. Father to the west of the church, and in line with its apse, stood 'as

40 C. 132; Klijn, op. cit. 135; W. Wright, op. cit. 1, 301: II, 267.

41 I Jn i, 3.

42 Theodore of Mopsuestia, Third Homily on Baptism (R. Tonneau and R. Devreess, *Les Homélies Catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste*, Studi e Testi 145 (1949), 421, 425); Narsai, *Homilies* xxi and xxxii (A. Mingana, *Narsai Homiliae et Carmina*, Mosul 1905, 1, 326, 11, 148-9; R. H. Connolly, *The liturgical Homilies of Narsai translated into English*, Cambridge 1909, 5, 66).

43 Cf. J. N. D. Kelly, 'the earlier Pauline conception of [Baptism] as the application of Christ's atoning death to the believer seems to have faded' (*Early Christian Doctrines*, 1958, 194). Aphrahat, writing, c. A. D. 345, makes a passing allusion to Rom. vi, 3, as offering Pauline confirmation of Christ's institution of Baptism at the foot-washing (Jn xiii) on the eve of His passion, Dem. xii De Paschate (*Aphraatis Demonstrationes*, Paris 1894, col. 529).

44 For a convenient text, with translation. see F. L. Cross, *St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments*, 1951; references in this paper are made to this edition. The attribution of the five *Catecheses* to Cyril has been disputed by W. J. Swaans (*Le Muséon*, LV (1942), 1-43). Cross holds Swaan's case to be not proved. B. Althamer is of the same opinion (*Patrologie*, Freiburg 1958, 279).

45 For an account and reconstruction of Constantine's work, see H. Vincent and F. M. Abel, *Jerusalem*, Paris 1914, 11, 1, 2, 154-217. Wistrand persuasively suggests certain alterations in the detail of Vincent and Abel *Konstantins Kirche am heiligen Grab in Jerusalem nach den ältesten literarischen Zeugnissen*, Goteborg 1952).

it were the head of the whole' (so Eusebius describes)⁴⁶ the Holy Sepulchre, in which Christ's body had been buried after His crucifixion, and from which He had risen 'on the third day.' The surrounding ridge of the rock in which the sepulchre was hewn had been cut away: and the Sepulchre itself, bow resembling a small house, stood in isolation in the midst of a garden.⁴⁷ To the South of the precinct, projecting externally from it and not quite in a line with the Sepulchre, was the Baptistry. The candidates for Baptism entered the Baptistry by an external western door without passing through the precinct. Baptised, they left the Baptistry by a door opening on to the garden of the Sepulchre; and passing between the sacred memorials of the Passion and the Resurrection, they proceeded to the Martyrium⁴⁸ for their first attendance at the Eucharistic Liturgy and for their first communion.

The purpose of the first three of Cyril's Lectures on the Sacraments was to explain to the new Christians the full meaning of the rite and ceremonies in which they had taken part in the Baptistry during the night between Easter Eve and the dawning of Easter Day. The rite on which Cyril comments is fundamentally the old Syrian rite, with certain dramatically impressive embellishments added at the beginning and with a new feature annexed at the end. At the beginning, as they stand in the entrance-hall of the Baptistry, the candidates face westward toward the abode of the Prince Darkness and with outstretched hand they pronounce a renunciation of Satan and all his works and all his pomp and all his worship.⁴⁹ Then they turn eastward, toward 'the region of light,' and recite a short Profession of Belief, 'I believe in the Father and in the Son and in the Holy Spirit and in one Baptism of repentance.'⁵⁰ After that they enter the inner chamber of the Baptistry for the main part of the rite.

How does Cyril interpret the ceremony in the water? He devotes his second Sacramental Lecture to it taking as his text the passage of Romans vi:⁵⁰ (RSV) which begins with the words, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death." (3-4). He makes no reference, in the second lecture, to the

46 *De Vita Constantini*, cc. 33, 34.

47 The sepulchre was not yet covered by a cupola and had not yet become the centre of a smaller and round church, as it was later to be (Wistrand' op. cit. 20-4, 35-6).

48 At the end of the fourth century, Egeria (or Aetheria) records that the newly baptised, on their way to the Martyrium, made a 'station' at the Holy Sepulchre, 'quemadmodum exient de fonte simul cum episcopo primum ad Anastase (i. e. the Sepulchre) ducuntur. Intrat episcopus intro cancellos Anasta, dicitur unus ymnus, et sic facit orationem episcopus pro eis, et sic uenit ad ecclesiam maiorem (i. e. the Martyrium) cum eis, ubi iuxta consuetudinem omnis populus suaigilt' (*Itinerarium Egeriae*, xxxviii, 1, 2, ed. A. Franceschini and R. Weber, Turnhout 1948 82) [see *Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage* trans., G E Gingras, New York: Ancient Christian Writers, XXXVIII, 1970, 114. Editor]. This usage may well have been instituted by Cyril. In the bishop's 'oratio' we may have the origin of the prayer which in the Byzantine rite precedes the anointing with cf. the prayer of the Barberini Euchologion, *Eulogetos Eikurie* in J. Goar, *Chalogion sive Rituale Graecorum*, Venice 1730 (repr. Graz 1960), 290 f; in F. C. Conybeare and A. J. Maclean, *Rituale Armenorum*, Oxford 1905, 404; and in modern editions of the *Euchologion*.

49 I, 2-8; Terullian witnesses to the use of renunciation of 'the devil and his pomp and his angel's in north Africa c. A. D. 211 (*De Corona Militis* 3).

50 I, 9,

Baptism in Jordan. Instead, he applies the thought of Christ's death and burial to the persons being baptised. When they are stripped to enter the water, they are 'imitations' *Mimoumenoi* of Christ stripped 'naked on the cross.'⁵¹ They are taken to the font, as Christ was taken dead from the cross to that Sepulchre 'which is before your eyes'⁵² Their three descents into the water represent symbolically Christ's three days' burial in the sepulchre.⁵³ The baptismal rite is 'a likeness,' says Cyril, quoting in conclusion Romans vi, 5, of Christ's death and sufferings.⁵⁴ Sixteen centuries after Cyril delivered his exposition, it is still possible to sense the powerful appeal which the rite, the night, and the site combined to exercise upon the imagination of the persons being baptised. What had been done physically in the redemptive events of Christ's passion, death, and burial on the first Easter Eve was done symbolically in the baptismal liturgy on the anniversary of the events, and on the very site which had witnessed their occurrence. The baptismal doctrine of Romans vi was particularly appropriate to the baptismal rite of Jerusalem because of the presence of Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre. These two sacred places, indeed, seem to have suggested the revival of the Pauline doctrine.

The adoption of the Pauline doctrine by Cyril was bound to affect his treatment of the old Easter baptismal tradition. The picture of Golgotha, burial and tomb, cannot comfortably be fused with that of Jordan, rebirth and womb. In his second lecture, Cyril makes a brief allusion to the water as a 'mother'⁵⁵ and to the idea of his hearers symbolical 'birth' which, he says, is concurrent with their symbolical 'death';⁵⁶ but he refers neither to the baptism at Jordan, nor to the Divine Voice, in his exposition of the baptismal act.⁵⁷ Does he, then, ignore Christ's Baptism? It has already been mentioned that Cyril's rite exhibits a new feature added at the end. The new feature, which is explained in the third Lecture, was a postbaptismal anointing. In method of application' this anointing differs from the old pre-baptismal ceremony. Not the whole body, but only the brow, the breast, and the organs of sense, the ears and nostrils, are smeared with the oil.⁵⁸ Further, the oil is not the unmixed product of the olive, but *Muron*,⁵⁹ fragrant ointment, the Western equivalent of which is Chrism. Cyril explains the new ceremony as a symbol of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus to 'anoint' Him after His ascent out of the water from His baptism.⁶⁰ For Cyril, the anointing with the *Muron* is the Sacrament of the Holy Anointing

51 II, 2.

52 II, 4.

53 Ibid.

54 II, 7.

55 II, Cyril confirms his point by appeal to Eccles. iii, 2,

56 II, 4

57 Cyril refers to the Voice, however in *Catechesis* xi, 9;

58 III, 4.

59 III, 2,

60 III, 1. Cyril quotes Is. lxi. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me" (RSV), as a prophecy of the event.

