

Severus of Antioch in Egypt

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Severus of Antioch in Egypt

The Council of Chalcedon in 481 left a heritage of strife in the Roman Empire. Strife had followed the earlier council of Ephesus, but that was solved by the migration of malcontents to Persia. It was otherwise after Chalcedon. Those who refused its decisions remained and formed a powerful faction. Whilst the West and most of the Greek East accepted its decrees, opposition continued in Syria and Palestine, whilst Egypt was united in rejecting them. The Emperor Zeno tried to reconcile dissidents by a proposed compromise in the *Henoticon*, but

ABBREVIATIONS :

- BM = British Museum.
BN = Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
Borgia = Borgia Collection in the National Museum, Naples. Catalogued by Zoega. Cf. *The Times* for 26. 19. 43 for damage to this Library during German retreat in 1943, and *The Daily Telegraph* for 7. 12. 43 for the way in which most of its contents were preserved. Cf. also A. VAN LANTSCOOT, *Cotation du fonds copte de Naples*, in *Le Museon* XLI (1928) 217-224 for correspondence of Zoega's numbers with those in the present catalogue at Naples.
CIG = *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, ed. A. BOECK and others, Berlin, 1828-1877.
CSCO = *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*.
HE = *Historia Ecclesiastica*.
KKS = O. VON LEMM, *Kleine Koptische Studien*, L'Académie imperiale des Sciences, St-Petersbousg, 1912, LVI-LVII.
MPG = MIGNE's *Patrologia Graeca*.
PM = *Coptic manuscripts from the monastery of S. Michael in the Fayyum* which passed into the hands of the late J. J. Pierpont Morgan in 1918. Reproduced in *Codices Coptici photographice expressi Bibliothecae Pierpont Morgan*, Rome, 1922. Copies in the British Museum and Cambridge University Library.
PO = *Patrologia Orientalis*.
ROC = *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*.
Zoega = G. ZOEGA, *Catalogus codicum Copticorum manuscriptorum qui in Museo Borgiano Veletris asservantur*, Romae, 1810. Anastatischer Neudruck, Leipzig, 1903.

failed. His successor Anastasius inclined to support the anti-Chalcedonians, but was himself suspect as of dubious orthodoxy, and had to meet a serious rebellion in 514 led by the Thracian Vitalian who posed as a champion of the Chalcedonians. During that revolt Constantinople was in great peril, and Anastasius obtained peace only by conceding most of what Vitalian demanded.

Anastasius died in July 518 and was succeeded by the Thracian Justin, who at once reserved Anastasius' policy. Instead of trying to conciliate the anti-Chalcedonians, he endeavoured to enforce the Chalcedonian decrees and deposed all bishops who refused to accept them, though shrinking from applying force in Egypt where opposition was determined and the people disaffected. Amongst the first bishops deposed were Severus of Antioch and Julian of Halicarnassus, both of whom took refuge in Egypt. Severus was in great fear of Justin's severity and of Vitalian who had made savage threats against him and had a strong personal animus as god-father of Flavian, the bishop whom Severus had superseded (1). But Justin mistrusted Vitalian and, after inviting him to court and flattering him, caused him to be assassinated. Before that happened Severus, after hiding in Antioch, escaped to Alexandria where he was well received and lived unmolested in the Enaton monastery outside the city with other refugees.

Dioscorus II (515-518) was then Patriarch of Alexandria and Severus' friend, but he died on October 24th. Justin did not appoint a successor and after some delay the Alexandrians elected another friend of Severus, Timothy III, who had been Dioscorus' secretary.

Then a controversy broke out between Severus and Julian. A certain monk asked Severus whether Christ's human body, as it was before the resurrection, could rightly be termed corruptible or not. That body never suffered corruption and after the resurrection was glorified, but before then it was a human body, as such was it liable to human frailties, including liability to corruption? Severus replied that it might be termed corruptible, as some of the Church Fathers had so termed it. One of those present reported this answer to Julian of Halicarnassus, and he protested that the Fathers had not so termed it. He then composed a work which he called the *Tomarion*, in which he maintained that the body of Christ, though human, was exempt from human needs such as hunger, thirst, fatigue and liability to corruption, a kind of *phantasma*, human in appearance, but really super-human. This work divided the anti-Chalcedonians into two factions, one for Severus, the other for Julian.

