

# Georgian Christian Thought and Its Cultural Context

Memorial Volume for the 125th Anniversary of  
Shalva Nutsubidze (1888-1969)

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# SEVERUS OF ANTIOCH AS CANONIST IN THE COPTO-ARABIC TRADITION

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## *Introduction*

In a recent study, F. Alpi discussed Severus of Antioch's role in the ecclesiastical legislation of Justinian.<sup>2</sup> While working on the edition of the Arabic *Life of Severus of Antioch* attributed to Athanasius, who was patriarch of Antioch at the beginning of the seventh century, I was intrigued by the number of attestations to the Canons of Severus in that text. This prompted me to re-examine the Arabic manuscripts of canonical law in order to discern more clearly Severus's prominence in ecclesiastical law in the Copto-Arabic tradition. This article shows the significant respect and stature which Severus the canonist enjoyed.

## *Canons of Severus in His Biography Attributed to Athanasius*

As it is known that Severus studied Law in Beirut, the author of the biography of Severus that is attributed to Athanasius placed emphasis on Severus's legal background. This section collects and highlights all references to canons in Severus's biography.

§ 58

وكان كل واحد منهم متعلق القلب بساويرس وكان يظنوا في يوليانس الاسقف انه ساويرس فصرخ الشعب وقالوا له تكلم ولا تسكت فهذا موضع يظهر فيه القوي ويبين فيه الجبار ضعف المقاوم للحق هذا الوقت الذي تسل فيه سيفك وتسد افواه المتكلمين على الله بالعظيم ثم اخرج حجرك الذي هو الكلمة الروحانية الذي يخرج من فيك واهلك الفلسطيني الذي هو مقدنيوس واضطهده واحزنه كن ثابتاً بنطقك

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank to my colleague Lisa Agaibi for reading the English text and suggesting many corrections.

<sup>2</sup> F. Alpi, "Sévère d'Antioche et la législation ecclésiastique de Justinien," in *Acts of the Symposium Syriacum in Malta* (forthcoming).

وقوانينك تقوى وتقدم الى الجهاد وقاوم الناموسيين لانك اب المراتب اغلب مقاومك  
وادفع الينا النصيب معك لتفتخر بالغبلة وكانوا ينتظروا الخلو بمقدنيوس .

And everyone's heart was eager to see Severus, because they thought that Bishop Julian was Severus. The people cried out loud and said to him: "Speak and do not be silent, for in this situation the strong one will be revealed and the mighty one will show the weakness of the one who resists the truth. This is the time to draw your sword and shut the mouth of those that speak great things against God. Cast your stone, which is the spiritual word that goes forth from your mouth, and destroy the Philistine, who is Macedonius. Persecute him and make him sad. *Be steadfast in your speech and canons*, be strong and draw near unto battle, and resist the lawyers, for you are the father of ordinances. Conquer your adversaries, and grant us a portion with you, that we may have glory in victory!" And they were waiting to be with Macedonius privately.

§ 75

فلما سمع الملك ان مقدنيوس لم يوافق ساويرس في امامته انكر هذا الامر وسلم  
مقدنيوس الى ساويرس ليقيم عليه **قانون البيعة** فعند ذلك كب ساويرس باذلال  
بامر الملك قوانين الامانة وقال هكذا...

And when the king heard that Macedonius did not consent to Severus's faith, he was displeased and handed over Macedonius to Severus that he might *apply the canons of the Church* upon him. And then by the king's order Severus wrote with humility the canons of the faith, and said thus:<sup>3</sup>

§ 93

انت زينت البيعة باقوالك الامانة المستقيمة انت الذي جعلت البيعة **تضي بقوانينك**  
**المقدسة** وتعاليمك الارتدكسية في كل الاماكن

"You adorned the Church by your sayings on the straight faith, you enlightened the Church by your *holy canons* and your orthodox teachings everywhere"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This part is also mentioned in the *Confession of the Fathers* and translated into Latin. See *Recta fides scripta ad Anastasium imperatorem* (M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, Vol. 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1979), N 7070[16]).

