

THE SACRAMENTARY OF SERAPION
FROM A THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF B. LITT.
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10. BAPTISM. ORDINATIONS etc.

The service of Baptism which is given in the Sacramentary of Serapion is not something strikingly new but is adapted to and accords with the common type which is given fragmentarily by other authors and especially by Cyril of Jerusalem in his Catecheses.

Following Brigtmán's order of the prayers of Baptism, we distinguish in the Sacramentary of Serapion the three parts of the office i. e. the preparation of the Catechumens which includes also the blessing of the oil of exorcism, the Baptism itself to which the consecration of the water belongs, and the confirmation with the Chrism which includes also its consecration (Cf. ch. 8).

In the documents of the 4th century we may see the baptismal office as following: After the Catechumens course during Lent, the ceremonies of initiation took place on the night of Easter Eve. The Catechumens were received in the vestibule of the baptistry and first they said the renunciation of the Devil turning to the West, «the region of darkness». Afterwards they turned to the East «the region of light» and they recited the creed. Then the Catechumen was undressed and entered into the baptistry where he was anointed with the oil of exorcism. After the anointing he entered into the baptistry where he was anointed with the oil of exorcism. After the anointing he entered into the font where the water had been previously consecrated by the bishop. After a threefold immersion into the water, the confirmation took place and the baptized was anointed by chrism. Dressed with new clothes he received the Holy Communion at the Eucharist which followed; in Alexandria (as in Rome) he took honey and milk¹¹⁸.

The Sacramentary of Serapion with its prayers also gives that shape. Thus we have first «the prayer of the consecration of the wa-

(*) Συνέχεια ἐκ τῆς σελ. 591 τοῦ προηγουμένου τόμου.

118. Cf. E. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 330.

ters» (7). Also, the «εὐχή ὑπὲρ βαπτιζομένων» (8) before the Baptism ; afterwards the prayer «μετὰ τὴν Ἀποταγήν» (9). Then the «εὐχή εἰς τὸ Ἄλλειμμα τῶν βαπτιζομένων» (15) and the «εὐχή μετὰ τὴν Ἀλειψιν» (10) follow when the candidate approaches the font. The «μετὰ τὸ βαπτισθῆναι καὶ ἀνελθεῖν εὐχή» (11) is after the Baptism, and the prayer of Christ (16) follows.

The consecration of the water comes first in the Sacramentary of Serapion. It seems that the practice was changed later on, as the current Egyptian rites, Coptic and Ethiopic, do not place it at that point. In earlier authors there is evidence that the consecration took place at the beginning of the office. Thus the 19th (& 112) canon of Hippolytus says that the candidates «περὶ τὴν ἀλεκτροφωνίαν ἴστανται ἐγγὺς κυμαινομένου ὕδατος θαλασσίου, καθαροῦ, προητοιμασμένου, ἁγίου»¹¹⁹.

In Serapion this prayer is a kind of epiclesis where God is asked to look down on these waters and to fill them with «Holy Spirit». In this prayer, as in the Epiclesis of the Eucharist, the invocation for the consecration of the water is addressed to the Father to send the Logos : «ὁ ἄρρητός Σου Λόγος ἐν αὐτοῖς (the waters) γενέσθω καὶ μεταποιησάτω αὐτῶν τὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ γεννητικὰ αὐτὰ κατασκευασάτω πληροῦμενα τῆς σῆς χάριτος...». Further on in another point Serapion says : «καὶ ὡς κατελθὼν ὁ μονογενὴς σου Λόγος ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ἅγια ἀπέδειξεν, οὕτω καὶ νῦν ἐν τούτοις κατερχέσθω καὶ ἅγια καὶ πνευματικὰ ποιησάτω...».

The preparation of the Catechumens for Baptism was the final phase of a course of teaching and discipline during the whole period of Lent. In the Sacramentary of Serapion this preparation is represented by the prayers 8, 9, 15, 10.

The «εὐχή ὑπὲρ βαπτιζομένων» (8) is a prayer, it seems, that was read for the Catechumen when he was accepted finally and definitely for Baptism. That comes out from its rubric, its content and from the position which it has among the other prayers, before the «prayer after the renunciation».