(1) PSEUDOS-ZACHARIAS RHETOR (circ. A. D. 569) in PO. II. iii. p. 208; EYAGRIUS, HE. IV. 4.

Justin died in 527 and his nephew Justinian succeeded. He did not continue Justin's uncompromising policy, but was ready to negotiate with the moderate anti-Chalcedonians such as Severus (1), whilst his wife Theodora openly supported Severus. Friendly letters were exchanged between Severus, Justinian and Theodora, and the exiled patriarch was invited to a conference in the capital (2). In fact he did go there and took part in it, staying in Theodora's palace with a safe-conduct from the Emperor (3). In the early part of Justinian's reign he was not molested by the imperial government, which treated him as a possible mediator, but suffered bitter opposition from the Julianists.

An instance of this hostility appears in the account given in the *History of the Patriarchs* of events in Scetis. When the *Tomarion* reached Scetis most of the monks accepted Julian's views, but seven adhered to Severus. The Julianists attacked those seven, two of whom were killed, the rest scattered « and began to celebrate the liturgy in their cells in the monastery of S. Macarius and in the other monasteries. And this was the cause of their separation and of the prevalence of error in the four monasteries and in the hermitages » (4). That was towards the end of the patriarchate of Timothy III, so probably shortly after 535 (5).

H. G. E. White cites the Coptic document describing the *Translation of the Forty-nine Martyrs*, which shows that it was the followers of Severus in Scetis who provoked the riot, but agrees with the *History* that it was they who were worsted and so were excluded from the church and had to celebrate services in their cells (6). This Coptic document is the older evidence, but it applies the name of « Gaianites » to the Julianists, a name not used until after the death of Timothy III.

The *Synaxarium* states that when Severus « went to Egypt he wandered about from place and from monastery to monastery, hiding himself » (7), so Michael Syrus, « the holy Severus passed from desert to desert, so as not to be recognised by persecutors, he lived quietly,

(1) The Patriarch Timothy II supported SEVERUS. *History of the Patriarchs*, ed. EVETTS, p. 191.

(2) EVAGRIUS, *HE*. IV. xvi.

(3) PSEUDO-ZACHARIAS RHETOR VII. xv in PO. II. iii. p. 260 and IX. xvi. in PO. II. iii. p. 292. ATHANASIUS OF ANTIOCH, *Conflict of Severus*, ed. E. J. GOOD-SPEED, PO. IV. vi. p. 622.

(4) *History of the Patriarchs*, ed. EVETTS, p. 189 sq.

(5) H. G. E. WHITE, *The Monasteries of the Wadi 'n-Natrun*, II (1932) pp. 229 sq.

(6) *Notices et extraits*, XXXIX. pp. 353 sq. cited by H. G. E. WHITE, *op. cit.* pp. 229 sq.

(7) *Synaxarium*, ed. BASSET, PO. I. 313.

wearing poor clothes, with hat and sandals » (1). Later he left the desert and went to the town of Sakha (2), « where he stayed with a devout head-man » (3). That devout person was Dorotheus. Severus arrived in Egypt as a fugitive from persecution in Justin's early days and from the ferocity of Vitalian, but was allowed to live undisturbed in the Enaton monastery. Then opposition arose, not from the government, but from the Julianists, and he went in disguise to organise and encourage those who refused Julian's heresy.

The *History of the Patriarchs* makes several errors in its account of Severus' life. It states that « Anastasius the believing prince died; and they raised up an evil man after him, a heretic whose name was Justinian, that he might govern the Empire », and describes Justinian as the persecutor who « seized Severus » (4). Justinian here is an error for Justin. Then « after two years, at the request of the believing princess Theodora, the prince left Severus alone and gave him up to her, and so she sent him back to his see » (5). Severus never was restored to his see. Further « it was made known to the faithful princess Theodora that the blessed Theodosius had been banished out of the city of Alexandria, whence she herself had originally come » (6). Theodora was not of Alexandrian origin. The *Synaxarium*, commemorating the arrival of Severus in Egypt on 2 Babeh (29 September 518), says that this happened in the days of Anastasius « who was hostile to the saint, but the Empress was orthodox and loved him » (7). Anastasius was the friend and patron of Severus, and Theodora was not his wife. The *History*, in its account of Theodosius described Gaianus as stirring up trouble by bribing the governor and commander of the forces to expel Theodosius (8). Those officers protected Theodosius and expelled Gaianus. A later entry corrects this statement (9).

