

SYRIAC HISTORICAL WRITING : A SURVEY OF THE MAIN SOURCES

By : Sebastian Brock
The Oriental Institute
Oxford — England

Although Syriac literature cannot boast any really outstanding historians, there do come down to us a number of pieces of historical writing in Syriac . mostly in the form of annalistic chronicles, which can provide valuable source material for the political , social and economic history of the Middle East ,in particular between the fourth and fourteenth centuries AD. Some of this material (such as the chronicles of Michael and Abu'l Faraj) is well known to modern historians, but much of it has not always received the attention it deserves, the texts having been published in many different , and sometimes out-of - the - way, places .

In the present survey my aim has simply been to bring to-gether the main bibliographical information about these varied Syriac historical works in convenient form in the hope that this may prove a useful guide to the historian who is not necessarily well acquainted with Syriac studies as such . At the outset it should be stressed that no attempt is made to offer any new insights into this material or to analyse the sources afresh.

The definition of what constitutes historical writing is not always obvious , and I have included only chronicles , eccles-iastical histories and

writings which can be described as essentially annalistic in character . Excluded are biographies , hagiography , monastic histories , historical notes in colophons and on fly-leaves (1) and works on chronology (such as that by Shem'on Shenola'waya) ; the same applies to independent translations of Greek historical works (such as those of Eusebius(2), Socrates and Theodoret) and to works translated from Syriac into Arabic no longer extant in their original language (notably the Chronicle of Seert(3)) . Nor, finally , have I included lost (as opposed to fragmentary) works .

The items are divided up into west and East Syrian sources , the former category including Melkite and Maronite , as well as Syrian Orthodox , authors . Within each category the works are arranged in approximate chronological order . The bibliographical information(4) given for each

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- 1 - This includes the fragmentary and perhaps contemporary account of the Arab invasion of Palestine on a fly-leaf of a sixth-century Gospel manuscript; for this text see Chronica Minora II (= CSCO 3/3, p. 74 ; Latin translation in CSCO 4/4, p. 60) .
 - 2 - For the use of Eusebius Chronicon by the Syriac chronicles see P. Keseling, ' Die Chronik des Eusebius in der syrischers Ueberlieferung ' , OC III. 1 (1927) , 23—48, 223—41 ; III. 2 (1927) , 33—58 .
 - 3 - PO 4, 5, 7, 13 (indices in PO 5 to part I, and in Melanges de l'Universite St Joseph 42 (1966) for part II, by J.M.Fiey). According to P. Nautin (Revue de l'histoire des religions 186 1974), 113—28) this work is to be identified as a translation of Isho dnah's Ecclesiastical History , otherwise lost; Fiey however, prefers to leave the question open(see Parole de l'Orient 6/7 (1975/6) , 447—59) .
 - 4 - Abbreviations used are as follows : Barsaum = Ignatius Ephrem Barsaum, Kitāb al lū 'lū' al mantūr fita'rīh al'ulūm wāl adāb as suriyāniya (2nd edition, Aleppo 1956, reprinted Baghdad 1976) ; Syriac translation by Philoxenus Yuhannon Dawlabani, Ktobo d-berulle bdire (Qamishli1967); I give first the pagination of the 1976 reprint of the Arabic and then, after a stroke, that of the Syriac translation . CSCO = Corpus Scriptorum =

source is confined to the more important items only ; for further details reference should be made to the standard bibliographical aids⁽⁵⁾ (for the earlier literature the section on Syriac sources in F. Haase's Altchristliche Kirchengeschichte nach orientalischen Quellen (Leipzig 1925) , pp. 6—24, will be found valuable) .

WEST SYRIAN WRITERS

(1) Chronicle of Edessa

A Chalcedonian with ' Nestorian ' leanings , writing in Edessa soon after 540,⁽⁶⁾ composed a chronological list of events covering the years 132 BC to AD 540 . The majority of entries are very short, but among the longer ones is § 8, containing the famous account of a flood in Edessa in November 201, in which ' the nave of the Church of the Christians ' was badly damaged . The fact that some of the author's material seems to have been derived from the local archives makes his short chronicle particularly valuable .

The text survives in Vat. syr. 163 of the seventh century . First edited by Assemani (Bibliotheca Orientalis I , 388-417) , it has been reedited a number of times, notably by L. Hallier in Texte und Untersuchungen 9 . 1

== Christianorum Orientalium (Louvain) ; the number in the complete series is given first, and then, after a stroke , that of the sub-series Scriptores Syri . OC = Oriens Christianus . OCP = Orientalia Christiana Periodica . PO = Patrologia Orientalis . ROC = Revue de l' Orient Chretien . ZDMG = Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft .

- 5 - That is, C. Moss, Catalogue of Syriac Printed Books and Related Literature in the British Museum (London 1962); I. Ortiz de Urbina, Patrologia Syriaca (Rome 1965 (second edition)) ; S.P. Brock, ' Syriac Studies 1960—1970 : a classified Bibliography', Parole de l'Orient 4 (1973), 393-456.
- 6 - So F. Haase , ' Die Abfassungszeit der Edessenischen Chronik', OC II. 7/8 (1918) , 88—96, against Hallier who argued for a date after 570 .

(1892 , with an important introduction, German translation and commentary), and by I. Guidi in Chronica Minora I (CSCO 1/1 , pp. 1-13 ; Latin translation in CSCO 2/2, pp. 1-11) . There is an English translation by B. H. Cowper in Journal of Sacred Literature 5 (1865), 281-45, and a Russian one by N. Pigulevskaya in Palestinsky Sbornik 4 (67) (1959) , 79-96

(2) Pseudo - Zacharias Rhetor , Ecclesiastical History

The historical text which comes down to us in twelve books attributed to Zacharias of Mytilene is in fact a composite work of which only part represents a translation of the sixth-century writer Zacharias Rhetor; it consists of :

- (a) Books I-II : miscellaneous short works of very varied provenance .These include , in Book 1, Moshe of Inghilene's translation of the ' History of Joseph and Aseneth ' , the acts of St Silvester of Rome , the letter of the Priest Lucian concerning the finding of the relics of St Stephen, Gamaliel and Nicodemus, and , in Book II, a version of the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus , documents on Eutyches and the second synod of Ephesus, and the letter of Proclus to the Armenians :
- (b) Books III-VI: an abridged translation of a lost Greek historical work by Zacharias (explicitly named in III. 1 and elsewhere) . Dionysius bar Salibi, in quoting the work, speaks of the author as 'Zacharia the Rhetor, bishop of Melitene ' (read ' Mytilene ') ; this Zacharias Rhetor may be the same person as Zacharias Scholasticus (' lawyer ' or ' advocate ') , the author of one of the Lives of Severus (PO 2) who subsequently became bishop of Mytilene ; on the other hand it may be that Dionysius bar Salibi, by calling Zacharias Rhetor ' bishop of Mytilene ' was himself confusing two different people (so Kugener) .

