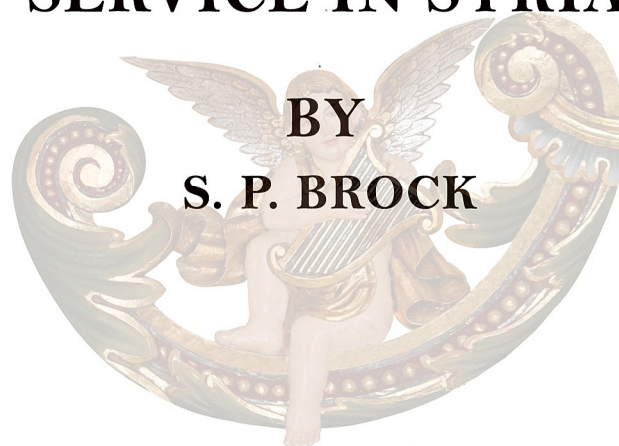




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A  
SHORT MELKITE BAPTISMAL  
SERVICE IN SYRIAC



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## A SHORT MELKITE BAPTISMAL SERVICE IN SYRIAC

BY

S. P. BROCK

### INTRODUCTORY

Although to-day the Melkite baptismal service is in Arabic and belongs to the Constantinopolitan rite, the oldest surviving manuscripts of the service are in Syriac, and some of these manuscripts preserve a form of text which antedates the byzantinisation of the rite that took place after the recapture of Antioch by the Greeks in 969. This earlier form of the service represents a genuinely Antiochene rite, and one that has several points of contact with the other Antiochene baptismal *ordines* in Syriac, i.e. the two Syriac Orthodox services, attributed to Severus (=S) (1) and Timothy of Alexandria (=T) (2) respectively, and the Maronite service attributed to Jacob of Serug (=JS) (3). This Antiochene Melkite *ordo*, which is attributed to Basil (=B), has been published, from a Vatican manuscript, by J.A. Assemani in the invaluable collection of baptismal *ordines* in volumes I-III of his *Codex Liturgicus Ecclesiae Universae* (4).

The other Antiochene *ordines* all have short forms of the service, for use in cases of emergency: thus the Syrian Orthodox have abbreviated services

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(1) For the various texts of S in Assemani's *Codex Liturgicus* and Denzinger's *Ritus Orientalium* I, see *Le Muséon* 83 (1970), p. 369, and for the early manuscripts of S, see *Studies in the early history of the Syrian Orthodox baptismal liturgy*, *JTS* 23 (1972), pp. 16-64.

(2) Edition and translation in *Le Muséon* 83 (1970), pp. 367-431.

(3) ASSEMANI II, pp. 309-50, III, pp. 184-7; DENZINGER I, pp. 334-50.

(4) In III, pp. 199-237; Latin translation only in DENZINGER I, pp. 318-27.



attributed to Severus (5) and to Iohannan bar Shushan (†1072) (6), and a very short *ordo* attributed to Philoxenos (7), while the Maronites have a short service attributed to Basil (8). These short forms of the services are of considerable interest in that they preserve a number of archaic features, but most interesting of them all, perhaps, is an anonymous short form of the old Antiochene Melkite *ordo*, which has hitherto passed virtually unnoticed (9).

BM Add. 14497, ff. 119a-152a, of the eleventh/twelfth century (10), contains a text of the full Antiochene Melkite *ordo* that differs in a number of respects (11) from that published by Assemani in *Codex Liturgicus III* (I hope to discuss the full service in this manuscript in a future article), and at the end a smaller, but contemporary, hand has added the short baptismal service (ff. 152a-153b), which is published below.