<sup>4</sup> The quotations follow the sections of the edition in Y. N. Youssef, *The Arabic life of Severus of Antioch attributed to Athanasius*, PO 49.4, N 220 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004). It seems that the Coptic substratum of the second word is the word *coclex* which has a double meaning either 'adorn' (as in our text) or 'comfort' (which gave more sense in our context, cf. Youhanna Nessim Youssef, "Two notes on the Coptic Theotokias" *Scrinium* 5 (2009), 56-84).

## § 124

ثم ان الخبر وصل الى الملك بما فعله الاب ساويرس فسكت عن طلبه ولما بلغ الخبر للبطيرك ساويرس بان الملك قد تغافل عنه قام ورجع الى انطاكية وكانت معونة الله معه وقوته وكان يكتب رسايل روحانية وبنفذه الى الارتدكسيين في جميع الاماكن ليثبتهم على الامانة ويبين لهم قوانين ممتلية ادب ونطق روحاني بتايد الروح القدس.

And what Father Severus had done was reported to the king, \* who stopped seeking him. And when a word came to the Patriarch Severus that the king had stopped seeking him, he arose and returned to Antioch. And the help of God and his might were with him, and he wrote spiritual letters and sent them to the orthodox congregations in all places in order to strengthen them in their faith, and *he provided them with canons that were full of eloquence and spiritual logic, by the support of the Holy Spirit.*

## § 128

انت الحبة الخردل التي نمت حتى استظل تحت اغصانها المومنين اعني قوانينك التي تركتها في البيعة واستظللنا نحن بها

You are the mustard seed, which has grown mightily such that believers have found shelter beneath its branches (cf. Matt 13:31), *meaning, your canons which you provided to the Church, are those which give us shelter.*

## § 142

فلها سمع الملك وخواصه هذا الكلام من الاب ساويرس تعجبوا من حكمته وصبره على الجهاد وعمق حكمته وتفسير اقواله ففكر الملك فيما يصنعه بالقديس ساويرس لانه رآه ثابت على اماتته وقوانينه

And when the king and his notables<sup>5</sup> heard the speech of Father Severus, they marvelled at his wisdom, and the conflicts which he endured, and the depth of his wisdom, and his interpretation. And the king considered what to do to Saint Severus, because it was obvious to him<sup>6</sup> that *he was steadfast in his faith and his canons.*

<sup>5</sup> The Coptic has "and the senate."

<sup>6</sup> Lit., "for he saw that he was".

Another quotation from the *Life of Severus of Antioch* by Athanasius is narrated in the Dīfnar<sup>7</sup> in the Doxology Batos for the 10th day of Kiahk.<sup>8</sup>

\* ܕܥܢ ܢܝܠܘܥ ܡܒܪܝ ܢܬܐܩ ܢܥܡ  
ܢܥܩܕܢܘܢ ܥܕܝ ܕܬܐܩܬܝܬܝܘܬܝ  
ܢܢܝܥܟܠܗܥܝܐ ܢܬܐ ܢܝܘܪܗܘܕܐܝܘܥ

with new songs and *with His*  
*holy Canons*, that he gave to  
the Orthodox Church

It is known that Severus of Antioch composed songs.<sup>9</sup> The second part of the stanza of the Doxology refers to the role of Severus as a canonist.

When reconsidering the data contained in the biography of Severus as well as the praise Severus received in the Dīfnar one notes the emphasis placed on the word “Canons.” The respective authors likely expressed themselves in this way in order to show that Severus’s theological positions were justified by the “Canons” of the Church.

### *Severus of Antioch in the Anonymous Collection of Berlin*

There is an anonymous collection of canons in Berlin, preserved in a single undated manuscript, MS Berlin Arabic 107, folio 59 verso, which contains “Temporal Canons” (“*Zeitliche Canones*”); Canons for the priests and the clergy.<sup>10</sup> A canon of Saint Severus of Antioch is mentioned: “When a Priest or a deacon denies the Christian faith.”