From the following prayer (9) «μετὰ τὴν ἀποταγήν» and from its content which refers to the «συγκατάθεσιν» of the candidate we assume that before this prayer the exorcism, the renunciation, and the confession of faith took place. «The Exorcism of the baptismal rite is only the conclusion of a series of exorcisms extended over the Cate-

119. From. P. Trempelas, Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Βαπτίσματος, p. 138.

chumenate, or at least over the last stage of it (Cyr. Hier. Procat. 9, 14 Cat. 1, 5 etc.)¹²⁰.

As we are informed by Cyril of Jerusalem, when the exorcisms took place the Catechumen veiled his face in order not to detach his attention but to concentrate his mind on the meaning of the exorcisms. «Ἐσκέπασται σου τὸ πρόσωπον, ἵνα σχολάσῃ λοιπὸν ἢ διάνοια· ἵνα μὴ τὸ βλέμμα ρεμβόμενον, ποιήσῃ ρέμβεσθαι καὶ τὴν καρδίαν»¹²¹.

The exorcisms were regarded as something indispensable in the baptismal rite and their content was collected from the Scriptures. Thus St. Cyril of Jerusalem writes: «...χρυσὸς μὴ δύναται ἄνευ πυρὸς καθαρθῆναι τὰ ἀνοίκεια· οὕτως ἄνευ ἐπορκισμῶν οὐ δύναται καθαρθῆναι ψυχὴ· εἰσι δὲ θεῖοι ἐκ θείων Γραφῶν συνεκλελεγμένοι»¹²².

In Serapion there is only an allusion and a short reference to the exorcism in the «εὐχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν βαπτιζομένων» (8).

The exorcism was followed by the renunciation, which, as has been said, was in Serapion before the prayer (9), and the catechumen turned to the West. The form of renunciation in the Apost. Tradition is: «I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy service and all thy works» (Dix, Apost. Tradition p. 34); and in the Canons of Hippolytus: «Ἀποτάσσομαί σοι Σατανᾶ, μετὰ πάσης τῆς πομπῆς σου» (can. 19, 119 in Trempelas, The Service of Baptism, p. 138); Origen¹²³ gives a form which combines both of the above: «Quid denuntiaverit diabolo: non se usurum pompis ejus, neque operibus ejus, neque ullis omnino servitiis ejus ac voluptatibus pariturum».

The «prayer after the renunciation» (9), apart from the renunciation, presupposes the «συγκατάθεσιν» as well; that is the confession of faith. It seems that this confession or «σύνταξις» is as early as the renunciation though there is no good evidence about it. But St. Gregory the Nanzianzene. writes: «Οἶδα τίνι ἁμολόγησα καὶ τίνι ἀπεταξάμην καὶ τίνι συνεταξάμην»¹²⁴; also St. Cyril of Jerusalem: «Ὅτε οὖν τῷ Σατανᾶ ἀποτάτη... στραφῆναι σε ἀπὸ δυσμῶν πρὸς ἀνατολήν... τότε σοι ἐλέγετο εἰπεῖν· Πιστεύω εἰς τὸν Πατέρα καὶ εἰς τὸν Υἱὸν καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα καὶ εἰς ἓν Βάπτισμα μετανοίας»¹²⁵.

120. Brightman, op. cit., p. 249.

121. Procatech. 9 P. Gr. 33,349 a.

122. Procatech. 9 P. Gr. 33,349 a.

123. Homil. XII in Numeros 4 Die Griechischen Christlichen schriftsteller 7. p. 176, 1.

124. Oratio XXXIII Contra Arian. and de Seipso 17 P. Gr. 36, 286 b.

125. Catech. 19,9 P. Gr. 33, lo 73 b f.

In the Sacramentary of Serapion there is no form of creed but we may deduce its content from the content of the several prayers. Thus Brightman¹²⁶ has collected the following form out of Serapion's prayers and perhaps it represents approximately the baptismal creed :

1. Πιστεύω εἰς τὸν ἀγένητον Πατέρα, παντοκράτορα οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς καὶ πάντων ποιητήν. «1, 9, 13, 27, 23.»
2. καὶ εἰς τὸν Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, «1»
τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ Λόγον, «1, 8, 10»,
τὸν ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γεννηθέντα «1, 20»,
3. τὸν καταβάντα «7», ἐπιδημήσαντα «7»,
4. παθόντα «5», σταυρωθέντα «5, 17»,
5. ἀναστάντα «5, 17»,
6. καὶ καθεζόμενον ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ ἀγενήτου «5»,
7. καὶ ἐρχόμενον κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς «17».
8. Καὶ εἰς τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα «8, 10, 16».
9. Καὶ εἰς μίαν ἀγίαν καὶ μόνην καθολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν «1, 23».
10. Ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν «1, 15, 17»,
11. ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν «18»,
12. ζωὴν (αἰώνιον) «16».