Spirit; he describes it as.⁶¹ As to *antityfon ou exriste xristos* Cyril conceives the matter, the post-baptismal anointing is involved in the action of Christ's own Baptism. Whereas his predecessors had regarded the Baptism in Jordan, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the utterance of the Voice as constituting one 'moment,' Cyril distinguishes between Christ's 'washing' in the water and the event which followed it.⁶² The post-baptismal anointing completes the liturgical representation of the scene at Jordan. By means of their *Chrisma*, the newly baptised became *Eikones*, 'ikons,' of Christ, and conformed to the Son of God.⁶³ Cyril's distinction and its liturgical application were useful. They enabled him to preserve, by linking it with the post-baptismal anointing most of what the old Eastern tradition had attached to the pre-baptismal anointing and the ceremony in the water. In so doing, they saved Cyril from the most awkward consequences of adopting the doctrine of Romans vi.

The treatment of the new ceremony of the *Muron* as the Sacrament of the Holy Spirit, however, created a difficulty about the interpretation of the old pre-baptismal anointing with oil. It was impossible to conceive two moments, within the same rite, at which the Holy Spirit is bestowed. It was equally impossible to jettison the immemorial usage of the pre-baptismal anointing. How, then, was it to be interpreted, or reinterpreted? Cyril was content to say of the first anointing both that it is 'the means of expelling every trace of the operations of the adversary,' and also that it is of such power 'as not only to burn up and purge away the traces of sins, but to chase away the invisible hosts of the evil one.'⁶⁴ Skilfully, Cyril preserves all that he can of the traditional Syrian interpretation, emphasises what he preserves, and further enhances it by treating the anointing as a 'demonifuge.' To persons who were convinced of the reality of demons, and who lived in fear of demonic power, Cyril's interpretation of the old pre-baptismal anointing could hardly fail to commend itself.⁶⁵

The baptismal rite, which forms the subject of Cyril's commentary, poses a problem to the historian of liturgy. Whence did the church authorities of Jerusalem derive the post-baptismal ceremony and the use of *Muron*? Was the ceremony an imitation of Western practice, instituted by a local Eastern Church which was not afraid of novelty and of employing novelty for the purposes of edification? Or was the new usage suggested by some document held to be authoritative, such as *Apostolic Tradition*?⁶⁶ There are certainly signs of interest in *Apostolic Tradition* at this time in the East. There are no clear answers to these questions, however; and there is not

61 III, 1.

62 III, 1.

63 Ibid.

64 II, 3

65 For a combination of Cyril's 'demonifuge' doctrine with the traditional Syrian association of the bestowal of the Holy Spirit by means of the pre-baptismal anointing, see Narsai's *Homily* xii (A. Mingana, *Homiliae*, i, 366-8; R. H. Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies*, 43-5).

66 But *Apostolic Tradition* enjoins the use, not of *myron*, but of 'oleum sanctificatum' see the edition of Dix, 39.

enough evidence to give ground for conjecture. It can only be said that however and whenever the Church of Jerusalem was led to adopt a post-baptismal anointing, it handled the ceremony in its own way. It left intact the traditional sequence of the central part of the rite;⁶⁷ and in interpreting the added ceremony as making men of Christ, it was expressing in a new way albeit in a novel connection, the traditional Eastern idea of 'communication' with Christ the Son of God as established in and by the baptismal rite.

The liturgy (in the broadest sense of the term) of the Church of Jerusalem has left an indelible mark on all the historic liturgies of Christendom. The sentiment associated with the Holy City, the prestige which sentiment for the City won for its Church, and the impressive usages of worship which the Church of Jerusalem evolved, led to imitation of its practice on a universal scale. The rite of Baptism was no exception. Cyril's application of Romans vi to the baptismal act received expression in the liturgy. A relatively early example of such expression, not less interesting because of its Arian background, occurs in Book VII of *Apostolic Constitution*. As we have already noticed, *Apostolic Constitutions* belongs to the close of the fourth century,⁶⁸ it was compiled out of *Didascalia*, the *Didache*, part of Hippolytus's and parts of *Apostolic Tradition*. The Constitutor freely edits and expands his material so as to bring it into conformity with his own ideas. In his treatment of *Didascalia* xvi, for instance, he inserts an injunction for a post-baptismal anointing with *Muron*,⁶⁹ which, as we have seen, was entirely unknown to the Didascaliast. In Book VII, xi-xiv, he sets out a baptismal *Ordo* or rather Directory,⁷⁰ which more likely reflects his own conception of the ideal rite, than the actual usage of contemporary Antioch. His rite exhibits the old Syrian pattern, and includes directions for the consecration of the oil and the water. In regard to the water, he indicates the themes upon which the celebrant is to improvise in the first part of the prayer; these are concerned with the economy of salvation, in which Christ's appointment of 'the baptism of regeneration' has its due place. At the close, the Constitutor provides a form of words which expresses the Pauline doctrine, and which the celebrant is to recite verbatim. The form runs thus:

⁷¹ Look down from heaven and consecrate this water, and give grace and power, so that he who is being baptised according to

67 It is worthy of note that, whereas Cyril devotes his first lecture to the preliminary embellishments, and his third to the added post-baptismal anointing, he takes the constituents of the traditional rite (i. e. the pre-baptismal anointing and the baptismal act itself) together in the second lecture, which bears the title, "*On Baptism*."

68 c. A. D. 380 according to B. Althamer (*Patrologie*, 50).

69 III, xvi, 4 (F. X. Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, I, 21.) The Constitutor similarly brings *Didache* vii into line with Jerusalem usage by introducing both a pre- and post-baptismal anointing, the latter with *myron*, although his source mentions only the use of water. Apparently on the basis of *Didache* vii however, the Constitutor asserts that, when neither oil nor *myron* are available water alone suffices thing of the dying, VII, xxii, 1-3 (Funk, op. cit. I, 406; see also II, xxxii, 3 (*Didascalia* ix), where the Constitutor pursues the same method (Funk, op. cit. I, 115).

70 The *Ordo* contains no ceremonial directions. The use of the traditional ceremonies is presupposed,

the commandment of thy Christ may be crucified with and die with and be buried with and rise with Him to the adoption as a son which is in Him, to the end that he may indeed be dead to sin, but yet may live to righteousness.⁷²

It may be conjectured that the consecration prayer of the Constitutor's Church did not include a clause of this tenor, and that the Constitutor supplied it, because he held it to be a *desideratum* in the ideally perfect type of prayer for consecrating the baptismal water. The influence of Cyril's use of Romans vi is evident.

As we should expect from his treatment of *Didascalia* xvi and other of his sources,⁷³ the Constitutor attaches a post-baptismal anointing with *muron* at the end of his rite.⁷⁴ He provides a model prayer to be said at the anointing; but his prayer makes no reference to the Holy Spirit. Instead, it asks that

this ointment may be efficacious upon him who is being baptised, so that the fragrance of thy Christ may abide firm and fast in him and that, having died with Him, he may rise with and live with Him.⁷⁵

Here the Jerusalem usage is accepted, but occasion is taken in the prayer to put forward an interpretation of the *muron* entirely different from Cyril's. The Constitutor's own interpretation carries forward the Pauline idea of Romans vi in phraseology suggested by 2 Corinthians ii, 15 and 2 Timothy ii, 11. It may be noted that the Constitutor's rite falls short of explicitly asking for the bestowal of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the rite is still traditionally Syrian enough to associate the oil of the pre-baptismal anointing with *Charis Pneumatike*, 'the Spirit's grace.'⁷⁶ In any case, the Constitutor has made it abundantly clear, in his comments upon his editing of *Didascalia* xvi and *Didache* vii, that he holds the Holy Spirit to be given with the pre-baptismal oil.⁷⁷ The final feature of the Constitutor's rite may be noticed. After his anointing with the *muron* the new Christian, standing and facing toward the East, recites the Lord's Prayer.⁷⁸ This practice was known to Chrysostom, who refers to it as immediately following the baptis-

71 VII, xliii, 5 (Funk. op. cit. 1, 451).

72 Rom. vi, 3-8, end II; cf. I Pet. ii, 24 (Cyril uses this conflation in Procatechesis 5).

73 See above, p. 33, n 3.

74 The post-baptismal anointing was still unknown at Antioch c. A. D. 390, when Chrysostom delivered his baptismal Catéchèses; see A. Wenger, *Jean Chrysostome. Huit Catecheses Baptismales Inédites*, Paris 1957, 99-101.

75 VII, xlv, 2 (Funk, op. cit. 1, 451). In xxvii, 2, the Constitutor provides a Thanksgiving, which he inserts between his editing of *Didache* x and xi, and which is couched in phraseology reminiscent of the *Didache* eucharistic prayers (Funk, op. cit. 1, 415). No doubt the Thanksgiving was intended as a consecration.