Books III-VI are chiefly concerned with ecclesiastical matters , and cover the period 450—491 .

- (c) Books VII-XII : these were composed by an anonymous author who was writing about 589 . This author , who on internal evidence appears to have been a monk living in north Mesopotamia (perhaps Amid) , was

also responsible for putting together the work as a whole (thus including the translation and abridgement of Zacharias Rhetor's Greek history) . Book VII covers the reign of Anastasius, Book VIII that of Justin I, and IX-XII the reigns of Justinian and Justin II up to 569 . Of Books X and XII only fragments are preserved, while Book XI is entirely lost . In the course of these books the author translates several important Greek documents and letters whose originals are lost .

The entire work is preserved in London Add. 17202 copied about AD 600, only three decades or so after the anonymous compiler had completed his work. In the manuscript it is entitled ' History of events which occurred in the world ' , but it is interesting to note that the running title ' Ecclesiastical (History) of Zachariah ' is already applied to parts of the work not by Zacharias Rhetor . Excerpts of various parts are also to be found in some further manuscripts (London Add. 12154 (c. AD 800) , Vat. syr. 145 (9 th cent. ?) , London Add. 14620 (9th cent.) , and Add. 7190 (12th cent.)) .

The Syriac text has been edited in part or in whole by several different scholars, but of the two editions of the extant text in Add. 17202 that by E. W. Brooks in CSCO 83-4/38-9 (with Latin translation in CSCO 87-/41-2) is much superior to that by J.P.N. Land in his Anecdota Syriaca III (1870) .

There is a German translation by K. Ahrens and P. Kruger (1899) and an English one by F. J. Hamilton and E. W. Brooks (also 1899);⁽¹⁾ neither is complete, books I-II being omitted. There is an important review of the two translations by M-A. Kugener in ROC 5 (1905) 201-14 , 461-80 .(8) .

(3) John of Ephesus , Ecclesiastical History

John of Amid, appointed bishop of Ephesus and Asia in 542, wrote towards

- 7 - Of the two translations the English is generally the more satisfactory ; both were of course made from Land's not always reliable edition .
- 8 - On Zacharias Rhetor see also E. Honigmann, ' Zacharias of Mytilene ' , in his Patristic Studies (Studi e Testi 173; 1952) , 194-204 , and K.Wegenast's article in Pauly - Wissowa, Realenzyklopadie II. 9 (1967) , 2212—6.

the end of his life two works of the greatest importance for sixth - century history , the Lives of the Eastern Saints (written 566-8; published by Brooks with an English translation in PO 17-19) , and an Ecclesiastical History in three parts. As an independent work only Part III (written over the decade 575-585) survives, virtually complete. The original work consisted of :

Part I : this covered from the late first century BC to AD 449, although for the period from Casesar to Constantine it appears .

Part II : this spanned the period 449 to 571. Some quite long extracts . to have contained no more than just a catalogue of emperors . given in London Add. 14650 of AD 874/5: were printed by Land in Anecdota Syriaca II, 289-329; the variant readings of this manuscript are given by Chabot in his edition of the Zuqnin Chronicle (see (11) , below) at the appropriate places⁽⁹⁾ (this chronicle, together with other later chronicles , made very extensive use of John's work) . Excerpts from various other manuscripts, deriving from this lost part, were published by Brooks in CSCO 104/53, pp. 402 - 17(10).

Part III : this final part , covering from 571 to at least 585, is preserved almost complete in a seventh - century manuscript , London Add. 14640 (some of the gaps in the manuscript can be filled in from excerpts from John's work in the later chronicles) . The Syriac text of this part was first edited by W. Cureton in 1853, and then reedited by Brooks in CSCO 105/54 (1935) . There exist English , German and Latin translation : the English by R. Payne smith (1860), who reorders the sequence of the chapters; The German J. M. Schonfelder (1862) , and the Latin by E. W. Brooks in CSCO 106/55 (1936) . Of these that by Brooks is the most reliable .

There are two old monographs in John's Ecclesiastical History , by J.P.N. Land (1856, in Dutch) , and by Diakonov (1908, in Russian)

9 - For translations, see under (11) below .

10- An excerpt on the building of Dara is to be found appended to Gregory Abu'l Faraj's secular history in Oxford Hunt 52 : see E. A. W. Budge, The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj Oxford 1932), II, f. 189 (text) and pp. xxii-xxv (English translation) .

(4) Melkite Chronicle

A Chalcedonian chronicle, of Melkite origin, is preserved in Sinai syr. 10. ff. 42-53, of the eighth/ninth century. This covers, in very abbreviated form, Adam to the emperor Heraclius, and presumably the work was composed soon after Heraclius' death (641). Its chief interest lies in the sections on sixth-century ecclesiastical history and the fact that it shows an indirect relationship to the later Syrian Orthodox 846 Chronicle (no (14) below).

The text was edited, with a French translation, introduction, notes and index, by A. de Halleux in Le Museon 91 (1978), 5-44. In previous articles de Halleux had discussed § 13 (on Philoxenus; in Orientalia Lovanensia Periodica 6/7 (1975/6), 253-66), § 14 (on Severus; in Parole de l' Orient 6/7 (1975/6), 461-77), and §§ 17-23 (on three sixth-century synods; in A Tribute to A. Voobus (ed. R. H. Fischer; Chicago 1977), 295-307).