Both the *History of the Patriarchs* and the *Synaxarium* were late compositions when the events of Severus' life were in the remote past and the Copts were obsessed by the persecution of the reign of Heraclius, when the State Church and the imperial government were per-

(1) MICHAEL SYRUS, IX. ch. xxvi, in PO. II. iii. p. 307.

(2) It was at Xoïs-Sakha that Severus died. John of Asia (circ. A. D. 565) ch. xlviii, in PO. II. iii. p. 298.

(3) *Synaxarium*, ed. BASSET, 2nd Babeh, PO. I. iii. p. 314.

(4) *History of the Patriarchs*, ed. EVETTS, p. 187.

(5) *ibid.* 189.

(6) *ibid.* 194.

(7) *Synaxarium*, ed. BASSET, PO. I. iii. p. 313.

(8) *History of the Patriarchs*, ed. EVETTS, p. 193.

(9) *ibid.* p. 194.

secutors and the Gaianites, Severus' real enemies, had fallen into oblivion. The disorganization of the Gaianites or Acephali dates from the days of Damian (569-605) when their community in the East was reduced to four priests. They chose the oldest of these, Barsenuphi, and the three others consecrated him bishop, invalidly. Their brethren in the West were indignant, disowned them, and consecrated another bishop (1).

The *History* states that the governor and a friend named John « took Theodosius and put him on board a boat secretly on the river and conveyed him to a town called Malig within the province of Egypt and there he remained two years » (2). At the death of Theodosius in 567 the governor of Alexandria « an excellent and philosophic man » who was in sympathy with the followers of Severus, advised them to « go out to the monastery of Az-Zajjaj (Enaton) as if you intended to pray there and appoint yourselves whom you shall elect as patriarch ». So they went out and elected Peter IV (3). In all this it is obvious that the civil authorities acted in sympathy with Severus' followers and connived at their freedom, provided their patriarch did not visit the city openly.

Justinian treated Severus as a moderate man who might come to terms and kept that hope until the uncompromising synod of 536 showed it to be futile. Then Severus went back to Egypt and was alone, without even a secretary, as he complained in his letter to John of Bar Aphthonia (4). It was not the government but the Julianists who persecuted him and his adherents, and it was those Julianists of whom the State most disapproved. Peter IV Theodosius' successor, lived unmolested in Enaton, but « could not reveal that he was patriarch and was not able to enter the city openly » (5). Similar conditions prevailed in Antioch where the Patriarch Theophanes was forbidden to enter his episcopal city because he refused to accept the decisions of Chalcedon (6). Later, when Justinian restricted the churches of Alexandria to the Chalcedonian clergy, he permitted the followers of Severus to use two new churches which that built, the Angelion at the Hundred and Five Steps, and the church of SS. Cosmas and Damian east of the amphitheatre (7).

When the conflict took place in Scetis Severus was hiding « in the

(1) *ibid.* p. 210.

(2) *ibid.* p. 194.

(3) *ibid.* pp. 205-208.

(4) JOHN OF BETH-APHTHONIA, *Life of Severus*, ed. M. A. KUGENER, in PO. II. iii. p. 257.

(5) *History of the Patriarchs*, ed. EVETTS, p. 207.

(6) *ibid.* p. 208.

(7) *ibid.* p. 200.

house of a man named Dorotheus, who took care of the affairs of the aged monks who had rejected the error of Julian the unbeliever. And the said man was allowed to visit the governor of Egypt, Aristomachus, and begged him to take pity on the aged amongst the monks who were in the desert by granting them the favour of authorising them to build churches and towers instead of those which had been taken from them by Julian and his companions, so that they might give rest to the monks. Accordingly the governor gave orders to Dorotheus to do as he wished » (1). The towers were the strongholds to which the monks retired when threatened by Berber tribesmen.

The result was that the churches and monasteries in Scetis were duplicated. The « Church of the South », duplicate of that of S. Macarius, was built with the help of Aristomachus and consecrated by Theodosius, and to it were transferred the relics of the Forty-nine Martyrs. Each of the other three monasteries also had a duplicate. The older churches and monasteries were retained by the Julianists until those sectaries disappeared, and the new ones were used by Severus' followers. That this duplication was encouraged by the civil governor and that the two factions were able to live side by side, each excommunicating but tolerating the other, shows marked forbearance on the part of the secular authorities.