76 In the prayer for the consecration of the oil, VII, xlii, 2 (Funk, op. cit. 1, 449).

77 III, xvii, 1 and VII, xxii, 2 (Funk, op. cit. 1, 211, 407).

78 VII, xlv, 1, 2 (Funk, op. cit. 1, 451).

mal act.⁷⁹ There is a hint of the practice in the petition, 'henceforth let them call thee, "Our Father who art in heaven,"' which occurs in the prayer said over the oil and the water in the *History of John*.⁸⁰ When the use of the *myron* was introduced, it was logical to place the Lord's Prayer after the post-baptismal anointing, as the Constitutor has done. The Prayer occupies a corresponding position in the later West Syrian baptismal liturgies.⁸¹

We may take the rite of Book VII of *Apostolic Constitutions* as representative of the kind of liturgical experimentation which was promoted alike by the Jerusalem model and Cyril's lectures. In the issue, the Jerusalem version of the old Syrian rite was accepted throughout almost the whole of the Christian East. The Byzantine prayer for consecrating the baptismal water, which, although we first know it through the Barberini Euchologion of the eighth century, appears to be an expanded edition of a much older Anotiochene-Byzantine form,⁸² contains in its conclusion, following the model of the Constitutor, a petition drawn from Romans vi, 4 and 5.⁸³ The prayer remains in use in the Greco-Russian Orthodox Church to this day. Again, Greek and Russian infants still receive the same kind of anointing with, after Baptism, upon the brow, the breast, and the organs of sense, as Cyril's adults received at Jerusalem c. A. D. 350; and when, at the end of the rite, an Epistle and Gospel are read, the Epistle is found to be Romans vi, 3-11, the greater part of the passage which supplied the text to Cyril's Sacramental Lecture on Baptism.

To the East Syrians, who in the fifth century were to be counted Nestorians, the new Jerusalem model was unacceptable. The old Syrian rite continued in use without change. It was still believed that the pre-baptismal anointing with oil was the means of conveying the Holy Spirit to those admitted to Baptism.⁸⁴ Even among the East Syrians, however, Cyril was not without effect. Narsai, for instance, who was acquainted with the Lectures, adopted Cyril's explanation of the threefold submersion in the water as symbolical of Christ's three days' burial in the tomb.⁸⁵ In the seventh century, the Nestorian Patriarch, Isho 'yabh III (c. A. D. 650-c. A. D. 660) undertook a revision of the old baptismal liturgy, possibly as a result of what he had seen in 'the country of the Romans'⁸⁶ when he went on an embassy to the Emperor Heraclius in A. D. 630. Isho 'yabh appears to have remodelled the framework of the rite on the pattern of the eucharistic liturgy;

79 *Homily VI on Colossians ii* (Migne, PG, 62, col. 342).

80 See above, p. 25.

81 H. Denzinger, *Ritus Orientalium*, Graz 1961, 1, 266-351.

82 M. J. Goar, *EUCHOLOGION*, 288-9; and in Conybeare and Maclean, *Rituale Armenorum*, 399-402. For the composition of the prayer see H. Scheidt, *Die Taufwasserweihegebete*, Munster 1935.

83 The same conflation occurs in a Baptismal Catechesis of Chrysostom, A Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia Graeca Sacra*, St Petersburg 1909, 159. There is no NT MS authority for instead of

84 E.g. by Narsai, see above, p. 32, n. 2.

85 *Homily xxi* (A. Mingana, *Homiliae*, 1, 346; R. H. Connolly, *Liturgical Homilies*, 51).

86 I. e. the Byzantine dominions.

he introduced a post-baptismal anointing accompanied by a prayer.'⁸⁷ Isho 'yabh's framework remains; but his post-baptismal anointing has been jettisoned. Its place has been taken by a laying-on of the priest's hands, and the post-baptismal prayer asks no more than that the recipients of Baptism may have grace to live in chastity and pious conversation. The liturgical action of the East Syrian rite of today⁸⁸ is precisely what we found it to be in the *History of John*, in *Didascalia*, and in the *Acts of Thomas*.

Liturgy, it is often said, does not change. It would be more correct to say that liturgy does not change, unless or until circumstances create a pressure for change; and we must not forget those who, in every age, are possessed (as Dom Gueranger expressed it) of 'une manie sans cesse de retoucher a la Liturgie.'⁸⁹ In their earlier days, the historic rites of Christendom, Latin, Greek, Syriac, etc., were as much the property of laics as of clerics. When new theological ideas and new devotional interests influenced the popular imagination, liturgy could change, and change radically and rapidly, as we know from the history of the Eastern eucharistic liturgy. On the whole, the Roman Church was liturgically more conservative than others; when it changed its rites, it added to rather than altered them. The Canon of the Roman Mass and the Ordination rites of the Roman Ordines and Pontificals could be drawn upon to illustrate the thesis. The Eastern Church or Churches, on the other hand, like the Athenians in Acts xvii, were always ready 'to tell or hear some new thing,' and to welcome the new thing, if it came from Jerusalem or, later, from Constantinople. The East's claim to be 'unchanging' must be treated with reserve. In one liturgical respect, however, the claim could be defended. The rite of Baptism offers less scope than the rite of the Eucharist for the play of new devotional interests and new theological ideas. When Cyril of Jerusalem, bringing out of his treasury things old as well as new, applied forgotten Pauline doctrine to the baptismal rite of his Church, no radical change in liturgy was required. Paul's doctrine fitted easily to traditional usage. When the Church of Jerusalem added a post-baptismal anointing with it could claim that it was not fundamentally changing the rite and its meaning, but was recognising a differentiation hitherto unobserved. It was still linking the bestowal of the Holy Spirit with an act of anointing. So, at least, most of the East came to believe. Baptism might be, indeed, a symbolical burial; it was none the less also a symbolical re-enactment of the scene at Jordan, as it had always been, except in the West. There was resettlement of the tradition but no reconstruction of the liturgy; there was, in both, some development, but no revolution.

87 See G. Dietrich, *Die nestorianischer Tauf liturgie*, Giessen 1903; see also the review of this book by Baumstark in *Oriens Christianus*, III (1903), 219-26. The Nestorian revision was the first to transform the rite into a baptism of infants.

88 *Liturgia Sanctorum Apostolorum Adaei et Maris.. necnon Ordo Baptismi, Urmiae*: Typis Missionis Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis, 1890, 55-75, contains the Syriac text, which is also printed in Dietrich, op. cit. For an English version, see *The Liturgy of the Holy Apostles Adai and Mari.. and The Order of Baptism*, 1893, 63-82.

89 Quoted by Edmund Bishop in his Liturgical Note appended to A. B. Kuypers, *The Book of Cerne*, Cambridge 1902, 234.

Consignation in the West Syrian Baptismal Rites

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[History of the baptismal rites of Antioch, for half a millenium, that is, between the sixth and the fourteenth centuries, constituted a complete vacuum in our knowledge. This was due to failure of scholars in exploring the sources of that period. Sebastian Brock in his "Studies in the Early History of the Syrian Orthodox Baptismal Liturgy," *Journal of Theological Studies* (1972, 16-27,) has filled this vacuum. The main sources he used in his studies are the following :

- S: *Ordo* attributed to Severus, Patriarch of Antioch (512-518). Brock's study concerns mainly about this source. There is an English translation of this *Ordo* in J. Hough, *The History of Christianity in India from the Commencement of the Christian Era* (London, 1845), pp. 645-50.

There are six versions of S in J. S. Assemani, *Codex Liturgicus*, I—III :

- SA I = Assemani, II, 261-300
- SA II = Assemani, II, 361-300
- SA III = Assemani, I, 219-240
- SA IV = Assemani, I, 240-58
- SA V = Assemani, I, 258-76
- SA VI = Assemani, II, 248-61

T: *Ordo* attributed to Timothy of Alexandria, of which see above pp.

JS: The Maronite *Ordo* attributed to Jacob of Serugh. Assemani, II, 309-350.

B: A genuinely Antiochene *Ordo* used by the Mektes, and attributed to Basil. Assemani III, 199-237.

For comparison with the East Syrian *Ordo*, the following manuscripts are used :

- A : British Museum Add. 17218, ff. 53-54 (eighth century)
- B : BM Add. 14520, ff. 155-61 (eighth/ninth century)
- C : BM Add. 14494, ff. 9-16 (ninth/tenth century)
- D : BM Add. 14518, ff. 7-16 ninth/tenth century)
- E : BM Add. 14667, ff. 13-15 (ninth/tenth century)
- F : BM Add. 14493, ff. 165^b -170 (tenth century)
- G : BM Add. 14496, ff. 23^b - 24^b (tenth century ; fragmentary)
- H : BM Add. 14495, ff. 68^b - 83^b (tenth/eleventh century)
- I : BM Add. 14499, ff. 65^a - 74 (tenth/eleventh century)
- J : BM Add. 17128, ff. 44^b - 53^a (tenth/eleventh century)
- K : BM Add. 14500, ff. 59^a - 74^b (eleventh century).