(5) Maronite Chronicle

One of the few early works in Syriac composed by a Maronite is a fragmentary chronicle covering the period from Alexander the Great to the time of composition, namely the mid 660s. The part covering the late fourth century to the late 650s. is entirely missing, but the final five pages deal with the war between 'Ali and Mu'awiah in some detail.

The chronicle survives in a single manuscript of the eighth/ninth century, now divided between Leningrad and London (Add. 17216, ff. 2-14). The complete text was edited by Brooks in Chronica Minora II (= CSCO 3/3, pp. 43-74; Latin translation (by Chabot) in CSCO 4/4, pp. 35-57). There was an earlier partial edition (of the final folios dealing with seventh-century history) by T. Noldeke, with a German translation and commentary, in ZDMG 29 (1875), 82-98, and a partial French translation by F. Nau in ROC 4 (1899), 318-28.

(6) Jacob of Edessa , Chronicle

The Chronicle of the outstanding Syrian Orthodox scholar Jacob of Edessa (died 708) is unfortunately lost apart from a fragment (perhaps of an abbridgement) in London Add. 14685, ff. 1-23, of the tenth/eleventh century, and excerpts in later chronicles (notably Elia of Nisibis, Michael and Abu'l Faraj). The work was designed as a continuation of Eusebius ' Chronicon , covering from the 20th year of Constantine (326) to (according to Elia of Nisibis) 692. What survives in Add.14685 is the introductory section where Jacob discusses Eusebius ' canon and the error of three years it contains in its calculation. Then, for the pre-Constantinian period, Jacob added some information absent from Eusebius on certain foreign dynasties. This is followed by Jacob's own ' canon ' in the form of a now damaged chronological table covering 326-630, the text breaking off with mention of Heraclius, Ardashir III and Abu Bakr .

The text in Add. 14685, together with the excerpts from Jacob's Chronicle mede by Elia of Nisibis (no (26) below, were printed by Brooks in Chronica Minora III (=CSCO 5/5, pp. 281-330 ; Latin translation in CSCO 6/6, pp. 197-258). Previously he had edited the chronological canon with an English translation in ZDMG 53 (1899) 261-327, 550 (cp 54 (1900) , 100-102) .

(7) Historical notices for 712 - 716

Ten short but not uninteresting notices concerning events and natural phenomena during the years 712-716 are to be found in London Add. 17193 , ff. 75-76, of AD 874, following the account of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch John I's audience and discussion with an unnamed Emir. Both texts were edited together by F. Nau (with a French translation) in Journal Asiatique XI, 5 (1915) ; the historical notices will be found on pp. 253-6, 284-7 .

(8) Chronicle to the year 724

A short world chronicle, covering from Adam to AD 724, is preserved in London Add. 14643, ff. 1-57, of the eighth century. The entries are mostly brief and in some disorder towards the end. The work concludes with a list of Arab 'Kings', from Muhammad to Yezid II, giving the lengths of their reigns; it was this list that led earlier European scholars to refer to the chronicle as the 'Book of Caliphs' (Liber Calipharum).

The chronicle was first edited by Land in his Anecdota Syriaca I, pp. 1-24 103-22 (1862), but this has been superseded by Brooks' edition in Chronica Minora II (= CSCO 3/3, pp. 77-156; Latin translation in CSCO 4/4, pp. 61-119).

(9) Excerpts concerning AD 501/2, 505/6 and 763/4

Berlin syr. 167 (Sachau 315), ff. 66-69, of AD 1481 contains three historical excerpts concerning the above-mentioned years. The first is introduced as having been taken from 'a book of ecclesiastical (history)'; both it and the next entry concern Amid, while the third excerpt is on the misrul of Musa b. Mus'ab.

The text was edited by Brooks in Chronica Minora III (= CSCO 5/5, pp. 331-6; Latin translation in CSCO 6/6, pp. 259-64).

(10) Chronicle to the year 775

An extremely brief chronicle, covering from Adam to 775, is to be found in London Add. 14683, ff. 93-102 of the tenth century. Most of the space is devoted to the pre-Christian period, and only two folios are left for the first to eighth centuries AD: here little more than a list of emperors and caliphs is given, though there are a few short historical entries for the eighth century.

The work was edited by Brooks in Chronica Minora III (= CSCO 5/5, pp. 337-49; Latin translation in CSCO 6/6., pp. 265-75).

(11) The Zuqnin Chronicle (' Pseudo - Dionysius ')

An anonymous writer , who was very probably a monk of the monastery of Zuqnin (near Amid) , compiled an important world chronicle which was completed in 775 . J.S. Assemani supposed that the author was none other than the patriarch Dionysius of Tellmahre , but both Nau and Noldeke demonstrated that this could not be the case ; it is for this reason that the work is often referred to as the ' Pseudo - Dionysius Chronicle ' . Even though it cannot be the mostly lost chronicle of the patriarch Dionysius , it is nevertheless a document of great significance in that it incorporates valuable earlier sources .

The chronicle is preserved in a unique manuscript of the ninth century , now divided between two libraries , Vat .syr. 162 and London Add. 14665,ff.1-7. The manuscript lacks both the very beginning and the end of the work , and we are thus deprived of knowledge of the compiler's name . The only complete edition is that by J.B. Chabot in CSCO 91/43 and 104/53 (1927-33; for partial translations see below) .

The work consists of :

(a) A short and very damaged preface , written in AG 1087 (= AD 775/e' in the reign of Mahdi son of ' Abdallah, when Leon son of Constantinos ruled over the Greeks and Pepin over the Romans ' , it is addressed to Giwargis (George) chorepiscopus of Amid, the abbot Euthalius and various other members of the monastic community (of Zuqnin) . The text is printed in vol. II of Chabot's CSCO edition , pp. 418-20 .

(b) Creation to AD 313 (chabot , vol. 1, pp. 2-159) . The colophon states that the material is derived from Eusebius and some other sources ; the latter will include the Cave of Treasures , an apocryphal text about Alexander ;(11)

11- On Alexander texts in Syriac see my note in Journal of Semitic Studies 15 (1970) , 215—8 .

another about the Magi (having connections with the Latin Opus Imperfectum in Matthaeum(12), and a version of the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus (13) . This section had been previously published separately by Tullberg (1851) .

