

CHAPTER SIX

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM

1. Introductory Remarks

a) The Text

The first group of texts we shall examine consists of one procatechesis, 18 catecheses, of which the last 13 are explanations of the Jerusalem Creed,¹ and 5 mystagogical catecheses which interpret Baptism, Chrism and celebration of the Eucharist. There has been much discussion as to the dating as well as authorship of these texts. A debate beginning in the 1500's has still not reached a final conclusion.² That the 19 Lenten catecheses must be attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem and belong to his early activity in Jerusalem (c. 350) is beyond all doubt.³ The discussion centres on the author and the original dating of the mystagogical catecheses.

A. Piédagnel, in his introduction to the Sources Chrétiennes' edition of the mystagogical catecheses gives a fully detailed account of the authorship. In this, he refers to the discussion concerning the surviving manuscripts, the literary tradition in which the catecheses later emerge, as well as liturgical information and the basis they provide for dating.⁴ He hesitates, meanwhile, to draw any unequivocal conclusion from this material.⁵ The introduction, shows, nevertheless, that Piédagnel assumes Cyril to be the author—it is Cyril's life and the rest of his works which take up the remainder of his introduction.⁶

¹ For the reconstruction of the Jerusalem Creed, see Stephenson, General Introduction p. 60ff; see also p. 33f.

² Piédagnel, Introduction p. 18f.

³ A certain disagreement exists concerning Cyril's status when catechizing. If he was a presbyter, the catechetical lectures were probably delivered in 347 or 348, while 350 is likely the correct date if the catecheses were delivered when he was a bishop, see Quasten, Patrology, III p. 364.

⁴ Piédagnel, Introduction p. 21-33.

⁵ "Nous devons constater que plusieurs explications sont possible, entre lesquelles il est difficile de faire un choix; et je souscrirais volontiers au jugement de J. Quasten, qui trouve également difficile, dans les circonstances actuelles, d'établir ou d'infirmier la paternité de Cyrille' pour les Mystagogiques", Piédagnel, Introduction p. 38.

⁶ Cyril's biography is rendered in Piédagnel, Introduction p. 9-14 and in Stephenson, General Introduction p. 21-34.

Direct comparison of the textual groups leads us a step forward in the question of authorship. It is, in fact, rather easy to demonstrate a number of differences in Lenten catecheses and mystagogical catecheses. Whereas the first are stenographically recorded during catechetical teaching,⁷ the mystagogical catecheses show a brevity and lack of improvised phraseology which suggests rather that they are notes made as a basis for future sermons.⁸ E. J. Yarnold, moreover, points out both stylistic and theological differences which make it natural to assume a certain distance between the two text groups.⁹

The most radical solution to this problem implies an attribution of the mystagogical catecheses to Cyril's successor John (387-417).¹⁰ But then, the idea of seeking an Origenistic tendency immediately suggests itself because John is regarded as a keen follower of Origen.¹¹ Kretschmar is one of those who has attempted to show that the mystagogical catecheses have Origenistic tendencies in liturgical structure as well as in content. It is, however, difficult to find his reasoning on this point convincing.¹²

Some recent contributions, on the other hand, have tried to retain Cyril's authorship of all the catecheses. C. Beukers, basing his idea on

⁷ Quasten, *Patrology*, III p. 363; Stephenson, *General Introduction* p. 1 note 3.

⁸ Improved sections occurring in the Lenten Catecheses in *Cat.* 15.33; 2.16 and 17.31 do not occur in the Mystagogical Catecheses. Yarnold's suggestion that the Mystagogical Catecheses are the preacher's notes, stands in opposition to Telfer's theory that the catecheses are complete, but short because they were followed immediately by Syriac and Latin translations, see Yarnold, *Authorship* p. 144f.

⁹ Yarnold, *Authorship* p. 147-159.

¹⁰ This solution has been predominant after W. J. Swaan's article from 1942 (Swaan, *A propos*) and has been advocated by, for example, Stephenson, *Introduction* p. 143-49 and Kretschmar, *Die frühe Geschichte* p. 22-27.

¹¹ Yarnold, *Authorship* p. 146.

¹² Kretschmar attempts to demonstrate that the introduction to the anaphora referred to in 5 M. *Cat.*, maintains the same peculiarities as we find in the Origenistic exegesis of *Jes.6*. From this he maintains that an Origenist has introduced these elements into the Jerusalem eucharistic prayer (Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie* p. 168f.). The problem with Kretschmar's argumentation is, however, that he asserts simultaneously that these Origenistic elements are a part of the Antiochene liturgical structure (Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie* p. 169 note 1), and thus liturgically dependent upon Antioch (Kretschmar, *Die frühe Geschichte* p. 34). We find it more convincing to see the liturgy referred to in 5 M. *Cat.* in the light of an existing liturgical structure that from the Origenistic exegesis of *Isaiah* which has been considered questionable in the 4th century (Kretschmar, *Die frühe Geschichte* p. 26).

Nor do we find Kretschmar's argumentation for an Origenistic tendency in the Mystagogical Catecheses convincing. His reference to 4 M. *Cat.* 5 which can be seen as a further development of a tradition stemming from Clement of Alexandria (Kretschmar, *Die frühe Geschichte* p. 27; see also note 26), can not be used as an argument for separating the mystagogical catecheses from the others. Stephenson holds that an Alexandrian tendency is also reflected in the Lenten Catecheses, and his argumentation is similar to that found in Kretschmar, see for example Stephenson, *Alexandrian Heritage* p. 579f.