To follow closely the treatment of Brock on the four Antiochene consignations in the study cited above, it is helpful to give the BASIC STRUCTURE of the Baptismal Rites of S :

Prooimion

Sedro

Etro

Prayer for self

Prayer for Consignation

CONSIGNATION 1

Prayer for introducing exorcism

Exorcism

Apotaxis

Syntaxis

Creed

Prayer of thanksgiving

Prayer for consignation 2

CONSIGNATION 2

Prooimion

Sedro

Blessing of water (several prayers)

CONSIGNATION 3

Baptism

Prayer over myron

CONSIGNATION 4

Prayer after chrismation

Prayer introducing Our Father

Prayer following Our Father

Prayer before communion

Final prayer] [Editor].

THE CONSIGNATIONS

This subject constitutes one of the thorniest problems in connection with the Antiochene baptismal *ordines*, and before turning to the internal history of S it will be helpful to describe briefly the situation in the Antiochene area in general.

The various Antiochene *ordines*, as they come down to us, normally provide the remarkable number of four consignations, the first without oil, the other three with. In trying to trace the origin of these four consignations, as will be attempted below, it is important to note their different positions in the service. These positions are relatively stable, and I shall call them positions 1, 2, 3 and 4, irrespective of how many consignations any one text may in fact contain. These positions are :

- 1 = accompanying the inscription of the candidates' names, and preceding the exorcism
- 2 = coming between the *syntaxis* and the consecration of the water
- 3 = coming between the consecration of the water and the baptism proper
- 4 = following the baptism, and preceding communion

It is well known that in the early Antiochene rite there was no post-baptismal anointing, only a pre-baptismal one.¹ This was still the state of affairs in Antioch in the 390s, as can be seen from John Chrysostom's *Baptismal Instructions*,² but only a decade or so later we find that a post-baptismal anointing is already present in Mopsuestia, the see of Theodore,³ and all commentators from the Antiochene area later than Theodore consistently speak of a post-baptismal anointing.⁴

Both Chrysostom and Theodore in fact speak of *two* pre-baptismal consignations with oil,⁵ corresponding to positions 2 and 3, but the commentators on the Syrian rite from Ps. Dionysios onwards make no mention

1 For the New Testament basis for this, see T. W. Manson, 'Entry into membership of the early Church,' *J.T.S.* xlviii (1947), pp. 25-33. According to G. Kretschmar the same situation originally applied in Egypt: 'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Liturgie, insbesondere der Tauf Liturgie in Ägypten,' *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie*, vii (1963), p. 47.

2 See especially T. M. Finn, *The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instructions of St John Chrysostom* (Washington, 1967), pp. 139 ff.

3 Cf. R. Tonneau, *Les Homélies catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste* (S.e T cxlv; Rome, 1949), pp. 402, 456 ff. The suggestion (*apud* L. L. Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* London, 1966), p. 41) that the reference to the post baptismal anointing only goes back to the translator is unlikely.

4 e.g. *Apostolic Constitutions* vii. 22, 43-4, Ps. Dionysios, *Eccl Hier* ii. ii. vii (P G. iii, col. 396). The specification of a post-baptismal anointing in Canon 48 of Laodicea (*apud* Bedjan, *Canonicon*, p. 24) is no doubt polemical in intent, and the same probably applies to no. 30 of John of Tella's *Canonical Resolutions*: 'Q. Can baptism be completed without the holy myron, or can the person being baptized (be anointed) with the "oil of prayer" alone? A. Baptism cannot be completed without the consecrated oil, i.e. myron.' (Text in T. J. Lamy, *Dissertatio de syrorum fide et disciplina in re eucharistica* (Louvain, 1859), pp. 84-5, and for a discussion of the difficult syntax see de Vries. *op. cit.*, p. 123). Note that Proclus, in *Hom.* xxvii (ed. Leroy, S.e T. ccxlvii) (Constantinople, between 434 and 446), apparently still knows no post-baptismal anointing; see note 41.

5 Cf. Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-42, and for Chrysostom, Finn, *op. cit.*, pp. 119 ff. (with further literature).

of any consignation immediately preceding the baptism, that is to say, in position 3, despite the fact that the vast majority of actual texts of the later Antiochene *ordines* regularly have a consignation at this position, as well as at the other three positions.

A consignation at position 1 is first attested for certain in the Antiochene area in Ps. Dionysios' description of the baptismal rite,⁶ which belongs pretty certainly to the early sixth century. Since this consignation falls in a part of the service that was originally quite separate in time from the actual baptism, the absence of any earlier reference to it does not necessarily imply that it is a late innovation. Indeed its simple character suggests that it may have gone back a long way in time as a feature of the catechumenate.

The relationship of the two pre-baptismal anointings, the consignations at positions 2 and 3, is a subject to which I shall return below. The post-baptismal anointing, in position 4, is a later introduction into the Antiochene area, and Ratchiff has plausibly suggested⁷ that it came from Jerusalem.

So much for the background: we may turn now to the texts of S themselves. Here the following procedure will be adopted: first I shall give a purely descriptive account of the consignations one by one as they appear in the texts of S, and for each consignation details will be given of the position, the accompanying prayers, the rubrics, and the formula. Following this we shall see how the situation in S compares with that in the other Antiochene *ordines*, and then finally I shall offer a tentative interpretation of the meaning, and explanation of the inter-relationship, of the four different consignations.

Consignation 1

The first consignation is intimately linked with the inscription of the candidates' names, and thus precedes the exorcisms. It is prefaced by two prayers, of which the first is described in the rubrics as a prayer by the priest for himself; this description applies mainly to the first half of the prayer (the *ghonto*, or secret), which, apart from some variation in wording at the opening, is the same in all early manuscripts and printed editions. The *tloyto*, or *ekphonesis*, however, prays specifically for the candidates, and this part of the prayer is found in totally different forms:

6 *Eccl. Hier.* II. ii. v P. G. III, col. 396) Perhaps also Narsai, ed. Mingana, I. p. 363 (end) = R. H. Connolly; *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* (T. and S. VIII. 1; Cambridge 1909), p. 40, and Philoxenos of Mabbug, *Tractatus de trinitate et incarnatione* (ed. A. Vaschalde, C.S.C.O. Ser. Syri II. xxvii; p. 124 (text) = p. 95 (tr.)).

7 E. C. Ratchiff, 'The old Syrian baptismal tradition and its resettlement under the influence of Jerusalem in the fourth century,' *Studies in Church History*, II (1965), pp. 19-37. Whence it reached Jerusalem is not clear (*ibid.*, p. 32). Cyril's commentary (if it be his and not his successor's) on it is in *Cat. Myst.* III (P.G. xxxiii, cols. 1088-93).

1. The early manuscripts, SA I-III and SK provide the following prayer⁸:

And fashion thy Christ on those who are about to be reborn through (the agency of) my weakness; confirm them on the foundation of the apostles and prophets; plant them as a true plant in thy catholic church, that, as they advance in the fear of God, thy all-honourable and blessed name, O Father, may through them too be praised, together with that of thy only-begotten Son, and that of thy Holy Spirit, now and always, and for eternal ages, amen.

2. SH, SA IV-VI, however, give a quite different *tloyto*, and the earliest manuscript known to me that contains this *tloyto* here is BM Arundel Or. II, of the fifteenth century. The prayer reads:

That this person,⁹ who has become worthy, through planting of the likeness of Christ, by means of baptism, may also be a participant in his resurrection; and, as he preserves the gift of the Holy Spirit and multiplies the trust (given him) by grace, may he receive the crown of victory of the calling from on high, and be numbered with the first-born who are inscribed in heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord, along with whom to thee is fitting glory and honour, together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, for ever, amen.