(c) AD 313—485 (Chabot , vol. 1, pp. 159—234). The heading states that the source is Socrates ' Ecclesiastical History , but a number of further writings are used, such as another section on the Seven Sleepers and the Plerophoriae of John Rufus (published by F. Nau in P0 8) .

(d) AD 497-506/7 (Chabot , vol. 1, pp. 235-317) . This section represents an independent work addressed to an abbot Sergius ; on internal grounds it is likely that the author wrote in Edessa not long after 507 . Entitled ' A history of the times of affliction which occurred in Edessa, Amid and in the whole of Mesopotamia', it is a piece of local history of exceptional importance. Near the beginning of the work (f. 66 of the manuscript) a later scribe, Elisha of Zuqnin , has supplied the text of a lost folio and at the end he asks for God's mercy on ' the priest Mar Isho ' the stylite from the monastery of Zuqnin that Isho ' (Joshua) the stylite was the author of this part of the chronicle , and in this many scholars have followed him; it is much more likely , however, that this Isho, was either the compiler of the work as a whole or (more probably) its original scribe.

Because of its historical importance this section has been separately edited a number of times, in 1876 by P. Martin (with French translation), in 1882 by W. Wright (with English translation), and in 1959 by the late Metropolitan Yuhannon Dawlabani (Mardin) . There is a Russian translation by N. V. Pigulevskaya in Mesopotaima na rubezhe V-VI vv. (Moscow / Leningrad 1940) , 130—70(14) .

12- See U. Monneret de Villard, Le Leggende orientali sui Magi evangelici (Studi e Testi 163; 1952) .

13- For the various Syriac texts on this subject see A. Allgeier in OC II. 4-8 (1915 —18) .

14- Among the secondary studies the following might be noted : H. Gelzer , 'Josua Stylites und die damaligen kirchlichen Parteien des Ostens ' ==

(e) AD 489-578: (Chabot , vol. II, pp. 2-145). This section very largely based on the otherwise lost Part II of John of Ephesus' Ecclesiastical History; it also includes Simeon of Beth Arsham's letter on the Himyarite martyrs .

(f) AD 587-775 (Chabot , vol II ,pp. 145-399). At the beginning the author states that he is writing in AH 158 = AG 1086 (i.e. AD 775) , and complains of lack of sources for this period . The entries for 587 to 713 are very brief , but for the rest of the eighth century, up to 775, the narrative becomes increasingly fuller, especially for the early Abbasid period. This section , which contains much important information about economic conditions of the time , was edited separately, with a French translation and index, by Chabot in 1895 under the (misleading) title Chronique de Denys de Tell-Mahre ; quatrieme partie ; it should be noted that in this earlier edition Chabot did not yet know of Add. 14665 ff. 1-7, which continue on from the end of Vat. syr. 162 : these leaves accordingly are only to be found in the CSCO edition(15).

Although it is the normal practice of the CSCO to provide translations , Chabot never lived to complete one for this Chronicle, and so only volume I of the Syriac text has an accompanying Latin translation (by Chabot, CSCO 121/66; 1949) ; this covers sections (b) to (d) above . Of the various partial translations mentioned earlier only Chabot's French one covers material in volume II of the Syriac text (our section (f) , but without the seven London folios at the end); thus the important section (e), covering the sixth century and deriving mostly from John of Ephesus, is not yet provided with any complete translation. There are , however, some quite extensive excerpts given with French translation by F. Nau in ROC 2 (1897), 41-68, and a German

= Byzantinische Zeitschrift 1 (1892) , 34—49; E. Merten, 'De bello Persico ab Anastasio geso , in Commentations Philologae Ienenses VII. 2.3 (1906) ; and F. Haase, 'Die Chronik des Josua Stylites', OC II.9 (1920) ; 62—73.

15- There is a discussion of the order of ff. 169—173 of Vat. syr. 162 and of the London folios in E. Tisserant, Codex Zuqninensis Rescriptus (Studi e Testi 23; 1911), pp. x-xv (the manuscript is a palimpsest., with texts from the Septuagint as underwriting) .

paraphrase of vol. II, pp. 54—69 , 111-2 is to be found in N. pigulewskaja , Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien (Berlin 1969), pp. 325-35(16).

(12) Chronicle to the year 813

Of some interest for the Abbasid period is a short anonymous chronicle preserved in London Add. 14642, ff.36—39, of the tenth/eleventh century. In its extant form this work covers AD 775 to 813; the manuscript, however, is badly damaged and has lost both beginning and end, with the consequence that the full extent of the chronicle and its approximate date of composition are both unknown, although the date of the manuscript itself provides a terminus ante quem for the latter .

The text was edited by Brooks in Chronica Minora III (= CSCO 5/5 , pp. 243-60; Latin translation in CSCO 6/6, pp. 183-96) . Earlier Brooks had published the text with an English translation in ZADG 54 (1900), 195—230 .

(13) Chronicle to the year 819

A short chronicle, covering from Christ to AD 819, was discovered in 1911 by Ephrem Barsaum (later to become Syrian Orthodox patriarch) in a ninth century manuscript at Basabrina (Tur Abdin). According to a marginal note the work had been copied by a certain Severus for his uncle David, bishop of Harran (consecrated between 846 and 873) . About half the work is given over to the seventh and eighth centuries (a later hand has added an entry on a drought in 1094/5) .

The work was edited by Barsaum in CSCO 81/36, pp. 3-22, with a Latin translation in CSCO 109/56, pp. 1-16 (by Chabot) .

18- On this chronicle see also F. Haase, ' Untersuchungen zur Chronik des Pseudo-Dionysius', OC II.6 (1916) 65—90, 240—70; N. V. Pigulevskaja, 'Theophanes' Chronographia and the Syriac Chronicle ', Jahrbuch der osterreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft 16 (1967) , 50 - 60 (cp also her article (in Russian) in Palestinskij Sbornik 19 (82) (1969) , 118—26

(14) Chronicle to the year 846(17)

Another short chronicle, this time covering from creation to AD 846/7, is preserved in London Add. 14642, ff. 1-36, of the tenth century(18) the beginning of the work is lost and there are some lacunae elsewhere too. Prominent among its sources are an antecedent of the Melkite chronicle (no (4) above) and the Syrian Orthodox Chronicle to 819. In his edition CSCO Brooks(19) concluded from the several mentions of the monastery of Qartmin (Tur Abdin) that the chronicle had been written there, but as Barsaüm later pointed out in his edition of the Chronicle to 819, such a provenance would be more suitable for the latter chronicle which served as a source for such entries to the 846 chronicle; even this, however, is far from certain.