The prayer (19) «after the renunciation» would follow that confession of faith which was a confirmation to syntaxis.

The catechumen was anointed with the oil of exorcism.

According to the canons of Hippolytus the blessing of the oil of exorcism and of the chrism took place by the bishop on the day of Baptism and the catechumen was anointed after the renunciation and confession. In the Coptic rite, and to-day in the Roman rite, the oil of exorcism is consecrated along with the Chrism on Maundy Thursday.

From the content of the prayer «εἰς τὸ ἄλειμμα τῶν βαπτιζομένων» (15) we assume that it is not the prayer of consecration. Thus it is very probable that the consecration did not take place during the Baptism. In the early Church, there was a custom that prayers of exorcism should be recited not only over the people but also over some certain lifeless elements (oil, water etc.) in order for them to be used afterwards for the blessing of men or things, having in themselves the power of exorcism and therefore being the substitute for the exorcism itself. The oil of exorcism has such a meaning and position¹²⁷. This

126. Op. cit., pp. 250-251.

127. Cf. Forget in A. Vacant and F. Mangenot, Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique, v. 5, 1779. Also, P. Trempelas, «Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Βαπτίσματος» p. 36.

idea, of course, is expressed also in the prayer of Serapion (15): «διὰ τοῦ ἀλείμματος τούτου... ἀποθεραπεῦσαι ἀπὸ ψυχῆς, σώματος, πνεύματος αὐτῶν πᾶν σημεῖον ἁμαρτίας καὶ ἀνομίας ἢ σατανικῆς αἰτίας». Certainly we cannot speak with certainty about the time of the consecration of this oil, but it does not seem to have any relation to that which is blessed at the Liturgy. At any rate it seems the anointing either is followed by or follows prayers which are connected with it like that of Serapion «ἀλείμμα τῶν βαπτιζομένων» (15—). The Apost. Tradition of Hippolytus, has the formula at the time of anointing: «Let all evil spirits depart far from thee»¹²⁸.

The prayer (10) which follows in the rite has the rubric in the MS.: «μετὰ τὴν ἀνάληψιν». But it has been corrected rightly by Brightman into «μετὰ τὴν ἀλειψιν» and by others «μετὰ τὴν ἀνάλειψιν».

It is a prayer of transition from the preparation of the catechumen into the Baptism itself. Signs of its use in procession to the Baptistry are the words «ὀδήγησον» and «ὀδηγεῖτω» which are used for example in this way: «ὁ μονογενῆς σου Λόγος ὀδηγεῖτω αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ λουτρόν».

After this prayer the Baptism follows in the Baptistry. It took place by immersion as we can deduce from the rubric of the following prayer (11): «μετὰ τὸ βαπτισθῆναι καὶ ἀνελθεῖν εὐχή»; «Ἀνελθεῖν» of course, from the font.

The formula would be «in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit». We can assume it from the prayer (10) which is situated before the Baptism. That is addressed to God the Father but it says also that in the regeneration of the catechumen «συμπαρεῖτω ὁ ἅγιός Σου Λόγος, συνέστω τὸ ἅγιόν Σου Πνεῦμα ἀποσοβοῦν καὶ ἀποβάλλον πάντα πειρασμόν».

The prayer «μετὰ τὸ βαπτισθῆναι καὶ ἀνελθεῖν» (11) speaking about the participation of the baptized in the «ὀφέλιμον δωρεάν» refers, in some way, to the confirmation—chrism which follows and with which the whole service concludes.