The first *tloyto* is not, however, absent from SH, SA IV-VI, for it, occurs later on in these texts, as the *tloyto* to the prayer introducing the *second* consignation. Conversely, the second *tloyto*, provided before the first consignation in SH, SA IV-VI, is found in the other texts attached to a prayer for the candidates that follows immediately after the consecration of the water (where it properly belongs).¹⁰

The testimony of the early manuscripts clearly shows that the positioning of the *tloyto* 'And fashion thy Christ...' in SH, SA IV-VI is secondary in S, although it evidently antedates by several centuries the earliest manuscript that provides it, for Dionysios bar Salibi states that this prayer was placed by Jacob of Edessa in the first half of the service (i. e. the position in the early manuscripts and in SA I-III, SK), but by Moses bar Kepha in the second half (presumably the position in SH, SA IV-VI).¹¹

8 In the following pages I give literal translations; where it is of importance to reproduce the word order of the Syriac I employ Latin rather than English (the Latin is adapted from that in Assemani, not always satisfactory from this point of view).

9 Whereas the earliest manuscripts invariably use the plural throughout, many of the printed texts are worded for a single candidate only.

10 Cf. below, p. 49.

11 Mingana syr. 215, f. 21a.; cf. Moses bar Kepha, § II (where it is in fact mentioned *after* the description of the second consignation).

Some further light is thrown on the situation by the fact that the whole prayer (*ghonto* and *tloyto*) occurs, albeit in a different recension, in a manuscript of **B** (BM Add. 14497), although not in the printed text of **B** in Assemani. The position, however, differs from that in the early manuscripts of **S**, for it occurs immediately before the consecration of the water,¹² i. e. in a position corresponding roughly to that of the second consignation in **S**: Add. 14497 actually has no consignation in position 2, in this respect going against the printed text of **B**. (This absence may well be due to Byzantine influence, the Constantinopolitan *ordo* having no consignation in position 2 either).

The position of the prayer in question in Add. 14497 in fact finds some support in **T**, for the phraseology of the opening of the *tloyto*, 'fashion thy Christ', occurs towards the end of **T** † 15, the prayer that immediately precedes the second consignation.¹³ In all probability, then, the whole prayer properly belongs with the second consignation,¹⁴ but at an early date in the history of **S** it was transferred to a position before the first consignation; later, certain texts of **S** transferred the *tloyto* only back to its proper position before the second consignation (with oil), substituting in its place before the first consignation a *tloyto* drawn from the concluding sections of the consecration of the water.

The second of the two prayers preceding the first consignation has an invariable *ghonto*, beginning 'Giver of light...' The *tloyto*, however, again varies:

- (1) The early manuscripts with the exception of **K**, and all the printed texts except SA IV-VI give the following *tloyto*:

And grant them, Lord, thy holy breath, (the same) that thy only-begotten Son breathed on his disciples; and remove from their minds every relic of idolatry, (so) preparing them for receiving thy Holy Spirit; and, so that they may be made worthy of the washing of rebirth, make them worthy too of the forgiveness that comes from the hands of thy only-begotten Son, our God, Jesus Christ, along with whom to thee is fitting praise and honour and might, together with thy all holy and excellent, worshipful and lifegiving Spirit, amen.

- (2) SA IV-VI, supported by the eleventh century manuscript **K** (as well as by Arundel Or. 11) have no *ekphonesis* here at all, although they do provide that of the other texts at a later stage in the service, in the course of the consecration of the water, between the exorcism of the water and the *epiklesis* for its consecration.

12 The whole prayer is also found, in the same position as in Add. 14497, in the Constantinopolitan *ordo* ed. F. C. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum* (Oxford, 1905), pp. 398-9.

13 Cf. *Le Muséon*, lxxxiii (1970), p. 412.

14 This is supported by the presence of similar phraseology in **JS**'s prayer over the oil.

Once again, this variation appears to be older than its earliest attestation in the manuscripts, for it too is mentioned by Dionysios bar Salibi,¹⁵ who states that the *tloyto* in question is placed by Jacob of Edessa in Part I of the service, but by Moses bar Kepha in Part II.

The rubrics for the first consignation regularly state that the candidates are stood in order, and then brought before the priest or deacon who is inscribing their names. The deacon who presents them gives both the candidate's name and that of his sponsor (*robo*, or *haw da-mqabbel leh* = *ἀνάδοχος*). The candidates are then 'sealed' (*htm*) on the forehead, without oil,¹⁶ while the deacon holds each candidate's head in turn 'in his two hands'. As he pronounces the formula the priest makes the sign of the cross three times.

The manuscript D alone departs from this norm, having the following rubric: 'And the priest passes along them all and makes the sign of the cross against their foreheads, and drives from them the rebe' powers.'

The formula for the first consignation, like that for the last, shows very little variation in the manuscripts, which read:

N is sealed ((*htm*) in the name of the Father, amen; and of the Son, amen; and of the (+ living and C I K) Holy Spirit (+ unto eternal life C I; + for ever H J), amen.

D, alone of the texts S, has no formula here at all, in this agreeing with T, but against JS and B.

Consignation 2

The second consignation comes between the prayer of thanksgiving after the *syntaxis* and the consecration of the baptismal water; it is invariably introduced by a prayer. In the mixed Severan *ordo* of D (and in JS) this consignation is followed up by a further prayer. Although there is a certain amount of variation in the choice of the short doxological *tloyto*, the *ghonto* of the introductory prayer is regularly found in all early manuscripts (except D) and in the printed editions of S. This reads as follows:

Holy Father, who through the holy apostles didst give thy Holy Spirit to those who are baptized, do thou now also, using the shadow of my hands, send thy Holy Spirit upon these who are about to be baptized, so that, being filled with it and with its divine gifts, they may produce fruit thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.

From this prayer¹⁷ it would appear quite clearly that the old Antiochene tradition of a pre-baptismal anointing connected with the gift of

15 Loc. cit. 16 This is stated explicitly in the rubrics of B.

17. The prayer would appear to be modelled on the prayer of the *Trisagion* in the *Anaphora of Mark* (F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, i (Oxford, 1896), p. 117), where, however, Christ is addressed, and asked to send his 'light and truth.'

the Spirit has still been preserved in S,¹⁸ even after the addition of the post-baptismal anointing. What is also interesting is that the gift of the Spirit is here connected with the second, and not the third,¹⁹ consignation, a point to which we shall revert later.

The manuscript D indeed contains the same prayer, but it has delayed it to a position a little *after* the second consignation, and instead, to introduce the second consignation, it has a prayer addressed to the 'Good Shepherd,' asking for the candidates to be 'signed lambs in thy flock.' This turns out to be a prayer closely related to the one in JS that introduces the *third* consignation.²⁰

The rubrics for the second consignation show considerable variation in the texts over the name of the oil used, the priest's action, and the parts of the body anointed. Whereas the formula regularly describes the oil as the 'oil of gladness,' in the rubrics it is sometimes called 'oil of anointing' (CK ; SA I IV, SK), at others 'holy oil' (D H J ; SA V VI), or 'olive oil' (SH, SA II III), or, remarkably, 'myron' (I), or 'mixed with myron' (F). Likewise the action is sometimes described as 'sealing' (*htm* : thus C H I J ; SA I III), at other times as 'signing' (*rsm* : thus D K ; SA II IV-VI, SH, SK), and once as 'sealing and anointing' (F). As we shall see, 'signing' (*rsm*) is the normal term of the formula. The part or parts of the body enumerated also vary, though to a lesser degree ; here the norm is 'forehead' (D H I J K, and the printed editions), but in F, after the priest has anointed the forehead the candidates undress and the deacons 'anoint (*msh*) all their limbs'; in C no part of the body is specified. A notable feature of the rubrics of C F I and J is that the priest 'cries out' (*maz'eq*) the formula.

The printed texts are in virtual agreement over the formula for the second consignation, providing :

N is signed (*rsm*) with the oil of gladness ($\pm$) to be armed against every working of the adversary, and for a grafting into the good olive of the holy, catholic and apostolic church, in the name...

It comes as something of a surprise, then, to find that the earliest manuscripts normally provide a totally different formula, which reads :

N is signed (*rsm*) with the oil of gladness, that he may be made worthy of the adoption of rebirth,²¹ in the name ..

18 Note the connection in phraseology with the Melkite prayer in Assemani, iii, p. 236, which refers to the post-baptismal consignation.

19 As is often assumed by modern scholars, and as would seem to be implied by the retrojection, found in certain printed texts to the third consignation of rubrics proper to the fourth (see p.109).

20 Assemani, ii, p 347.

21 Note the connection between and the gift of the grace of the Spirit in Theodore's homily on the *Pater Noster* (ed. cit., pp. 296-7) : 'You have received at my hands the grace of the Holy Spirit, as a result of which you are made worthy of adoption.' The presence of *uiothesia* in the formula here confirms R. G. Coquin's thesis that the pre-baptismal anointing that followed the *syntaxis* was the one that confers *parresia* on the candidates : 'Le thème de la parresia et ses expressions symboliques dans les rites d'initiation, a Antioche,' *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, xx (1970), pp. 1-17.