The canonical collection is that of Macarius, the monk of the Monastery of Saint John the Little according to MS Paris Arab 251. This manuscript is dated to 1353 CE.<sup>11</sup>

In the following, we will quote the canons that contain the name of Severus in this collection:

<sup>7</sup> *Antiphonarium* (Arabic *Dīfnar*). This book contains a collection of hymns for the whole year. The hymn of the *Antiphonarium* is sung in the service of the Psalmody which follows the office of Compline. Cf. G. Gawdat, “Untersuchungen zum Dīfnar der koptischen Kirche. I: Quellenlage, Forschungsgeschichte und künftige Aufgaben,” *BSAC* 35 (1996): 37–54; idem, “Untersuchungen zum Dīfnar der koptischen Kirche. II zur Kompilation,” *BSAC* 37 (1998): 49–68.

<sup>8</sup> De L. O’Leary, *The Dīfnar (Antiphonarium) of the Coptic Church*, Vol. 1 (London: Luzac & Co 1926), 82–83.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. E. W. Brooks, *The Hymns of Severus and others in the Syriac version of Paul of Edessa as revised by James of Edessa*, PO 6.1 and 7.3 (Paris, 1911–1912).

<sup>10</sup> W. Riedel, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen des Patriarchats Alexandrien* (Leipzig, 1900; Reprinted Aalen, 1968), 130.

<sup>11</sup> G. Troupeau, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes*, Vol. 1 (Paris, 1972), 208–209.

Fol. 195, new 73 Arabic

بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس اله واحد هذه القوانين الزمنية التي وضعها ابائنا  
 القديسين الذين تقدموا قبلنا من أجل صعوبة الزمان ورغبة التائبين بقلب قريح  
 صلاتهم وبركاتهم تكون معنا امينا القانون السادس قس او شماس يجحد الامانة  
 المسيحية ويخرج عن المذهب ثم يتوب بعد هذا يغفر له ذنبه فامخدمة القديس  
 فلا يمكن منها عاجلا بل ان كان قسيس فعل هذا فليمنع من الخدمة المقدسة اربع  
 سنين اذا تاب بقلب قريح ودموع وان كان الذي فعل ذلك شماس فلهم ثلاثة سنين  
 خارج عن الخدمة المقدسة والقانون الرسولي المقدس يامر ان مثل هؤلاء لا  
 يعانوا خدمة القديس الى الابد لكن ساويرس البطريرك القديس يقول ان الامر  
 يضطرنا من اجل قساوة القلب وفساد الزمان ان نرخص في هذا القليل بقدر  
 الطاقة ونزفق ببعضهم

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God. These are the temporal canons that were established by our holy fathers who preceded us for times of difficulty and contriteness of those who repent with a pure heart. May their prayers and their blessings be with us. Amen.  
 Canon 6

Concerning a priest or deacon who denies the Christian faith, and converts to another religion and then later repents: Let his sin be forgiven. As for the celebration of the Eucharist, the following applies only in the case of sincere repentance with a contrite heart: a priest should be prevented from celebrating and partaking of the Eucharist for four years and not any earlier. A deacon must be prevented from holy service for a period of three years. The holy apostolic canon commands that these should not approach the service of the Eucharist forever. *However the holy patriarch Severus says that [since] the matter may force us, because of the hardness of the heart and the bad times let us give in this a little as much as we can and let us have pity on some of them.*



### Commentary

The expression *صعوبة الزمان* “bad times” came to be very recurrent. It is used in the correspondence of John XIII,<sup>12</sup> who frequently speaks of “bad times” [*sū’ / fasād az-zamān*].<sup>13</sup>

It seems that this patriarch refers indirectly to Canons of Severus which were written (according to the Manuscript of Paris) two centuries earlier.