The Persian invasion and conquest of 616–627 brought disaster to Alexandria and the Coptic Church. The monasteries at Enaton where the monks were « independent and insolent without fear through their great wealth and did deeds of mockery » (2) were destroyed and their inmates slain, save a few who hid themselves and the monasteries « have remained in ruins to this day. » (3) There was a wholesale slaughter of adult males in Alexandria, and at Nikiu in Upper Egypt some 700 monks living in a fortified place were slain by the Persians who heard « that their deeds were reprehensible because of their great wealth » (4). In 623 the Copts elected as patriarch Benjamin I who had taken refuge in the monastery at Canopus, which escaped destruction. Then in 627 the Emperor Heraclius recovered Egypt and appointed Cyrus as (Melkite) patriarch and governor. Heraclius determined to enforce ecclesiastical uniformity and compel all Egyptians to accept the decrees of Chalcedon (5). Benjamin fled to Upper Egypt and hid in a small monastery in the desert for ten years, then moved from place to place,

(1) *ibid.* p. 194.

(2) *ibid.* p. 221.

(3) *ibid.* p. 221.

(4) *ibid.* p. 222.

(5) *ibid.* pp. 226, 229.

hiding in fortified churches, and finally took refuge in the monastery of Metras, where all the monks were native Egyptians and successfully defied the imperial government. (1) During the years 627-640 Heraclius carried on a relentless persecution against those outside the State Church, and they therefore welcomed the Muslim Arabs as deliverers. Heraclius' persecution left a deep impression on the Copts, causing them to regard the Melkite (Greek) Church as their oppressor and to ascribe to it and to the State all the hardships suffered by Severus and his followers. Severus Ibn al-Moqaffa' (Euty chius) bishop of Al-Ashmunayn, who compiled the *History of the Patriarchs*, lived in the days of the Fatimid Khalifa Al-'Aziz (975-996), when the traditions of the past were confused and few were left who could read Coptic or Greek. His history of the Byzantine period often is inaccurate, but he is reliable for the later period of Arab rule. After the first few years of Justin's reign the emperors did not molest the anti-Chalcedonians, beyond forbidding the open presence of their patriarch in Alexandria, and that continued until 627. Any active persecution of Severus and his adherents until then was due to the Gaianites, and they had completely disappeared before the Persian invasion.

Tradition associates Severus during his exile in Egypt with the city of Siout (Lycopolis) and the neighbouring monastery on mount Erebe (2), on the south side of the city, a mount now known as Er-Rifeh. That monastery of Abu Sawiros (Severus) was well known in the Middle Ages. Maqrizi says that Severus was one of the great monks and a patriarch, and that he foretold that at the moment of his death a great mass of rock would fall upon the monastic church, and that actually happened, adding that he made this prediction «when he was setting out for the Sa'id» (3). The monastery is mentioned in the dedication of the Cheltenham Papyrus Codex of A. M. 719 (A. D. 1003) edited by W. E. Crum (4), which state that «the priest and perfect monk my father Gregory provided it (the codex) at his own expense for the church and monastery of the Patriarch Severus which are on the hills of Erebe on the south side of the city of Siout». It was not only a monastery dedicated to Severus of Antioch, but one which he had visited and with whose monks he had conversed in the course of his missionary excursions in Egypt, which led him to the Sa'id.

At Siout Severus discovered what were believed to be the remains of S. Claudius, a martyr who had suffered during the persecution under

(1) *ibid.* p. 233.

(2) **ερηβε**, Ἐρῆβη in *Theophilus of Alexandria*, Canon 2. MGP. 65.

(3) MAQRIZI, *Monasteries*, no. 50. Cf. PO. 800: IV. 714.

(4) W. E. CRUM, *Der Papyruscodex saec. VI-VII der Philippsbibliothek in Cheltenham*, Strassburg, K. Trübner, 1915, pp. 47, 105.