This formula is found in four (CDHK) out of the seven manuscripts antedating the twelfth century that are available for this part of the service. The three that differ from this norm offer yet new variations. One of these is of particular interest, namely that of F, which reads :

N is sealed (*htm*) and anointed (*msh*) with the oil of gladness, against every working of the adversary through the grafting on to the good vine in the holy, catholic and apostolic church ; in the name...

This, apart from the technical terms used for the action (*htm* and *msh* instead of *rsm*), is virtually identical, not only with the formula of the printed texts for this consignation, but also, as we shall see, with that of the other early manuscripts for the *third* consignation. Now F is the only early manuscript—and indeed almost the only liturgical manuscript known to me²²—which entirely omits the third consignation, an omission which would seem to be supported by the silence of the commentators on any consignation immediately preceding the baptism (our position 3). It is reasonable to deduce from this state of affairs that F's formula for the second consignation has simply been transferred from the third when the latter was dropped altogether—probably under the influence of the commentators, who themselves follow Ps, Dionysios on this point. This view is strongly supported by F's rubrics here, with the deacons anointing the rest of the candidate's body—a feature which, as we shall see, properly belongs in S to the third consignation.²³ The printed texts make the best of both worlds, for while they have adopted F's transference of the formula from the third consignation,²⁴ at the same time they keep the third consignation (though not always with any formula).

The two other manuscripts with aberrant formulae for the second consignation are I and J. I's formula is of interest in that it fuses together elements of the two different formulae that we have been dealing with. It reads :

N is signed (*rsm*) with the oil of gladness, the sign (*rusmo*) of adoption, that with it he may be armed against every working of the adversary, in the name ...

22 The omission is, however, also to be found in the text of S translated by J. Hough (title on p. 100); likewise the Pampakuda edition, cf. Hambye, art. cit., p. 259. Hough's translation interestingly has the same formula as that of the early manuscripts for the second consignation. The short *ordo* attributed to Philoxenus also has no consignation at position 3.

23 Ps. Dionysios, *Eccl. Hier.* II. II. VII (P. G. III, col. 396), in fact also has the division of labour for his pre-baptismal anointing (in position 2)—necessarily, as we shall see, in the light of the development of these consignations.

24 Possibly the motivation behind this was to remove the reference to a theme intimately linked with the gift of the Spirit, from the formula of consignation 2, once the post-baptismal anointing had been introduced; in this connection note the polemical tone in Moses bar Kepha's *Tractate on the Myron*: 'Es gibt nur eine Taufe und nicht mehrere und nur eine Adoption)der Sohne und nicht mehrere und es gibt nur eine Bezeichnung der Schafe Christi und diese geschieht durch das Myron' (quoted by de Vries, op. cit., p. 124).

It will be seen that I has taken part of the formula of the majority of early manuscripts and attached to it the opening of the formula as found in F and the printed editions. Note that nothing is said of the grafting.

J, on the other hand, has a very brief formula :

N is signed (*rsm*) in the name...

This will obviously be older than any of the expanded formulae of the other texts : in fact it corresponds exactly with the formula that Theodore quotes for this consignation.²⁵

Consignation 3

The third consignation follows the consecration of the water, and immediately precedes the baptism. It has already been noted that F, alone of the early texts of S, has no consignation at all at position 3, in agreement with Ps. Dionysios and the later Syriac commentators.

S, almost alone among the Antiochene *ordines* (i. e. in contrast to T and JS) has no prayer introducing this consignation. The only exception to this pattern in S is the manuscript I, which provides a prayer identical with T § 39, in the same position.²⁶

The rubrics of the early manuscripts regularly state that the priest anoints (*msh*) the head, while the deacons anoint the rest of the body ; SK (cf. SH, SA IV-VI), however, curiously says that the priest anoints all the organs of sense—an action which properly belongs to the *post*-baptismal anointing, whence these rubrics must derive. The oil specified in the rubrics of the manuscripts is normally given as 'holy oil'; only in some of the printed texts is myron mentioned in this connection (SH, SA VI),²⁷ although support for its use here can be found in Dionysios bar Salibi's commentary.²⁸

Unlike the situation for the second consignation the printed texts are divided over the formula for the third. In SH we find the following :

N is anointed (*msh*) with the oil of gladness so that he may be armed with it against every working of the adversary, in the name ..

In all six texts given by Assemani (SA I-VI) and in SK, however, no formula at all is found.

Once again the early manuscripts present us with a quite different state of affairs. Of the seven manuscripts available here four (C H I J) provide the long formula that F and the printed texts gave for the *second* consignation, although introduced by a different verb :²⁹

²⁵ Ed. cit., p. 368.

²⁶ Cf. *Le Muséon*, lxxxiii (1970), pp. 421-2. This prayer is also found in the manuscript B, but before the *second* consignation. Whether or not B continued with the normal pre-consignation 2 prayer of S is unfortunately unknown, for the text breaks off in the middle of this prayer.

²⁷ Cf. F and I for the second consignation

²⁸ § 7, f. 21b.

²⁹ It will be noticed that there are also some small differences in wording.

N is anointed (*msh*) with the oil of gladness so that he may be armed with it against every working of the adversary, for the grafting into (*lit.* of) the good olive, (namely the holy and catholic church of God, in the name ..

Of the three remaining early manuscripts, E and K have a short formula :

N is anointed with the oil of gladness, in the name...

while F, as we have already seen, entirely omits this consignation in position 3. Thus *no* early manuscript conforms with the situation in any of the printed texts, and the earliest manuscripts known to me which provide the pattern of SA I-VI (with no formula) belong to the fourteenth³⁰ and fifteenth³¹ centuries : it is a pattern, however, which is found in two other Antiochene *ordines*, T and B.³²

Consignation 4

The fourth consignation follows immediately after the baptism, and it is both prefaced and followed by prayers. These prayers, the former of which asks for the effects of the 'seal of the Spirit,' are common to both the early manuscripts and the printed editions, and only minor variants are to be found. The rubrics invariably specify that the organs of sense (listed) are 'sealed' (*htm*) with myron ; very similar rubrics are found in the other Antiochene *ordines*.

Basically the same formula is to be found, with only minor variations,³³ in all texts of S, and it is one that also occurs in T and JS. This reads :

With the holy myron of Christ God, the pleasant scent of holy faith, the imprint and perfecting of the grace of the Holy Spirit, is N imprinted (*tb'*), in the name...

To summarize the whole situation for S, as attested in the earliest texts available : the four consignations are neatly provided with different technical terms in the formulae for the action : *htm*, *rsm*, *msh*, and *tb'* respectively. The accompanying prayers suggest that the first consignation concerns the inscription of the candidates into the church, linked with the idea of Christ's ownership. The second consignation, as the preceding prayer shows, is clearly the original Antiochene pre-baptismal anointing associated with the Holy Spirit, while the formula adds the theme of *uiotesia*. The third consignation, which has no introductory prayer, is the protective anointing of the candidates, presumably regarded as athletes, in preparation for their contest with the devil, i.e. the baptism proper. To this the formula also adds the theme of grafting, from Romans xi. The final consignation is, of course, the post-baptismal anointing conferring the gift of the Holy Spirit, introduced into the Antiochene area about 400, and thus doubling, to some extent, with the second consignation.

³⁰ BM Add. 17230.

³¹ BM Arundel Or. II.

³² T § 40 ; Assemani, iii, p. 225.

³³ For the variants of S and JS from T. see *Le Muséon*, lxxiii (1970), pp. 427-8.

Complications arise, however, when one tries to correlate this comparatively neat pattern with that of the other Antiochene *ordines*, and in particular with the testimony of patristic writers.

It will be convenient to start with the other Syrian orthodox *ordo*, **T**. Although **T** differs from the norm of **S** in providing no formula at all for the first and third consignations, it would seem, from the accompanying prayers, that the four consignations had the same meaning as in **S**. Thus, before the second consignation **T** § 15 asks for the sending of the 'Spirit of thy mercifulness' on the candidates, while before the third, **T** § 39 asks that the adversary may not have dominion over 'lambs of the flock' about to be anointed.

In **B** the idea of ownership, in the form of branding of 'sheep,' is brought out in an addition to the formula for the first consignation :³⁴

N is sealed (*htm*) that he may become a new lamb in the flock of Christ, in the name...