### *Severus in the Compendium of Farag-allah al-Akhmimi*

The manuscript evidence for the *Compendium* of Farag-allah al-Akhmimi<sup>14</sup> comprises MS Paris BN Arabic 250. On fol. 240b we find an additional quire that includes a chapter on the Priests taken from Severus.<sup>15</sup> We have already demonstrated elsewhere that this text is the “Recommendation to the Priests” of Severus of Ashmunein and not by Severus of Antioch.<sup>16</sup>

### *Severus of Antioch in The Lamp of Darkness*

Shams al-Riyasah Abu al-Barakat, called Ibn Kabar,<sup>17</sup> who lived in the second part of the thirteenth century and died on Thursday, May 10, 1324 CE,<sup>18</sup> was a great scholar of his time. His book *The Lamp of Darkness for the Explanation of the Service* is an encyclopaedia of all the ecclesiastical

<sup>12</sup> This patriarch was a monk from the monastery of al-Muharraq. S. Y. Labib, “John XIII,” in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, ed. A. S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan, 1991), 1346–1347. (I was unable to find this information elsewhere). For his biography cf. A. Khater and O. H. E. Burmester, *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church known as the History of the Holy Church*, Vol. 3, Pt. 3, Textes et documents 13 (Le Caire, 1970), fol. 257r, p. 159 (text), p. 274 (translation).

<sup>13</sup> T. El-Leithy, *Coptic culture and conversion in Medieval Cairo 1295–1524*, Ph.D. thesis (Princeton University, January 2005), 379 (unpublished).

<sup>14</sup> V. Frederick, “Farajallah al-Akhmimi,” in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, ed. A. S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan, 1991), 1089. G. Graf, *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Studi e Testi 133 (Città del Vaticano, 1947), 427–428. While editing the canons of Hippolytus, R. G. Coquin assessed the quotations of Farag-allah as second-hand information. Cf. R.-G. Coquin, *Les canons d'Hippolyte*, PO 31.2 (Paris, 1966), [11] 279, n. 23.

<sup>15</sup> Troupeau, *Catalogue*, 208; G. Graf, *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Studi e Testi 118 (Città del Vaticano, 1944), 420; and Riedel, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen*, 121.

<sup>16</sup> Y. N. Youssef, “Recommendations to the Priests. Severus of Antioch or Severus of Ashmunain,” *Journal of Coptic Studies* 4 (2002): 187–195.

<sup>17</sup> A. Wadi, “Abu al-Barakat Ibn Kabar, Misbah al-Zulmah, cap. 18: il digiuno e la settimana santa,” *SOC Collectanea* 34 (2001), 233–322.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. R. G. Coquin, “Ibn Kabar,” *Catholicisme* 6 (1996): 1349–1351; S. Kh. Samir, “Un manuscrit arabe d'Alep reconnu, le Sbath 1125,” *Le Muséon* 91 (1978): 179–188; L. Villecourt,

knowledge of his time.<sup>19</sup> This book is divided into 24 chapters, with the first four chapters being devoted to theology, and chapters 5 and 6 to Canon Law. Chapter 7 consists of a bibliography of Christian authors, especially of those who wrote in Arabic. The remaining chapters (8–24) offer a detailed description of the liturgy of the Coptic Church of that time. Severus of Antioch is mentioned twice in this book:

The first reference to Severus occurs in chapter 5, in connection with comments concerning the Canonical Law of the Coptic Church:

قوانين أخرى غير منسوبة لأحد معين

ترجمها: هذه القوانين الزمنية التي وضعها أبائنا القديسون الذين تقد مواقلنا وقرر وهامن  
أجل صعوبة الزمان ورغبة التائبين بقلب فيح

(حاشية) في بعض فصولهم استشهد بـ **كلام أنبا ساويرس البطريك** وجمالها بل كلها فيما  
يتعلق بالكهنة—الاسقف فمادونه

بدايتها: اذ ارفع على اسقف بسبب زنا أو بسبب شيء من ذل

وغايتها: في كاهن يصلي عليه للزينة وتوفت امرأته قبل اجتماعه بها (...) وما يتلوه من تمة  
الفصل الأخير) وعدد أوامرها وزواجرها ستة وعشرين

Other canons, which are not attributed to anyone in particular:

Its introduction: These are the earthly canons of our holy fathers who preceded us; and they established them *for use in difficult times* and when penitents wish to return with a joyful heart.