Diocletian. A homily by Constantine bishop of Siout (1) is extant relating to this and celebrating the consecration of the *martyrium* of that saint (2). In the course of that homily the author relates that S. Claudius received a prophecy from S. Psate the bishop of Psoi, (3) who appeared to him in a dream and said; « I am Psate the bishop of the city of Psoi. I am come to summon thee and thy dear Victor to the land of Egypt. They will kill me there in the city of Tkoou (4), but they will exile thee and kill thee in the city of Siout. And they will exile Victor to the same city, but they will kill him in a castle in the nome of Antinoou. Victor will be killed in the eastern mountain, but thou, Claudius, wilt be killed in the western mountain, and thy body will remain concealed for a long time. A great bishop, a faithful pastor, will go there and he will discover thy body and build a church in thy name. As for Victor, they will build

(1) Constantine bishop of Siout is mentioned in the *Synaxarium* at the commemoration of S. Elias bishop of El-Moharraq on 20 Kihak (18 December). He was a pupil of the patriarch John II (505-518). He was the author of an encomium on S. John of Eraclea (BM. *Orient*. 5648. 38), two discourses in S. Athanasius (PM. xlvii. 6, 7) and perhaps of a (lost) encomium on S. Shenoute. (cfr. H. E. Winlock and W. E. Crum, *The Monastery of S. Epiphanius*, Metropolitan Museum, New York, I. 1926, p. 204).

(2) The discourse of Constantine bishop of Siout at the consecration of the Martyrium of S. Claudius is given in PM. xlvii. n. 3. Fragments are collected in O. VON LEMM, *Kleine Koptische Studien*, lvi-lviii, L'Académie impériale des Sciences, St.-Petersbourg, 1912, pp. 15-75. There are also Arabic versions in Paris, BN. arabe 4895, fol. 41-114, « Histoire d'Anba Constantin évêque de Siout »; arabe 4776, fol. 101 sqq. « Homelie de Constantin évêque de Siout sur le martyre du saint Claude, fils du roi Ptolémée », cfr. ROC. 2 ser. iv (xiv) pp. 182 sq.; arabe 4793 ff. 18 sqq. « Panégyrique de Claudius l'émir martyre, par Constantin évêque de Siout », cf. ROC. 2. iv (xiv) p. 187. E. Amélineau has made a translation of the first of these in his *Contes et Romans de l'Égypte chrétienne*, 2 vols. Paris, E. Leroux, 1888, vol. II. pp. 1-54. An Ethiopic version translated from the Arabic is published in CSCO. *Scriptores Aethiopicci*, ser. ii. xvii (37) texte et (38) versions, by F. M. E. PEREIRA, Rome, E. d. Luigi, Paris, C. Poussielgue, 1907. This text is from Cod. Abbadianus 179, perhaps of the xvii cent., and BM. *Orient* 686, perhaps of the xviii cent.

(3) Psoi, Ptolemais, of which Strabo says, « then the Ptolemais city, the largest in the Thebaid and not smaller than Memphis, having a political system in Greek fashion » (STRABO, *Geogr.*, xvii, 1, 42). In one place the Ethiopic version calls Psate the bishop of Antinoou (Ethiopic text in CSCO. p. 161) but later refers to him as bishop of Psoi (ib. p. 184). The Arabic, from which the Ethiopic is translated, in each case calls him « bishop of Psoi ». (AMÉLINEAU, *Contes et Roman*, II. p. 14, 21).

(4) τκωον Arabic and Ethiopic Qaou, the Roman city of Ἀντιόπολις as appears from comparison with Zoega xcix, ccxxxix and ccxlv. It was founded by Hadrian in memory of his favourite Antinous and stood on the east bank of the Nile, nearly opposite Rôda, close to the present village of Sheikh 'Abâ-deh. It is mentioned in the *Synaxarium* in the commemoration of S. Macarius of Tkoou on 27 Babeh and of Herminah of Qaou on 2 Kihak.

innumerable churches for him » (1). Later in this discourse the « great bishop » and « faithful pastor » is shown to be Severus, who was then the most prominent dignitary of the Monophysites in Egypt, the patriarch of Alexandria being quite content to remain in the back-ground (2). The Arabic version of the homily says that: « During the government of the upright pastor, the clarion of orthodoxy, the great Severus, God (exalted be He), saw fit to disclose the body of Claudius. Severus caused a church to be built in honour of the saint, attaching to it a priest (who was) very charitable, especially towards strangers, one whose table was always ready for them » (3). This last detail shows that the *topos* was not only a shrine and church, but also had a hospice for pilgrims.