The second consignation in **B**³⁵ corresponds closely to its counterpart in **S**, and it is introduced by the same prayer, 'Holy Father, who through the holy apostles...', asking for the sending of the Holy Spirit upon the candidates. **B** differs from **S**, however, in that it also provides a prayer of consecration for the oil, a feature that is found also in **JS**,³⁶ and which is definitely archaic, since it can be traced back as far as the *Acts of Thomas* (perhaps third century).³⁷ The third consignation in **B** has no introductory prayer,³⁸ and would appear to have the same import as its counterpart in **S**.³⁹ (The consignation in **B** is immediately preceded by the anointing of the water, which is accompanied by a prayer asking for the coming of the Holy Spirit on to the water 'through this consecrated oil,' and for the effects of this on those being baptized : this is clearly quite distinct from the pre-baptismal anointing, our third consignation, although in the Byzantine rite it has been confused with it.) **B**'s fourth consignation takes on very much the same

34 The two prayers preceding it are both found in **S**, but in different positions : the first, 'Giver of Holiness...' is the *sedro* that precedes the consecration of the water in **S**, while the second, 'Lord God Almighty...', comes immediately after the first consignation in **S**, and before the prayer that introduces the exorcism (this latter prayer is found in both **S** and **B**).

35 This only applies to the printed text of **B** in Assemani, iii. Add. 14497 has no consignation at all in position 2 (due to Byzantine influence?) This manuscript (likewise the Constantinopolitan *ordo*) has a prayer that is closely related to **S**'s prayer for self that precedes the first consignation in **S** (on this prayer see above, pp. 104 f.).

36 For the texts, see Assemani, ii, p. 330 and below, p. 52.

37 Ed. Wright, i, p. 291 (text) = ii, p. 258 (translation) = A. F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas* (Leiden. 1962), p. 130. The same feature is also found in the *Acts of John* (ed. Wright, i, p. 58 (text) = ii, p. 53 (tr.)), in Narsai (see p. 35 note 4 for reference), and in *Apost. Const.* vii. 42; it is also implied in Cyril, *Cat. Myst.* ii 3 (*P. G.* xxxiii, col. 1080). For the situation in the Constantinopolitan *ordo*.

38 The accompanying *qolo* (Assemani, iii, p. 225) has some themes in common with **T**'s prayer at this point (§ 39).

39 Note that in **B** (likewise Add. 14497) the rubrics state that the deacon anoints the whole body; no mention is made of any anointing of the head by the priest.

form as in **S**, although its formula differs.⁴¹ The consignations in **B** thus have very much the same meaning as in **S** and **T**.

Turning to **JS** we find some rather striking differences from this pattern. The first consignation is preceded by a prayer which, surprisingly, reads as follows:⁴²

May God, who has called thee [the candidate] by his grace and brought thee by his mercifulness to take the holy sign (*rusmo*), make thee worthy of the garment of salvation that (comes) from the water of baptism, that thou mayest put on the robe *stole* of glory, through the hovering of the Holy Spirit, and that thou mayest be worthy of adoption in holy baptism.

This all remarkably anticipates the second and third consignations of the other Antiochene *ordines*. As in **B**, the formula of **JS** (which uses *htm*) describes the candidate as being sealed 'a lamb in the flock of Christ.'

JS's second consignation is introduced by a prayer over the oil (compare **B**, with a different prayer), but there is no further prayer for the candidates. Whereas the theme of the corresponding prayer in **B** over the oil is that of protection, in **JS** the prayer (addressed to the Father) asks that 'thy might' may come from on high on to the oil, so that 'the mysteries of thy Christ may be fashioned⁴³ in it'; it is to be a signing (*rusmo*) of the 'lambs of thy flock,' and it will confer *uiotesia* on those worthy of being anointed with it. This latter point agrees exactly with the original formula of **S** for this (second) consignation.⁴⁴

It looks very much as if in **JS** the first consignation has taken on elements proper to the second (and third) consignations: thus *uiotesia* which is proper to the second, is also mentioned in the prayer before the first, while the theme of signing (i. e. branding) sheep, which is found in **JS** in

41 Note that the Melkite short service in Add. 14497, ff. 152a-3b, has remarkably preserved the old Antiochene pattern of *no* post-baptismal anointing at all.

42 Assemani, ii, p. 315.

43 Assemani, ii, p. 330. The same verb (*swr*) is used in the recension of the prayer for self that Add. 14497 provides before the second consignation (but in **S** before the first; see above, pp. 26 ff.); the texts of **S** have either *slm* or *tps*, while the Byzantine *ordo* has *Morfow*. What is of particular interest in this connection is that in **JS** the 'mysteries of Christ' are fashioned on the oil, while in **S** and Add. 14497 in neither of which is the prayer used in conjunction with an anointing) Christ is fashioned on the candidates. For the idea of the imprint of the name of God on the oil compares Narsai (ed. Mingana, i, p. 365 = tr. Connolly, op. cit., p. 42) 'three names he casts on the oil and consecrates it, and with the name hidden in it he signs the visible body.'

44 In **JS** (Assemani, ii, p. 334) there is a striking prayer, surprisingly just *after* the second consignation, and before the consecration, of the water, reading: 'May thy living and holy Spirit come and dwell, O Lord, on the head of this thy servant, and may he be signed (*rsm*) in thy name, O living Father, in the name of thy only-begotten Son, and of thy Spirit the paraklete, the propitiator of our sins...' Thus it would appear that in **JS** too the second consignation is/was connected with the coming of the Spirit. (For the epiklesis over the candidate, compare *Acts of Thomas* (ed. Wright, i. p. 193 = ii, pp. 166-7 = Klijn, op. cit., p. 77), and perhaps Aphraates, *Dem.* xxiii. 63.)

connection with both the second and the third consignations, has also been added to the first.

The third consignation in JS has both an introductory prayer and a formula. The prayer is concerned with this theme of signing (*rsm*) 'the lamb as a member of the flock,' but it further asks that the candidates be preserved from evil, perhaps a remnant of the idea of protective anointing that we find more prominently here in S, T, and B. The reference to sheep in connection with the anointing in position 3 is also found in T § 39, and is clearly old, for it is already found in Ephrem.⁴⁵

Turning briefly now to the East Syrian rite, we find that it has only one anointing corresponding to our second and third consignations. This anointing occurs in position 3, immediately before the baptism, but there is also a prayer over the oil which *precedes* the actual consecration of the water, that is to say it is in approximately the same position as the corresponding prayers over the oil in B and JS, both of which, however, have an anointing in that position (our 2).

This state of affairs suggests that our second and third consignations are in fact duplications⁴⁶ of a single pre-baptismal anointing with oil. The duplication will have come about because the position of this pre-baptismal anointing evidently varied: in some areas it followed the consecration of the water⁴⁷, while in others it preceded it.⁴⁸ The latter was evidently the pattern in the service which underlies the present duplication of the two consignations, in both positions 2 and 3, that we find in S, T, B, and JS, for it is the second consignation that is clearly there the more important of the two, being associated with the sending of the Spirit.

Such a duplication of an originally single anointing would have been helped by the fact that the action accompanying the anointing was twofold: the priest anointing the head, the deacons the rest of the body. This division of labour is already mentioned, for example, in the *Didascalia*,⁴⁹ and significantly there is there a separation in time between the two actions, since between them the candidates undress. What has happened in S and the other (western) Antiochene *ordines* is that the first of the two actions has

45 *H. de Virginitate*, ii. 6; cf. also E. Beck, 'Le baptême chez S. Ephrem,' *L'Orient Syrien*, i (1956), pp. III-36, esp. 125 f.

46 This suggestion has already been made by T. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 59. Thompson attributed the duplication to the compiler of S, an attribution which cannot, of course stand, since it is now known that there were two pre-baptismal anointings already in John Chrysostom's day.

47 Thus B, Add. 14497, and the Constantinopolitan *ordo*, as well as the East Syrian rite. It is implied in *Acts of John* (ed. Wright, i, pp. 58-9 = ii, pp. 53-4), *Didascalia*, xvi, and Cyril, *Cat. Myst.* ii. 3-4 (*P. G.* xxxiii, col. 1080).

48 Compare the Coptic rite, which has a consignation corresponding to our position 2, but none corresponding to our position 3. This is also the pattern which underlies Ps. Dionysios and the later Syriac commentators, as well as the single early manuscript of S, F, and the text translated by Hough (see p. 30 note), all of which entirely omit the consignation in position 3. The absence of any formula in T, B, and several of the printed texts of S, no doubt implies a similar prehistory.