The text was edited by Brooks in *Chronica Minora II* (=CSCO 3/3, pp. 157—238; Latin translation (by Chabot in CSCO 4/4, pp. 121—80). Brooks had previously edited the part covering AD 574-846, together with an English translation, in *ZDMG* 51 (1897), 569—88, and Nau had published the section (ff. 9-10) on St Peter and St Paul, with French translation, in *ROC* 1 (1899), 396 — 405.

(15) Dionysius of Tellmahre, Ecclesiastical History

The Syrian Orthodox patriarch Dionysius (818-45) wrote an Ecclesiastical History covering the years AD 582-842 at the request of John, bishop of Dara, but unfortunately the work as a whole does not survive, and only a few fragments come down to us. One short fragment, concerning 'the falling

17- Owing to the links between the 819 and 846 chronicles I take the 846 chronicle before Dionysius, who strictly should come first.

18- Although now bound up together with the 813 chronicle (no (12) above), originally these two chronicles come from two different manuscripts.

19- In *ZDMG* 51 (1897), p. 570, he had plausibly supposed that Harran was its place of composition.

away from the faith of Probus and abbot Iuhannon in the time of Peter, patriarch of Antioch' (581—91), is to be found in Vat .syr. 144, on the basis of which it was published by Brooks in the second volume of his edition of Pseudo - Zacharias Rhetor (CSCO 84/39 , pp. 219—24; Latin translation in CSCO 88/42, pp. 149—154) . Much longer excerpts are incorporated into the later chronicles of Michael, the anonymous to 1234, and Gregory Abu'l Faraj; Michael includes both Dionysius' interesting prologue and his ending (Chron. X. 20 and XII. 21) . A survey of materials from Dionysius in these three chronicles is given by R. Abramowski, Dionysius von Tellmahre : Jakobitischer Patriarch von 818—845 Leipzig 1940), 14—29, 126—9 (on pp. 138—44 he also gives the text and German translation of the fargment in Vat. syr. 144) . Abramowski's book as a whole gives a fine assessment of Dionysius' historical work and its importance .

(16) Michael, Chronicle

Undoubtedly the greatest of all Syriac chronicles is that of the Syrian Orthodox patriarch Michael (1166—99) . Starting from creation this massive work in 21 books extends to 1194/5. Of the preface, listing his sources, we have only an Armenian summary, but much of the information it must have contained is incorporated into body of the chronicle . The following table, taken from Chabot's preface to his edition,(20) gives the main sources whom Michael claims to have used .

Michael also cites numerous shorter documents and letters, many of which are not preserved elsewhere .

The chronicle comes down to us in a single manuscript completed in 1598, preserved at Urfa (Edessa) at the end of the last century ; from this two modern copies were made, one in 1887 for the future Syrian Catholic patriarch, Ignatius Ephrem Rehmani, the other in 1899 for J. B. Chabot . It is the text of the 1899 copy which was published photographically by Chabot

20- Chronique de Michel le Syrien, p. xxv.

Books	
I-VI	Creation to AD 323
VII-VIII.6	AD 323-431
VIII.7-IX	AD 431-565
X.1-20	AD 565-582
X.21-XI.17	AD 582-711
XI.18-XII	AD 711-842
XIII-XV.6	AD 842-1081
XV.7-XVI	AD 1081-1143
XVII-XXI	AD 1143-1195

<p>Dionysius</p> <p>Socrates Theodoret</p> <p>Zacharias Bretor</p> <p>Cyrus of Pata</p> <p>Dionysius of Telmahre</p>
<p>John of Ephesus</p>
<p>Jacob of Edessa</p>
<p>John of Ileria</p>
<p>Ignatius of Melitene</p>

<p>Dionysius bar Salibi</p>
<p>Michael</p>

<p>Dashi of Edessa</p>
<p>Ivanis of Kalsun</p>

in his monumental edition, with French translation, notes and indices (1899-1924; reprinted 1963 in four volumes). The Urfa manuscript had a few lacunae, and so the work is not quite complete .

Two oriental translations are also available , one into Armenian, the other into Arabic . The Armenian version , made by the priest Ishok in 1248, is a work of abbreviation and far-reaching adaptation , rather than a direct translation (21) The 1871 Jerusalem edition of the Armenian text is superior to that of 1870 (also Jerusalem) which contains a yet further reworked text There is a French translation by V. Langlois , Chronique de Michel le Grand , traduite pour la premiere fois sur la version armenienne du prêtre Ishok (Venice 1866); an earlier partial translation by E. Dulaurier , in Journal Asiatique IV , 12 (1848), 281-334, and IV, 13 (1849), 315-76 , covers the years 573 — 717 .

The Arabic translation, of which five manuscripts are known, is of limited use in that it was clearly made from the Urfa manuscript of 1598, and contains the same lacunae .

(17) Chronicle to the year 1234

An anonymous writer of the first half of the thirteenth century has left an important world chronicle divided up into two parts , separating secular from ecclesiastical history (a practice Gregory Abu'l Faraj was later to adopt) . According to Rahmani , who first edited part of the chronicle, the author came from Edessa, and this view is adopted by Barsaum who calls his the Edessene anonymous; (22) Chabot, however, maintained that he belonged

21- Cp F. Haase, 'Die armenische Rezension der syrischen Chronik Michaels des Grossen', OC II. 5 (1915)), 60—82 , 271—84. On Michael's chronicle in general see H. Gelzer, Das Geschichtswerk Mar Michael des Grossen , in his Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie (Leipzig 1898) II, 431—58, and R. A. Guseinov, in Palestiniskij Sbornik 5 (68) (1960) , 85—105 .

22- Barsaum, p. 131/78

to the patriarchal entourage and he went on to suggest that the work was composed at the famous monastery of Barsauma. The Edessene origin of the author is upheld by Fiey, who nevertheless does not rule out a subsequent connection with the monastery of Barsauma.