Constantines's discourse at Siout celebrated the discovery of some human remains which were identified as those of S. Claudius. The cult of martyrs was fully developed in the Egyptian Church and shrines of martyrs were widely distributed. Villages eagerly competed for the possession of such sepulchres, *martyria* were erected at the sacred sites and became places of pilgrimage. S. Shenoute (d. circ. 468) considered that there was too great a readiness to assume that human remains discovered in places where they had not been known to exist were necessarily relics of martyrs concealed in the days of persecution. He says: « there are some who say, Martyrs have appeared to us and have told us that their bones are deposited in a certain place, those I have discouraged and have pointed out their error. Some, when houses are pulled down or their stones removed and there appear what seem to be subterranean vaults and some sarcophagi, declare that these must be (remains) of martyrs. Have they buried in sarcophagi none save those who were martyrs? is there not a great similarity in those who were thus buried? » (4).

From this it appears that (i) remains thus found were identified as those of specified saints on the ground of visions or dreams of certain persons, presumably those esteemed for their known sanctity or for their distinguished position in the hierarchy of the Church. (ii) Human remains discovered in vaults and in sarcophagi were assumed to be relics of martyrs concealed in the days of persecution, though many other persons were thus buried, and there is nothing to differentiate the bones of a martyr from those of ordinary people.

The possession of a *topos* or martyrrium, usually with a church and monastery attached, often with a hospice for pilgrims as well, was an

(1) BORGIA cxliv. 19r-29, Zoega cxlvi. 239. LEMM, *KKS*. p. 23.

(2) AMÉLINEAU, *Contes et Romans*, II. p. 46.

(3) *ibid.* p. 44.

(4) BORGIA clxxxix, 423-4. Zoega p. 428.

asset to an Egyptian village. It is common in Coptic martyrdoms for the martyr to receive before death a direct message from heaven specifying the exact place where the *topos* shall be and stating the blessings which will be attached to the place. A special reward is promised to those who make ready the martyr's burial (1), and those who write the record of his sufferings and death (2). Invariably a promise is given that their sick brought there shall be healed, sometimes specifying that women visiting the shrine shall be protected in child-bearing and bear children alive (3). Those who serve the *topos* and those who make gifts for its upkeep shall be richly rewarded (4). Sometimes it is added that those who swear falsely by it shall be punished (5). It is not uncommon for the saint to pray before his martyrdom for such favours to be granted, and for his prayer to be answered by a voice from heaven (6). The record of a martyr's passion commonly concludes with a precise statement of the day, or days, on which he is to be commemorated with special solemnity (7).

There was, and is, no special process of canonization in the Egyptian Church. The proof of saintship lay in the working of miracles at the saint's tomb, and consequently a record of those miracles often forms an important supplement to the record of his passion.

In spite of the sacred character of the *topos* and the solemnity of the annual festival, S. Shenoute found it necessary to protest against the frequent profanation of the place and occasion by the disorderly conduct of those who resorted to the sanctuary and observed the festival. « To go to the places of the martyrs in order to pray, read, recite psalms, to sanctify oneself, and to receive the Eucharist is good, but to sing there, to eat, drink, play, still more to fornicate, to commit homicide by intoxication, indulgence and strife is iniquity. There are some who recite psalms, read and celebrate the mysteries within, whilst others outside make the whole neighbourhood resound with the noise of horns and flutes. The sanctuary of the martyrs is the house of Christ, it is his voice which says concerning it, My house is called the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. You have made it a market of vanities, of rings and such like articles, you have made it a

(1) BALESTRI-HYVERNAT, *Acta Martyrum*, in CSCO. ser. 3, tom. I, *Acts of Apa Lacaron* pp. 20-21; *Apa Apoli* p. 236.

(2) *ibid.* *Apa Apoli* p. 236; *Theodore* p. 61; *Apa Anub* p. 236.

(3) *ibid.* *Lacaron* pp. 20-21; *Serapion* 85-87; *Apa Epime* p. 153; *Apa Apoli* p. 236; *Apa Anub* p. 285.

(4) *ibid.* *Apa Apoli* p. 236; *Apa Anub* p. 87.

(5) *ibid.* *Apa Apoli* p. 236.

(6) *ibid.* *Apa Lacaron* pp. 21-22.