(Remark) in some of their chapters, *there are quotations from the words of Anba Severus the Patriarch*. They are generally or entirely concerned with the priest or bishop and those who are of lesser (rank) than the priest.

(Their incipit:) Concerning an adulterous matter or any other humiliating act submitted to a bishop.

"Les observances liturgiques et la discipline du jeûne dans l'Eglise Copte," *Le Muséon* 36 (1922): 267–268.

<sup>19</sup> S. Kh. Samir, "L'encyclopédie Liturgique d'Ibn Kabar (+ 1324) et son apologie d'usage Coptes," in *Crossroads of Cultures. Studies in Liturgy and Patristics in Honor of Gabriele Winkler*, ed. H.-J. Feulner, E. Velkouska, and R. Taft, OCA 260 (Rome: PIO, 2000), 629–655.

(Its end:) Concerning a newly married priest whose wife died before their marriage was consummated (and what follows up to the end of the last chapter). The number of the commands and interdictions is twenty-six.<sup>20</sup>

In 1900, W. Riedel offered what thus far is the only study of the corpus of Canonical law<sup>21</sup> mentioned in Abu al-Barakat ibn Kabar. In his work, Riedel provided a complete list of the canonical texts mentioned in Ibn Kabar and known at his time.<sup>22</sup>

It seems that the manuscript of Canon 5 in the Library of the Patriarchate in Cairo is the same as the one to which Ibn Kabar referred. It contains a canonical collection. During my visit to Cairo in 2004, however, I learned that this manuscript is now lost.<sup>23</sup> Here is the description of Simaika:

Collections of various canons: ...3) *Of the saintly fathers on the difficulties of the times.*"

131 folios, 20 lines, 26x18 cm. Titles in red. Copied by Nakhlah Quzman. In parts it is wrongly vocalised. Not dated.<sup>24</sup>

The second reference to Severus is in chapter seven concerning the bibliography of Christian authors:<sup>25</sup>

ساويرس بطريرك أنطاكية:

أ- له فصول في إثبات الإمانة الأرثوذكسية ترد ضمن سيرته.

ب- واقوال في تفسير بعض كلام الأناجيل المقدسة

Severus, Patriarch of Antioch:

A- He wrote several chapters defending the Orthodox faith, which are included in his biography.

B- Sayings explaining some verses of the holy Gospels.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately there is no critical edition of this important book. This quotation is taken from the popular edition with the introduction by S. Kh. Samir, *Misbah al-Zulmah fi Idah al-Hidmah*, مصباح الظلمة في إيضاح الخدمة [The Lamp of Darkness for the explanation of the Service] (Cairo: Al-Karūz bookshop, 1971), 201.

<sup>21</sup> For an overview, cf. R. G. Coquin, "Canon Law," in *Coptic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, ed. S. Atyia (New York: MacMillan, 1991), 449–451.

<sup>22</sup> Riedel, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen*, 15–80.

<sup>23</sup> Jan.–Feb. 2004. Information about the manuscript was provided by M. Nabih Kamel Daoud.

<sup>24</sup> M. Simaika and Y. 'Abd al-Masih, *Catalogue of the Coptic and Arabic Manuscripts in the Coptic Museum, the Patriarchate, the Principal Churches of Cairo and Alexandria and the Monasteries of Egypt* (Cairo, 1942), 257.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Graf, *Geschichte* (1944), 418.

<sup>26</sup> Samir, *Misbah al-Zulmah*, 293.