According to the early sources Baptism was followed by Chrism. That becomes obvious from the fact that the writers of the early Church used, without discrimination, terms for Baptism and Chrism which later on are attached only to Chrism¹²⁹. Thus Clement of Ale-

128. G. Dix, *The Apost. Tradition*, p. 34.

129. De Puniet in article «Confirmation», *Dict. d'Arch. Chr. etc.*, v. III, 2515 f., also P. Trempelas, «Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Βαπτίσματος», p. 45 f.

xandria says that Bastism may be called «φώτισμα» and «τέλειον» and «λουτρὸν» and that gives the perfect δωρεάν»¹³⁰. On the other hand Cyril of Alexandria attributes that to Chrism, which is given «πρὸς τελείωσιν»¹³¹ therefore it is called «τὸ τῆς τελειώσεως χρῖσμα»¹³². Also the term «σφραγίς» in an early period is attributed to Baptism¹³³ but from the 4th century there is evidence about the formula «Σφραγίς Δωρεᾶς Πνεύματος Ἁγίου» in connection with Chrism. Tertullian uses the term either for Chrism or Baptism¹³⁴. Thus there is a close connection between Baptism and Chrism.

About the way in which confirmation was performed we read in Brightman¹³⁵ that «from incidental allusions it may be gathered that Confirmation in Egypt consisted in, probably an imposition of hands (Orig. de princip. 1, 3 & 2, 7; St. Athan. ad Serap. 1, 6), and certainly an unction (Orig. in Lev. VI 5, in Rom. V 8; St. Didym. de Trinit. II 6. 23), administered by the bishop with consecrated chrism in the form of a cross, on the forehead of the neophyte, «in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost» to which the neophyte or his sponsor answered—Amen».

That the Chrism was connected with the imposition of hands may be assumed from the allusion of the prayer (16) of Serapion «γινόμενης ὑπὸ τὴν κραταίαν σου χεῖρα». We can assume from the same prayer that the «sealing» was performed in the form of a cross «χρῖόμενοι... τὸ ἐκτύπωμα τοῦ σημείου τοῦ σωτηριώδους σταυροῦ τοῦ μονογενοῦς». The formula would also be similar to the «Σφραγίς δωρεᾶς Ἁγίου Πνεύματος» as may be deduced also from the content of the prayer in which the anointed become «μέτοχοι τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Ἁγ. Πνεύματος καὶ ἀσφαλισθέντες τῇ σφραγίδι ταύτῃ etc.».

It seems that the consecration of the chrism by the bishop took place on the same day as the Baptism and that the prayer (16) was that of the consecration. This is obvious, in an indirect way, from the prayer itself (16) «εἰς τὸ χρῖσμα ἐν ᾧ χρίονται οἱ βαπτισθέντες». Here, there is also a kind of epiclesis of the Son, to «ἐνεργῆσαι ἐν τῷ χρῖσματι». Also its generality «ἵνα οἱ... χρίόμενοι ἐν αὐτῷ» and its direct reference not to the act of the anointing but rather to the matter

130. Παιδαγωγός 1, 6 P. Gr. 8, 281-284.

131. Joel. 23 P. Gr. 71, 363 a.

132. John. VII P. Gr. 74, 49 b.

133. S. Hermas Pastor 3, Similitudo, 9, 16 P. Gr. 2, 995.

134. P. Trempelas, *ibid.*, p. 46.

135. *Op. cit.*, p. 252.

itself ἐνεργῆσαι ἐν τῷ χρίσματι τούτῳ ἐνεργεῖαν θεῖαν καὶ οὐράνιον ἵνα...» speak in favour of the view that this prayer is that of consecration, being the only one for the consecration of the Chrism and for the «sealing» of the neophyte by it. Almost the same happens in the Apost. Constitutions. «In fact Confirmation in the 4th centry was very much what it is now; the only real difference being, that whereas in the existing rites besides the brow, several parts of the body are anointed, the early Egyptian evidence is good only for the anointing of the head and the brow»¹³⁶.

In the Sacramentary of Serapion there are only the prayers of ordination of the three ranks of priesthood i.e. of deacon, presbyter and bishop without anything else which would speak about the presentation of the candidates, the verification and the ratification of their election. Certainly, from the petitions in the Sacramentary of Serapion we are informed about the several orders which there were in the Church of Egypt at the time of Serapion. Thus we have the interpreters, the readers, subdeacons, deacons, presbyters and bishops. Also monks and virgins are referred to but not deaconesses or widows. But all these orders are merely referred to and there are no prayers of the act of ordination apart from those for the deacon, presbyter and bishop.