(7) *ibid.* *Apa Sarapion* p. 87; *Theodore* p. 61.

place where you bargain about your calves, where your asses and horses are stabled, where you take things for sale. There one who has honey for sale can scarcely escape uninjured from the men who throng around him and fight. What they would do in the markets with those who come to sell their goods, they do with those who sell in the *topos* of the martyrs. O great folly. If you come to the *topos* of martyrs to eat, drink, sell, buy and do whatever else you please, for what use are your houses, the places where it is usual to sell and buy? O folly of mind. If your daughters and mothers seek unguents for the head and *kohl* for their eyes, adorning themselves to deceive those who look at them, and if your son and brother and friend and neighbour do thus when they go to the *topos* of the martyrs, then for what are your houses? There are many who go there in order to pollute the temple of God, and make the members of Christ the members of a harlot, when they ought to sanctify them and keep them from all iniquity, whether they are men or women, especially those who protest that they have not married a wife, or are not married to a husband. Do not permit the *topos* of the martyrs to afford occasion for corrupting your flesh in the adjacent sepulchres or other neighbouring places, or in their recesses. It suffices that they who by reason of sickness sleep in the cemeteries get what they need for food » (1). This last passage refers to the practice of incubation, which was observed in the Christian *topos* as in the older pagan temples.

This suggests the question, Did the Christian *topos* usually replace a pagan sanctuary? In some cases undoubtedly it did, but it is rash to assume that this always was the case. It was so with the *topos* of SS. Cyrus and John between Canopus and Heraclea. There, in the village of Menouthis, about fourteen (Roman) miles from Alexandria had been a temple of Isis Medica or Isis of Menouthis (2) where the sick were brought for incubation. In the V century that temple was abandoned and no trace of it remained, but a church was built in its place. The worship of Isis, however, continued in secret, there was an *oneirokrites* or official interpreter of dreams, a priest and a priestess, as well as many idols removed from the temple of Isis at Memphis by a foreseeing priest on the eve of the prohibition of pagan worship (3). Those idols were concealed, but discovered and destroyed during the pontificate of Peter Mongus (4). Nevertheless the sick continued to be taken there until early in the seventh century when the Patriarch Cyril of Alexan-

(1) BORGIA clxxxix. 205-210. Zoega pp. 421-2.

(2) Isis of Menouthis in CIG. III. 4683. b.

(3) ZACHARIAS SCHOLASTICUS 17, in PO. II. 19.

(4) *ibid.* in PO. II. 27-29.

dria tried to counteract this illegal pagan worship by removing the relics of the martyrs SS. Cyrus and John from the church of S. Mark in Alexandria to Menouthis in order that « those who had formerly erred in coming there might now come to a true and undefiled healing » and so « tread down Satan and expel evil demons » (1). The name of the martyr Cyrus has been preserved in the place-name Abu Kir on the shore north-east of Alexandria.

At Canopus there had been a sanctuary of the Ptolemaic deity Serapis. That was destroyed and replaced by a monastery. The monks there are described as Tabennesiotai (2), either because they were from Tabennesi near Pbow (now Faw) in Upper Egypt, west of Kenea, or because they belonged to the monastic order founded by S. Pakhom at Tabennesi, an order whose abbots met annually in the parent monastery at Tabennesi and whose spread to Lower Egypt helps to explain the literary use of Sa'idic in the Delta.

Such conversion of a pagan sanctuary to a Christian *topos*, and later into the shrine of a sainted Muslim sheikh has apparently taken place in various places in Egypt, as Hasluck shows has often been the case in Anatolia. It has a parallel in the island in the Tiber where the temple of Aesculapius has been replaced by the church of S. Bartholomew where the shrine of the martyred Apostle is frequented by the sick as the pagan temple which it replaces. With this may be compared the instructions given by S. Gregory to S. Augustine of Canterbury on his way to preach to the Anglo-Saxons, directing him to make churches out of the existing pagan temples or to build churches in the same place where temples had been.

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(1) Cyril of Alexandria in MPG. 77. 1105, 1103. Cfr. Sophonius of Jerusalem who speaks of a horrible demon by name Menouthis in the form of a female dwelling in a village of the same name (MPG. 87. 3409. B and 3413. A). The relics of SS. Cyrus and John were translated from the oratory of S. Mark in Alexandria to the temple of Canopus . . . in that place beside the sands the foul demon had appeared in the form of a woman, gave oracles which had no truth, prescribed medical treatment which had no use, and the people made gifts to the altar erected in its name. The Egyptians called it Menouthis (ibid. 3693. B-C). Cf. the *Synaxarium* for 4 Abib when the translation of the relics was commemorated. P. SINTHERN, in *Romanisch. Quartalschr.* xxii. 196 shows that Sophronius based his account on a homily by Epiphanius.

(2) ZACHARIAS SCHOLASTICUS in PO. II. p. 27.