### Commentary

The text of Severus's biography that is referenced here survived partially in Coptic.<sup>27</sup> The complete text is found in Arabic and in Geez.<sup>28</sup> Ibn Kabar alluded to the biography of Severus of Antioch ascribed to Athanasius of Antioch, which contained two theological chapters against Macedonius the Patriarch of Constantinople, and an apology given before Emperor Justinian.<sup>29</sup>

The *Book of the Confessions of the Fathers*, composed by an anonymous author in the eleventh century, also mentions two extracts from the *Life of Severus*, one concerning Macedonius, and one pertaining to an apology before Emperor Justinian; hence this quotation strongly indicates that the *Life of Severus* was translated into Arabic three centuries before Ibn Kabar.

In its biography of Michael IV (1092–1102 CE), the 68<sup>th</sup> patriarch, the *History of the Patriarchs* mentions two quotations from the corpus of writings associated with Severus as author or subject matter.<sup>30</sup> Deacon John ibn Sa'îd al-Kulzumî, who was an eyewitness of these events, wrote the biography of Michael IV and mentioned therein that the bishops chose a Syrian monk to become patriarch, but found him to be of heterodox faith. So one of the bishops, Anba Sanhût, bishop of Cairo (Misr), started to provide patristic quotations in support of his point of view. He mentioned the letter, which Severus wrote to Emperor Anastasius after the excommunication of Macedonius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. This quotation is taken from the biography of Severus attributed to Athanasius.<sup>31</sup>

Other works of Severus in the book of Ibn Kabar consist of some explanations on the Gospels. In this material, Ibn Kabar alluded to the

<sup>27</sup> E. Goodspeed and W. E. Crum, *The Conflict of Severus Patriarch of Antioch by Athanasius*, PO 4.6 (Paris, 1908), 578 [10]—585 [17]; W. Till, *Koptische Heiligen- und Martyrerlegenden*, OCA 102 and 108 (Rome, 1935–1936), 1935, p. 188–200; 1936, p. 141–143; H. Munier, *Manuscripts coptes (Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire)* (Le Caire, 1916), 52–53; and T. Orlandi, "Un Codice Copto del 'Monastero Bianco' Economii de Severo di Antiochia, Marco Evangelista, Atanasio Di Alessandria," *Le Muséon* 81 (1968): 351–405.

<sup>28</sup> The edition of the Arabic text by Youhanna Nessim Youssef is forthcoming. For the Ge'ez text, see Goodspeed and Crum, *The Conflict of Severus*.

<sup>29</sup> Goodspeed and Crum, *The Conflict of Severus*, 650–670 and 704–709.

<sup>30</sup> For the sources of the *History of the Patriarchs*, see J. Den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur ibn Mufarrig et l'historiographie copto-arabe*, CSCO 513, Subsidia 83 (Louvain: Peeters, 1989), 142–145.

<sup>31</sup> A. S. Atiya, Y. Abd Al-Masih, and O. H. E. Burmester, *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church*, Vol. II, Pt. III (Cairo: Société d'Archéologie Copte, 1959), 238 (text), 379 (translation).

catena on the Gospels, which survived in Coptic.<sup>32</sup> The catena on the Gospels was also translated into Arabic.<sup>33</sup> In this catena, the name of Severus of Antioch occurs several times. For our discussion of the material from the *History of the Patriarchs* it is relevant to note that in the above-mentioned chapter offering Michael IV's biography, Bishop Anba Sanhût also provided a part of the catena on the Gospel of Saint John.<sup>34</sup>

### *A Coptic Quotation from Severus's Canons*

A hymn book from the Monastery of Epiphanius that contains several hymns in Greek includes in its text three quotations, one each from the apostle Paul, Athanasius, and Severus of Antioch. It seems that the quotation pertinent to Severus was part of the canons of Severus of Antioch concerning the priests and clergy presented above:

ΠΕΧΑΔΥ ΝΕΙ ΑΠΑ ΣΕΥΗΡΟΣ ΠΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΤΑΝΤΙΟΧΙΑ ΧΕ  
ΕΡΩΔΑΝ ΠΡΩΜΕ ΕΠΘΥΜΕΙ ΕΥΧΕΙΡΟΤΟΝΙΑ ΕΥΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑ ΜΝ  
ΟΥΤΡΥΦΗ ΕΥΛΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ ΑΝ ΜΑΡΕΧΕΙΜΕ ΝΑΔ ΕΥΤΕΧΝΗ ΝΖΑΝΜΩΙ Η  
ΝΖΑΜΚΛΛΕ Η ΟΥΤΕΧΝΗ ΝΛΟΓΙΚΗ

Apa Severus, the Archbishop of Antioch said: "If a man desiring ordination desires dignity and luxury and not priestly service, let him (rather) acquire a carpenter's or a smith's craft or a learned profession."<sup>35</sup>

### *General Conclusions*

It is known that Severus of Alexandria studied philosophy in Alexandria and law in Beirut.<sup>36</sup> Most of his known works deal primarily with theology (i.e. philosophy),<sup>37</sup> but nothing is known about his canonical activity.

<sup>32</sup> P. de Lagarde, *Catenae in Evangelia Aegyptiacae* (Göttingen, 1886; reprinted Osnabrück, 1971), cf. p. vi (Introduction) and the index of proper names under "Severus."

<sup>33</sup> F. Caubet Iturbe, *La cadena arabe del Evangelio de San Mateo II*, Studi e Testi 255 (Città del Vaticano, 1970).

<sup>34</sup> de Lagarde, *Catenae*, 225:3–8.

<sup>35</sup> W. E. Crum and H. G. Evelyn White, *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition, Part II: Coptic and Greek Ostraca and papyri (New York, 1926), 10 (text), 161 (translation) text number 49/14.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. M. A. Kugener, *Vie de Sévère attribué à Jean de Beith Aphthonia*, PO 2.3, N° 8 (Paris: Firmin-Didot 1904), 113–124; M.-A. Kugener, *Sévère Patriarche d'Antioche 512–518 par Zacharie le Scholastique*, PO 2.1, N° 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993), 12.46–47. K. E. McVey, *Georg, Bishop of the Arabs, A Homily on blessed Mar Severus Patriarch of Antioch*, CSCO 531, Script. Syr. 217 (Louvain, 1993) 4–5.113–124.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 329–345, N 7033–7080.

Several times, Severus of Antioch evoked the role of the bishops, priests, deacons, and laypeople in his writings.<sup>38</sup> One particular work in the tradition, that deals with the subject matter, however, as we argued above, should not be identified with the work *Recommendation to the priests*, which is ascribed to Severus of Antioch,<sup>39</sup> but in fact it was the work of Severus of Ashmunein.<sup>40</sup>

Ibn Kabar had accurately mentioned two works of Severus of Antioch which were accessible to him at his time in Arabic:

1. The *Life of Severus* attributed to Athanasius, which was translated in the eleventh century (as attested in the *Confessions of the Fathers* and the *History of the Patriarchs*).
2. The Coptic /Arabic catena, which was translated also in the eleventh or twelfth century (as attested in the *History of the Patriarchs*).

From all the texts discussed here, only the fragments from the monastery of Epiphanius could really reflect the canonical activities of Severus of Antioch. The other texts assembled in this dossier kept the souvenirs of such activities without providing any evidence of quotations of his canons. Modern scholars were also misled by the medieval texts. We hope that one day a scholar will find the canonical texts of Severus of Antioch.

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<sup>38</sup> See R. Darling, *The patriarchate of Severus of Antioch*, 512–518, PhD thesis (University of Chicago, 1982), 92–125 (unpublished).

<sup>39</sup> Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 333, N 7057.

<sup>40</sup> Youssef, “Recommendations to the Priests,” 187–196.