The deacons in the prayer (12) «χειροθεσία καταστάσεως» are referred to as successors of the seven deacons, and they have a close connection with the other ranks of the ministry being the first step of it (Cf. ch. 6).

The liturgical functions of the deacon, as we deduce from the Sacramentary, are to «παραστῆναι τῷ ἁγίῳ σώματι καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ αἵματι» (25). Of course, deacons would stand at each side of the altar at the Liturgy. Also in Baptism and the other Sacraments they would help the main celebrants as we see from several documents and especially the «Church Orders».

But apart from their liturgical functions they had others as well, connected with the social work of the Church i.e. the ministry among the poor and the sick. Their general work justifies the moral qualifications and the gifts which are referred to in Serapion and which are asked for them. These are «πνεῦμα γνώσεως καὶ διακρίσεως», «καθαρὰ καρδία καὶ σῶμα», «καθαρὰ συνειδήσις» in order to be able «μεταξὺ τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου καθαρῶς καὶ ἀμέμπτως διακονῆσαι».

136. Brightman, op. cit., p. 252.

In the prayer «καταστάσεως πρεσβυτέρων» (13) prebyters are referred to as the successors of the presbyters of Moses and as stewards of the people, obviously established by God.

The functions of the presbyters, as it comes out from this prayer (13), were threefold according to the threefold office of the Lord. The «οἰκονομῆσαι τὸν λαόν» may have reference to the administrative work; «πρεσβεύειν τὰ θεῖά σου λόγια» has reference to the teaching office; and the «καταλλάξαι τὸν λαόν σου σοὶ τῷ ἀγεννήτῳ Θεῷ» has reference to the reconciliation of man with God which comes through the divine grace given it the Sacraments.

There is no doubt that this wide jurisdiction of the presbyters is explained by their known position in Egypt where they were more independent than elsewhere, and where the «multiplication of the episcopate was possibly slow». Therefore the moral qualifications and gifts which are asked for the presbyters are analogous to their functions. «Besides the moral gifts, of a clean hear and a clean conscience (13), they have to have doctrine (25) to their teaching office; wisdom (13,25) and prudence (13) to their administrative and disciplinary office»¹³⁷. Generally they must have «Πνεῦμα ἅγιον... ἵνα δυναθῇ σοὶ ὑπηρετῆσαι».

The prayer «καταστάσεως Ἐπισκόπου» (14) and the other reference to the bishop in the Sacramentary of Serapion do not inform us about the form of the consecration or the way of his election.

At any rate the bishop is regarded as the successor of the Apostles «ἐπίσκοπον ἅγιον τῆς διαδοχῆς τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων» (14) having his rights by the authority of God Who through Jesus Christ is He Who «τοὺς ἀποστόλους ἐκλεξάμενος, ὁ κατὰ γενεὰν καὶ γενεὰν ἐπισκόπους ἁγίους χειροτονῶν». Therefore the episcopal office is regarded as a divine institution. This idea about the episcopal office as a divine institution is a common one in the Church of Egypt as we see it and in St. Athanasius in his epistle to Dracontius¹³⁸. The bishop being the successor of the Apostles continues their function in the Church; and his function is the inclusive pastorate of the flock «ποιμαίνειν τὴν ποίμνην»; unfortunately in Serapion there is not a further and more detailed definition of his functions. At any rate, Serapion gives also to the bishop a leading participation in the worship. Many services ought to be an exclusive function of the bishop such as ordinations, the completion of Baptism, and confirmation...

137. Brightman, op. cit., p. 256.

138. Athan. to Dracont. c. 3,4,5, P. Gr. 25,525c f.

In the «χειροθεσία καταστάσεως Ἐπισκόπου» (14) God is asked to give to the bishop elect «grace and divine Spirit» ὁ ἐχαρίσω πᾶσι τοῖς γνησίοις σου δούλοις καὶ προφήταις καὶ παιδιαρχαῖς». This connection of the bishop with the prophets perhaps, refers to his teaching function; and the «ποιμαίνειν σου τὴν ποίμνην ἔτι τε ἀμέμπτως καὶ ἀπροσκοπτως ἐν τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ διατελείτω» would refer to the administrative function and the spiritual supervision of the diocese. The spiritual, moral and intellectual gifts which are asked for the bishop are: to be «alive», to have «grace and divine Spirit», to be «out of every temptation» having also «wisdom and knowledge» and «εὐόδωσιν» in the «sciences» of God.