49 § xvi.

been allocated to the consignation in position 2, while the two together (since the second alone was unlikely to be kept alone)⁵⁰ have been allocated to the consignation in position 3. Likewise the different themes⁵¹ connected with the pre-baptismal anointing have been divided up between the two consignations, once the duplication had taken place: in S we find *uiolesia* together with the gift of the Holy Spirit, the main themes of the second consignation, while the idea of protection predominates in the third. In T the third, and in JS the second and third, consignations are also linked with the idea of marking the candidates as sheep.⁵² This allocation does not always agree with that described in Chrysostom and Theodore,⁵³ who, as we have seen, are the earliest witnesses to this duplication of an original single pre-baptismal anointing. That the double pre-baptismal anointing in Chrysostom is secondary can in fact be very clearly seen from his interpretation of the first of these (corresponding to our consignation in position 2). On this he writes:⁵⁴

He (the priest) anoints you on the forehead with the spiritual myron as a soldier enrolled for the spiritual arena...

Chrysostom is of course fusing the idea of the candidate as a newly enrolled soldier (linked by Theodore with that of branding sheep) with that of the athlete; athletes, however, were anointed all over, and so this theme is a very unsuitable one for this first anointing, of the head only.

Theodore, too, makes an allocation of themes rather different from that found in the later *ordines*. For him the gift of the Spirit is naturally connected with the post-baptismal anointing, an anointing to which he is the earliest witness in the Antiochene area.⁵⁵ Of the two pre-baptismal anointings, he connects the first with the branding of sheep/soldiers, and the technical term used for the action is *rsm*,⁵⁶ while the second is linked with the theme of the 'garment of immortality' (presumably seen as a form of protection), with *msh* as the term for the action.⁵⁷

To conclude this lengthy discussion of the consignations, let us turn back to S and look at the variations in the different texts of this *ordo* in the

50 Although this is in fact the case in B (including Add. 14497, even though this manuscript has no consignation in position 2!).

51 A more detailed study of this than is possible here would be worth while.

52 The double theme in JS and T is eminently suitable: the priest's anointing of the forehead reflects the branding of the candidates as Christ's lamb, while the anointing of the whole body reflects the anointing of athletes or wrestlers (as a means of protection).

53 It is interesting that Finn, op. cit., p. 119, also suggests that the two pre-baptismal anointings in Chrysostom were originally a single one.

54 Cat. ii. 23 apud A. Wenger, *Jean Chrysostome. Huit catecheses baptismales* (Sources chrétiennes 50; Paris, 1957), p. 147 (= P. Harkins, *St. John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions* (London, 1963), p. 51). John sees the gift of the Spirit as imparted in the baptism itself, cf. Finn, op. cit., pp. 174-80.

55 Edn. cit., pp. 402-3, 456-7.

56 Edn. cit., pp. 368-9, 398-9.

57 Edn. cit., pp. 400-3, 418-19.

light of the hypothesis that the consignation in positions 2 and 3 are really duplications of the original single Antiochene pre-baptismal anointing.

As we have seen, the first consignation was originally separated in time from the other ones, belonging to the period of the Lenten catechumenate. The fact, however, that it was intimately linked with the inscription of the candidates' names made the connection with the theme of ownership of sheep, being marked by branding, an obvious one. Now this was a theme that properly belonged to (one of) the anointings with oil,⁵⁸ and thus interaction between the first and the second/third consignations was made possible. Of course this interaction would become all the easier once the rites of the catechumenate had been joined in time to those of baptism. Although the influence, in this respect, of the later consignations on the first one cannot be seen in S's formula (in contrast to those of B and JS), it can be observed in the hesitation over the position of the introductory prayers for the first consignation,⁵⁹ and, as we have seen, the position before the second consignation that Moses bar Kepha—against Jacob of Edessa and the early manuscripts—gives to the prayer with the *ekphonesis* 'Fashion thy Christ...' may well be historically the older one, since this prayer may originally have been connected with the use of oil.

As far as the second and third consignations are concerned the situation is rather more complicated. As we have already seen, the overwhelming evidence of the early manuscripts shows that the formula, with its reference to Romans xi, that we find in the printed texts for the second consignation was in fact transferred thither from the third. Now the theme of grafting in Romans xi is quite unknown in connection with baptism in any Antiochene writer of the first five centuries A. D.; it is found, however, very prominently in Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catecheses*, in connection with the pre-baptismal anointing.⁶⁰ Accordingly it may be suggested that, when the post-baptismal anointing was introduced from Jerusalem into the Antiochene rite, there came with it the Jerusalem formula for the pre-baptismal anointing as well (our position 3 is almost certainly envisaged for the pre-baptismal anointing by Cyril), a formula containing precisely this reference.⁶¹

This introduction of a new formula to what was an already existing anointing would have been a relatively simple matter if, as we have suggested, the anointings at positions 2 and 3 were duplications of an original single pre-baptismal anointing which took place either immediately before, or after, the consecration of the water.⁶²

58 Note especially Theodore, edn cit., pp. 396-7.

59 See above, pp. 26 ff.

60 *Cat, Myst.* ii. 3 (*P. G.* xxxiii, col. 1080)

61 A similar formula is found in the Coptic *ordo*, in position 2 (there is no consignation in position 3), cf. Denzinger, i, pp. 200, 216.

62. Theodore shows that the formulas for these two consignations in his day simply read 'N is signed/anointed in the name...' (edn cit., pp. 368-9 and 402-3). Once the formula for the second consignation had been expanded with a reference to *uotesia* a corresponding expansion of the formula for the third would have been all the more obvious.

This duplication, however, was not adopted by everyone, and the silence over any consignation in position 3 that we find in Ps. Dionysios and the later Syrian Orthodox commentators is no doubt deliberate. It was probably under the influence of these commentators that the single manuscript of S, F, omitted the third consignation altogether. That this was a deliberate omission is made clear by the fact that the rubrics and formula proper to this third consignation have been pushed back to, and have displaced, those which properly belong to the second consignation. It would also appear that it was from manuscripts like F that the printed texts in Assemani ultimately derive, for in these texts, as in F, the formula for the third consignation has displaced that for the second, but at the same time they have reintroduced the action of the third consignation, though without any formula.

The very close relationship thus envisaged between the second and third consignations readily accounts for the frequent interchange of prayers for these two consignations that we find both within texts of S, and in the Antiochene *ordines* in general.

As for the fourth, post-baptismal consignation, it is hardly surprising that its character is so stable, not only in texts of S, but also in the other *ordines* as well, seeing that it is a completely new introduction into the Antiochene rite. It seems to have had virtually no influence on the other consignations, for the old Antiochene pre-baptismal anointing associated with the Holy Spirit is still preserved in S in the second consignation.⁶³

To conclude this section it may be helpful to illustrate the distribution of the consignations and certain of their features in tabular form.

TABLE 1 a

Consignation	Cyril	John Chrys.	Theodore	Ps. Dionys.	Byz. ordo	Coptic ordo	East Syrian ordo
Position 1				x	x	x	x (<i>rsm</i>)
Position 2		x	x (<i>rsm</i>)	x	} o m	x	} o m
parts of body		1	1	2		3	
Position 3	x	x	x (<i>msh</i>)	} o m	x	} om	x (<i>msh</i>)
parts of body	2	2	2		2		2
Position 4	x	om	x (<i>rsm</i>)	x	x	x	(x) ²
parts of body	3		2		3	3	

Key: x denotes presence of item

parts of body: 1 = head/forehead

2 = whole body. with division of labour

3 = organs of sense

⁶³ For the complete absence of the post-baptismal anointing from a manuscript of B's short *ordo* see note 41.

TABLE 1 b

Consignation	JS	B	T	D	CH IJK	F	SH	SA = SK
Position 1:								
formula	<i>htm</i>	<i>rsm</i>	—	—	<i>htm</i>	<i>htm</i>	<i>htm</i>	<i>htm</i>
parts of body	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
Position 2:								
formula	<i>rs n</i>	<i>rs n</i>	<i>rsm</i>	<i>rsm</i>	<i>rsm</i>	<i>htm+msh</i>	<i>rsm</i>	<i>rsm</i>
parts of body	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1
Position 3:								
formula	<i>rsm</i>	—	—		<i>msh</i>	} <i>om</i>	<i>msh</i>	—
parts of body	2	2	2		2		2	2
Position 4:								
formula	<i>tb'</i>	<i>rsm³</i>	<i>tb'</i>		<i>tb'</i>	<i>tb'</i>	<i>tb'</i>	<i>tb'</i>
parts of body	3	3	3		3	3	3	3

Key: see above.



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