The secular history continues to at least 1234, while the ecclesiastical history (which, despite its position, second, in the manuscript, was evidently written first) stops at 1207: in both cases the endings have been lost. Since the author was in Jerusalem when it was taken by Salah ad Din in 1187, and had already written much of the work by 1204, it is unlikely that originally the chronicle continued many years beyond 1234.

The author makes ample use of his predecessors (some of whom he quotes by name), but the value of his work is enhanced by the fact that he is independent of Michael's Chronicle, and instead makes his own use of some of the same sources. One important lost source which he mentions by name is the History of Edessa by Basil bar Shumana (died 1171).

The unique manuscript of the fourteenth century, which was in private ownership in Istanbul at the beginning of the century, is not complete, and there are several large gaps, especially in the ecclesiastical history, which now opens with the sixth century.

The beginning of the text was published by Ignatius Ephrem Rahmani, Chronicon civile et ecclesiasticum anonymi auctoris (Charfet 1904), while the complete work was published by J. B. Chabot (with the help of Ephrem Barsaum, later Syrian Orthodox patriarch) in CSCO 81/36 and 82/37 (the profane history covers volume I and pp. 1-241 of volume II, the ecclesiastical history vol. II, pp. 242-350). Chabot provided a Latin translation for vol. I in CSCO 109/56 (1937), whereas vol. II was translated into French by A. Abouna, with an introduction, notes and indices by J. M. Fiey, in CSCO 354/154 (1974) (23).

23- Earlier partial translations are listed in Fiey's preface; cp also N. V. Pigulevkaya, Vizantiya i Iran na rubezhe VI i VII vekov (Leningrad/Moscow 1946) 252-89.

(18) Gregory Abu'l Faraj, Chronicle (secular and ecclesiastical)

Included in Gregory Abu'l Faraj's imposing literary output is a large historical work consisting of a secular chronography and an ecclesiastical history . Although largely dependent on Michael and other earlier chroniclers, Gregory's compilations are differently arranged and retain their own value , especially of course , for the period by Michael .

The secular chronography deals with pre - Christian and profane history up to and including his own life time . The work is divided into eleven sections entitled yubale or ' series ' , as follows : (1) Patriarchs, (2) Judges , (3) Kings of the Hebrews, (4) Kings of the Chaldeans, (5) Kings of the Medes (just Darius), (6) Kings of the Persians, (7) Kings of the Pagan Greeks , (8) Kings of the Romans (Augustus to Justin II), (9) Kings of the Christian Greeks (Tiberius to Heraclius) , (10) Arab Kings (up to 1258), (11) Hun Kings (i. e. Mongols). The tenth section occupies some two thirds the work as a whole . Gregory also provided an Arabic edition this work, entitled ' Short History of Dynasties ' ; for this he made use of Muslim sources as well .

The Syriac text is preserved in a number of manuscripts of which the oldest in Vat. syr. 166 (before 1356/7) ; ; several of these contain the ecclesiastical history as well . The text of the secular chronicle was first edited in 1789 by Bruns and Kirsch , but this has been replaced by the superior editions of P. Bedjan, Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Syriacum (Paris 1890), and E.A.W. Budge , The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj (2 volumes, London 1932) ; the latter is a photographic edition of Oxford, Hunt 52, and is accompanied by an English translation(24). The Arabic text was edited , with a Latin translation , by E. Pococke in 1663, and by A. Salhani in 1890 (Beirut, with an index) (25) .

24- With index . There is a Turkish translation of Budge's English , Abu'l Farac Tarihi (Ankara 1945) .

25- CP G. Graf, Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur (Studi e Testi 133; 1947), II, pp. 274—5 .

The second half of Gregory's historical work , dealing with ecclesiastical history , is itself divided into two parts . The first , which opens with a list of Old Testament high priests, is concerned with the patriarchs of Antioch, giving under each name an account of the chief ecclesiastical events of his patriarchate . The entries reach up to 1285, and about a quarter of the work is taken up with detailed accounts of events during the century previous to 1285 . The second part is devoted to the catholicosate and maphrianate of the East . By continuing to list the line of catholici after the fifth-century schism Gregory has the distinction of being the only Syrian Orthodox church historian to have concerned himself with the affairs of the Church of the East as well .

The ecclesiastical history was finished in the year of his death (1288) , the final entry being devoted to the time of his own tenure of the maphrianate (1264—1286).The work was continued by his brother Barsauma up to 1288 .

The ecclesiastical history was sometimes transmitted by J. Abbeloos and chronicle , sometimes separately (26). It was edited by J. Abbeloos and T. J. Lamy, Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Ecclesiasticum (3 volumes(27), Lovain 1872—7), with a Latin translation ; the text is based on London Add. 7198 of the sixteenth century, with some variants from two slightly earlier manuscripts Cambridge Dd. 3 8 1 and Oxford Hunt 1 .

(19) Continuators of Gregory

Several anonymous works continuing on both parts of Gregory's chronicle survive :

(a) A continuation of the secular history , from 1289—1297, is incorporated into Bedjan's edition of Gregory's Chronicon (pp. 557-88). Bedjan conjectured

26- Note that Mingana syr. 585 is copied from the printed edition : see my 'Notes on some texts in the Mingana collection' , Journal of Semitic Studies 14 (1969) , 219—20 .

27- Volumes 1 and 2 are Paginated continuously .

that the author was Gregory's brother , Barsauma .

(b) There are continuations of the ecclesiastical history up to 1495 and to 1582 .The former is included in Abbeloos and Lamy's edition of the Chronicon Ecclesiasticum (II., 781—846; III, 467—85), while the latter (in Florence , Med. Or . 118) is unpublished . Barsaum states (28)that he himself had compiled a continuation up to modern times .

(20) Anonymous historical texts of 14th / 15th century

Four anonymous works are appended to the text of Gregory Abu'l Faraj's Chronography in Oxford Hunt 52 and are reproduced in Budge's photographic edition (with an English translation in vol. II, pp. xxvi - liii)

(a) The murder of Nawruz .

(b) The expedition of the Huns, Persians and Mongols in the province in Diyarbekir , covering AD 1394—1402 .

(c) The ravages of Timur khan in Tur Abdin, 1395—1403 .