قدّم الاساقفة حتى يكون ذلك حفظاً للقبلة **✠** قول وشماس تحت الاساقفة المستجيبه .  
 ونخرج من المذهب ثم يتوب بعد ذلك يغفر له ذنبه . فاما خدمه القديس فلا يحسن منها عاجلاً .  
 بل ان كان نفساً قوياً فعل هذا فلم يمنع من الخدمة المقدسه اربع سنين . اذا تاب بقلب قويم ودموع .  
 وان كان الذي فعل ذلك شماس فليقم ثلث سنين خارج عن الخدمة المقدسه . والقانون  
 الرسولي المقدس يامر بان مثل هؤلاء لا ينافوا خدمه القديس الى الابد . لكن ساء ورس البطرك  
 يقول ان الامر يضطرنا من اجل تساوه القلب وفساد الزمان ان يرخّص في هذا قليلاً كقدر الطافه .

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بِسْمِ الْآبِ وَالْإِبْنِ وَالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ إِلَهُ وَاحِدَ لَهُ الْمَجْدُ  
 بَنَدِيكَ يَحْيَى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَحَسَنَ تَوْفِيقَهُ لِبَشْرَحِ  
 وَصِيَّةِ الْآبَا الْكَلِمَةِ فِي قَوْلِ ابْنِ سَاوِرْتِس  
 نَعْمًا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ صَلَوَاتُهُ إِلَى النَّفْسِ الْأَخْرَسِ  
 أَيَاكُمْ أَعْنِي وَتَكَلَّمَ أَخَاطِبُ إِلَهُ الْآبَا الْكَلِمَةِ الْأَوَّلِ  
 الْمُبَارَكِينَ لِيَتَرَفَّقُوا مَوْقِعَ الْأَسْمِ الَّذِي عَيْتَمَهُ الْآبَا  
 مُقَدِّسِينَ لِأَنَّكُمْ فِي هَيْكَلِ اللَّهِ خَالِتِينَ وَعَلَى أَيْدِيكُمْ  
 مُنْتَضِبِينَ وَلِشُعُوبِهِ مُسْتَعْفِرِينَ وَلِجَمَاعَتِهِمْ مُبَارَكِينَ  
 وَعَنْ الْأَقْرَمِ رُدَّ عَيْنٍ وَبِالْوَصَا يَا غَامِلِينَ وَبِقَوَائِنِ  
 بِشُجْعَةِ الْأَتَرْدِ كَسَمَةِ مُقْتَسِكِينَ وَبِالْعُلُومِ وَالْأَقْوَالِ  
 مُبَشِّرِينَ وَعَلَى الْأَمَانَةِ تَابِتِينَ وَعَنْ الرِّهَابِ وَالْكَرِ  
 مَجْتَنِبِينَ وَبِالْظُّهَانِ تَقِيِينَ طَاهِرِينَ وَبِالنَّشْأَةِ  
 مُشْتَمِلِينَ وَبِتُرْدَادِ الْوَقَارِ فَايَزِينَ وَعَلَى الْمَشْدِ الْيُضَارِينَ  
 أَدْكُنْتُمُ الْمُتَوَسِّطِينَ الْمُتَشَبِّهِينَ الرُّوحَانِيَّ طَقُوسِ  
 السَّمَايَةِ فَأَعْضَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ وَلِنَفْسِي أَنَا أَخَاطِبُ لِيَعْرِفَ  
 كُلُّ الْجَدِّ مِنْ أَمْلِكِ الْيَوْمِ وَالْعَظِيمَةِ الَّتِي نَاهَا  
 وَالْأَمْرُ الَّذِي تَقَدَّرَ عَلَيْهِ وَاحْتَالَ الْجَسِيمُ الَّذِي يَوْمِي إِلَيْهِ  
 وَيَسِيرُ بِالْخُضُوعِ وَالْإِهْتَالِ الَّذِي حَبَّ عَلَيْهِ وَالْخُشُوعُ  
 وَالْاضْطِرَابُ الَّذِي تَمِيلُ إِلَيْهِ وَاجْتِنَانُهُ عَلَى الْأَسْرَارِ