The prayer «εἰς ἔλαιον νοσοῦντων ἢ εἰς ἄρτον ἢ εἰς ὕδωρ» (17) confirms the evidence of the Fathers and the other documents about the use of oil and also of water or bread for the sick after their blessing by the bishop or the prebyter. In regard to the oil we can say that its use is a very early one and traces of its sacramental use can be discerned in the Catholic Epistle of St. James (5,14 f.).

The prayer (17) of the Sacramentary of Serapion is, of course, a different one from no. (5) which is situated before the end of the Eucharist. Thus the prayer «περὶ τῶν προσφερομένων ἐλαίων» (5) is connected with the Eucharist since among the other gifts which were offered by the people for the Eucharist, was included oil for blessing to be used for the sick. This oil perhaps was offered by individuals for their use. It seems that the other prayer (17) was recited when, separately from the Liturgy, oil or bread or water was blessed for the sick. At any rate nothing in the text of the Sacramentary speaks in favour of the view that the reading of both the prayers at the same time and occasion took place. On the other hand their different position in the Sacramentary show that were recited independently of each other¹³⁹.

It is important to notice that in the consecration of the oil, as it is in this prayer (17), God the Father is again asked for «ὥστε ἐκέμψαι δύναμιν ἱατρικὴν ἀπὸ τῶν οὐρανῶν τοῦ μονογενοῦς ἐπὶ τὸ ἔλαιον τοῦτο, ἵνα γένηται etc.». Again the Logos is the acting Person of the Trinity at the consecration.

The elements (oil, bread, water) become after their consecration «ἀλεξιφάρμακον» of every sickness and «medicine of life and salvation»

139. Cf. P. Trempelas, Ἡ Ἀκολουθία τοῦ Εὐχελαίου; p. 4.

εἰς ὑγείαν καὶ ὀλοκληρίαν ψυχῆς, σώματος, πνεύματος, εἰς ῥῶσιν τελείαν»; thus they cover both the soul and body of the Christian.

It is, also, important to notice that these elements become perceptible instruments of the divine grace and power after the invocation of the name of God «τὸ ὄνομά Σου τὸ ἅγιον, ὃ ἐπεκαλεσάμεθα νῦν ἡμεῖς καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς καὶ ἀπερχέσθωσαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐντὸς «καὶ» τῶν ἐκτὸς τῶν δούλων σου τούτων· ἵνα δοξασθῇ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν σταυρωθέντος etc.».

The prayer «περὶ τεθνεώτος καὶ ἐκκομιζομένου» (18) refers to the Burial of the dead (Ch. ch. 8). This prayer was recited at a service and the word «ἐκκομιζομένου» shows that a funeral procession was taking place. This prayer does not inform us about the funeral service and its content, but the elements of this service which are known from other sources are not excluded by the Sacramentary of Serapion and perhaps they are implied in it. «Funeral rites were simple enough, as in essence they have continued to be; and in Egypt they were what they were elsewhere (Ap. Const. 30; Jer. Ep. LXXVII, II), consisting of an office of readings and prayers, the procession to the cemetery with accompanying psalmody, and the act of burial, followed immediately or at an interval by the mass pro dormitione. Origen (c. Cels. VIII 30) notes and explains the care bestowed by Christians on the bodies of the dead»¹⁴⁰.

That a Liturgy for the departed followed is very probable, as is suggested from the reading of names in the Eucharist of Serapion after the consecration of the bread and wine.

In this prayer (18) God appears as «ὁ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχων», «ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ δεσπότης πάσης σαρκὸς» which are usual phrases in prayer for the departed; but also He is called «ὁ ἀλλοιωτῶν καὶ μεταβάλλον καὶ μετασχηματίζων τὰ κτίσματα... μόνος αὐτὸς ἀφθαρτος καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος καὶ αἰώνιος ὢν». This terminology is usual in prayers of this kind and the structure and syntax are excellent. It contains, also, a profession of faith in the final resurrection of the bodies.

(Συνεχίζεται)

140. Brightman, op. cit., pp. 261-262.