(d) Part of a chronicle covering 1394—1493(29).

According to Ephrem Barsaum(30)the compilers of these works were the priests Esha'ya and Addai of Basabrina .

EAST SYRIAN WRITERS

(21) Barhadbeshabba of Beth Arbaye, Ecclesiastical History

Although ' Ecclesiastical history ' is the title given by the editor (following ' Abdisho ') , the heading of the work itself describes the contents as a series of ' Histories of the holy fathers who were persecuted for the sake of the truth

28- Barsaum, p. 132/180 .

29- The last three texts were edited earlier by Bruns in 1790 ; (d) is also to be found in Vat. syr. 167, with two other short , as yet unpublished , texts (on Hatem, king of Cilicia, 1296 ; and the sack of Amid , 1317) .

30- Barsaum , p. 131/179 .

The author, who must belong to the late sixth century, is called ' Mar Barhadbeshabba, priest and head bedoqa of the holy school in Nisibis : It is uncertain whether or not this Barhadbeshabba is to be distinguished from Barhadbeshabba bishop of Halwan, author of the ' Book of the foundations of the Schools' (ed . Scher , PO 4) .

The ecclesiastical history , consisting of 32 biographical entries covering the third to sixth centuries (ending with Narsai and Abraham), is preserved in a single manuscript, London Or. 6714, ff. 101 - 78 , of the ninth/tenth century . It was edited ,with a French translation, by F. Nau in PO 9, pp. 490— 630 (Introduction ; chapters 19—32) and PO 23 , pp. 177—343 (chapters 1 — 18, and Syriac index in the whole work X31) .

(22) History of Karka d-Beth Slokh

Although this work is largely concerned with the local martyrs of this town (modern kerkuk) , the fact that it is arranged chronologically allows its inclusion here . The history consists essentially of three elements :

- (a) the early history and its refounding by Seleucus;
- (b) the origins of Christianity there and the persecution of Shapur II;
- (c) the persecution of Yazdgard II in 445.

The last section is proportionally the longest and most detailed . Although P. Peeters had held the historical value of the work to be very low, more recently J. M. Fiey has suggested that a rehabilitation is in order (see Analecta Bollandiana 82 (1964) , 189-222) .

The work is preserved in a seventh /eighth century manuscript (Diyarbekir chald. 96) and two late nineteenth century copies . The text was first published by Moesinger in vol. 2 of his Monumenta Syriaca, and then again

31- On Barhadbeshabba, see A. Voobus , History of the School of Nisibis (CSCO 266; 1965) , 280—2. For chapters 17 , 19—30, see L. Abramowski, Untersuchungen zum Liber Heraclidis des Nestorius (CSCO 242; 1963) , 33—103 .

by P. Bedjan in Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum 2 (1891) 507—35 , using the Diyarbekir manuscript . There is a German translation by G. Hoffmann in his Auszuge aus syrischen Akten persischer Martyrer (Leipzig 1880) ,43—80, and a French summary by Fiey in Analecta Bollandiana 82 .

(23) Chronicle of Arbela

The anonymous work covering the history of Christianity in Adiabene from the beginnings to the mid sixth century , generally known as the Chronicle of Arbela (attributed by its editor to Meshihazkha, is a problematic text, of dubious credentials. Since the chronicle could potentially be important it will be necessary to examine the case in a little detail .

When the text was first published by A. Mingana (with French translation and index) his Sources Syriaques I (Leipzig 1907) , pp. 1-168 ,it was widely greeted by eminent scholars such as Sachau as an important and basically reliable source for the otherwise obscure early history of Christianity in Adiabene. Subsequent study by P. Peeters(32) I. Ortiz de Urbina(33) and others, however, cast some doubts on its historical reliability , but more recently the good faith of its editor Mingana has also been called into question . Mingana had attributed the chronicle to the sixth-century writer Meshihazkha , whose work was otherwist lost , pointing to a marginal note giving his name . In 1941 , however, Voste disclosed that the name Meshihazkha had actually been added to the manuscript by a local scribeat Mingana's own request(34) .Twenty five years later J . Assfalg examined the only known manuscript (Berlin , Ms. or . fol . 3126) and found that the hand, although

32- P.Peeters, 'Le Passionaire d'Adiabene ', Analecta Bollandiana 43 (1925), 261— 304 .

33- I. Ortiz de Urbina, 'Intorno al valore storico della Cronaca di Arbela ' OCP 2 (1936) , 5—32 .

34- J. M. Voste, ' Alphonse Mingana', OCP 7 (1941) , 514—8 (sep. 517). Fiey later identified the scribe ; see note 36 .

estrangelo, was a modern one and not a tenth-century one as Mingana's introduction suggested(35) what is more, the printed text did not always correspond to the manuscript, and for one page there was no manuscript basis at all. The following year, in 1967, J. M. Fiey put forward the suggestion that the entire work was the product of Mingana himself,(36) although he was not able to bring forward conclusive evidence (such as the use of nineteenth-century European works of church history) that this must have been so; rather Fiey pointed to two other works edited by Mingana, whose authenticity had been questioned by other scholars during Mingana's own lifetime. Since, however, it turns out that these accusations were not justified(37), Fiey's case by insinuation is weakened, and the question must for the moment remain open.

Whatever the date of the chronicle's composition, it is now generally agreed that the very full account of the early Christian history of Arbela is totally unreliable, seeing that it finds no support from better sources of local history, such as the martyr acts. What is not certain, however, is whether this judgement applies to the rest of the work; here it is interesting to note that scholars whose primary interest is in Zoroastrianism and Sasanian history have usually held the work in higher repute (38) :it is not so likely that a modern forger would have been able to produce seemingly reliable information on such subjects.

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- 35- J. Assfalg, 'Zur Textuberlieferung der Chronik von Arbela', OC 50 (1966) 19—36. There is a photograph of the page with the added name of Meshihazkha in Assfalg's Syrische Handschriften (Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland v; 1963), plate III.
- 36- J.M.-Fiey, 'Auteur et date de la Chronique d'Arbeles', L'Orient Syrien 12 (1967), 265—302. Earlier (Analecta Bollandiana 82 (1964), 218) Fiey had spoken of 'l'auteur tardif (xvie siecle ?)',
- 37- Sss my 'Alphonse Mingana and the Letter of Philoxenus to Abu ' Afr '. Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 50(1967), 199—208.
- 38- E. g. G. Messina, Orientalia 6 (1937) ,234—44.