The most remarkable feature about the short service in BM Add. 14497 is the complete absence of any post-baptismal anointing. In this our text is unique among the surviving Antiochene *ordines*, and it represents a very archaic stage in the development of the Antiochene baptismal rite. It is well known that, in this rite, originally there was no post-baptismal anointing, only a pre-baptismal one; this is the situation represented by the references to the baptismal service in early documents such as the *Acts of Thomas*, and it is still presupposed in the baptismal homilies of both John Chrysostom and Narsai (12). A post-baptismal anointing, however, was

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(5) ASSEMANI II, pp. 300-6; DENZINGER I, pp. 316-7; ed. E. BARSAUM, *Ktobo da-Cmodo qaddisho*, Homs 1950, pp. 51-5.

(6) See E. BARSAUM; *Ktobo d-berulle bdire d-<sup>c</sup>al mardut yulpane suryoye hdire*, Qamishlieh 1967, pp. 114-5, 466.

(7) ASSEMANI II, pp. 307-8; DENZINGER I, p. 318. Cp also A. DE HALLEUX, *Philoxène de Mabbog*, Louvain 1963, pp. 303-5.

(8) DENZINGER I, pp. 358-9.

(9) C. KARALEVSKY, however, notes its existence in passing: *Histoire des Patriarcats Melkites III*, p. 31.

(10) WRIGHT, *Catalogue...*, pp. 231-2.

(11) Some of these are noted in the course of my study of the early manuscripts of S, in *JTS* 23 (1972).

(12) T.M. FINN, *The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instructions of St. John Chrysostom* Washington 1967, p. 139ff; R.H. CONNOLLY, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, Cambridge 1909, p. XLII ff.



evidently introduced into the Antiochene area (almost certainly from Jerusalem) (13) soon after 400, for it is specifically commented on by Theodore of Mopsuestia in his *Catechetical Homilies*, and it is regularly mentioned by later writers (14). It is clear that this pattern rapidly became the norm in the Antiochene area, and the preservation of the earliest Antiochene practice in a manuscript of the eleventh or twelfth century is extremely surprising.

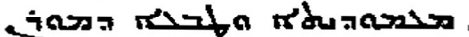
One further archaic feature deserves special mention here. The wording of the epiklesis of the Holy Spirit follows the general pattern of East Syrian epikleses ("May the Spirit come...") (15), found in both the East Syrian eucharistic and baptismal liturgies. In preserving this East Syrian pattern our short service is not, however, unique among the West Syrian baptismal texts, for the pattern also occurs in the Syrian Orthodox *ordo* attributed to Timothy (16), in one manuscript of that attributed to Severus (17), and in the Maronite *ordo* attributed to Jacob of Serug (18).

More detailed analysis and discussion of this short Melkite *ordo* will be found in the commentary, appended to the translation.

#### TEXT AND TRANSLATION.

For convenience the text has been divided up into sections. Words underlined in the Syriac text and italicized in the translation are in red ink in the manuscript. A few small corrections have been made to the Syriac text, but in all cases the reading of the manuscript is given in a footnote;

(13) Cp E.C. RATCLIFF, *The Old Syrian Baptismal Tradition and its Resettlement under the Influence of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century*, in *Studies in Church History* 2 (1965), ed. G.J. CUMING, pp. 19-37; also *JTS* 23 (1972), pp. 25, 33-4.

(14) Theodore: ed. TONNEAU, pp. 402, 456 ff; in addition to the later writers mentioned in *JTS* 23 (1972), pp. 24-5, note the sequence in Jacob of Serug -(ed MOUTERDE, in *MUSJ* 26 (1944 / 6), p. 359): 

(15) Cp B. BOTTE, *L'epiclèse dans les liturgies syriennes orientales*, in *Sacris Erudiri* 6 (1954), pp. 48-72; *JTS* 23 (1972), p. 52 ff. and *The epiklesis in the Antiochene baptismal ordines*, forthcoming in *O.C.A.*

(16) § 36.

(17) BM Add. 14518; § 37 in my forthcoming edition. On this manuscript see *A remarkable Syriac Baptismal Ordo (BM Add. 14518.)* in *Parole de l'Orient* 2 (1971) 365-78.

(18) ASSEMANI II, pp. 340-1.



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