Clearly more critical work needs to be done on the chronicle itself before any parts of it can safely be used for historical purposes .

Besides Mingana's French translation in Sources Syriaques there is a German one by E. Sachau in the Abhandlungen der Koniglich- Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften , Phil. - hist. Klasse 1915, 8., and a Latin by F. Zorell in Orientalia Christiana 8 (1927) , 144—204(39) .

(24) Anonymous Chronicle

One of the most important East Syrian historical works is the Anonymous Chronicle , covering the last half century or so of Sasanid rule , known sometimes as ' Guidi's Chronicle ' (after its editor) or the ' khuzistan Chronicle ' (after its probable place of origin) . It was probably composed c. 670—680 .

The work is preserved in Notre Dame de Semences (Alqosh) 169 (now in Baghdad) , of the fourteenth century ; from this manuscript a number of modern copies in European libraries were taken : Borg. syr. 82 (1891) , Vat. syr. 599 (1871) , Mingana syr. 47 (1907) and 586 (1932) . Guidi's edition in Chronica Minora I (= CSCO 1/1, pp. 15—39; Latin translation in CSCO 2/2, pp. 13—32) was based on Borg. syr. 82. Some of the more important variants to be found in the two Mingana manuscripts are listed in my ' Notes on some texts in the Mingana Collection', Journal of Semitic Studies 14 (1969) , p.221. A new edition of the text, making use of the Alqosh manuscript and edited by P. Haddad (with Arabic translation, notes and indices) , has recently been published by the Syriac Academy (Baghdad 1976) . There is a German translation, with an important historical commentary , by T. Noldeke Sitzungsberichte der kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien , Phil . hist . Kl. 128, 9; 1893) and a Russian one , also with commentary, by N. Pigulevskaya in Zapiski Instituta Vostok. Akad . Nauk. 7 (1939), 55—78.

39- For further secondary literature on the Chronicle of Arbela , see Ortiz de Urbina, Patrologia Syriaca, 210—11.

(25) John of Phenek Resh Melle

John of Phenek, a monk from the monastery of Mar Yohannan of Kamul living at the end of the seventh century, was the author of a theologically orientated world history entitled Ktaba d-resh melle, in fifteen books. The work, addressed to a certain Sabrisho, covers the following topics: book I, Hexaemeron and history of the world up to the Flood; II, Flood to Exile; III, Return from Exile to the Maccabean martyrs; IV - IX, theological and exegetical, rather than historical, in character; IX, on pagan religions; X-XI, life of Christ; XII, Ascension to destruction of the Temple (70); XIII, mission of the apostles; XIV; death of the apostles to the Arab invasions; XV, seventh century ..

T. Jansma (40) lists twelve late nineteenth or early twentieth century manuscripts of the work which he considers were probably all descended from a lost manuscript of 1262 written at Tabriz; there are two further incomplete manuscripts of uncertain derivation. So far only books X-XV, covering the first to the end of the seventh centuries AD, have printed, in Mingana's Sources Syriaques I, pp. 2* —171*, with a French translation of book XV only (pp. 172* —203* , with index). A German translation of extracts from the end of book XIV will be found in Abramowski's Dionysius von Tellmaher, pp. 5—8. Of the earlier books only an extract from book IX, on Zoroastrianism, has been published, with French translation, by J. de Mesnasse in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 9 (1937/9), 587—601 (incorporated by R. Zaehner into his Zurvan (Oxford 1955), 419—29).

(26) Elia (Elijah) of Nisibis , Chronography

The only East Syrian chronological work conceived on a large scale to

40- T. Jansma, 'Projet d'edition du ktaba d-resh melle, de Jean bar Penkaye', L'Orient Syrien 8 (1963), 87—106, where references to earlier literature will be found. (It is unclear whether resh melle 'summary' here, or whether it is a calque on Greek archaiologia).

have survived is the Chronography by Elia, metropolitan of Nisibis (1008-46). This bilingual (Syriac and Arabic) compilation is in two parts, the first consisting of various chronological tables followed by a list of notable events arranged by year (often listing the name of the source of information) and covering AD 25 - 1018 (the beginning is missing , and there are lacunae for the years 785—878 and 972—994) . The second part is devoted to elaborate calendrical tables .

The work is preserved, not quite complete, in London Add. 7197, of AD 1018 , parts of which are probably in the author's own hand . The complete Syriac text has been edited by Brooks and Chabot in CSCO 62/21—22 (with Latin translation in CSCO 63/23—4) . There is a French translation by L . Delaporte, Chronographie de Mar Elie bar Shinaya, metropolitte de Nisibe (Paris 1910) , with an index of names . A German translation (together with Syriac and Arabic text) of the list of historical events for AD 622—1018 (correponding to pp. 126—228 of Brooks' edition is to be found in F. Baethgen, Fragmente syrischer und arabischer Historiker (Leipzig 1884) ; this too has an index of names(41).

(27) Fragment of ecclesiastical history

Vat. syr. 179, ff. 104 — 111, of 1703 contains an excerpt covering the ecclesiastical history of the fourth and early fifth century ; the compiler , however, probably belonged to the eleventh century or later.

The text was first edited by E. Goeller in Oriens Christianus 1 (1901), 80—97, with a Latin translation ; it was subsequently reedited by Chabot in Chronica Minora III (= CSCO 5/5 , pp. 371—8; Latin translation in CSCO 6/6, pp. 297—304).

By way of conclusion it may be helpful to give a synoptic view of the periods covered by our various historical texts . In the table which follows

41- Cp D. Serruys , 'Les canons d'Eusebe , d'Annianos et d'Andronicos d'apres Elie de Nisibe ', Byzantinische Zeitschrift 22 (1913), 1—38 An arabic translation : J. Habbi, Syriac Academy, Baghdad , 1975 .

the numbers refer to the different sources described above ; in recapitulation these are :

(West Syrian)

- 1 = Chronicle of Edessa
- 2 = Ps. Zacharias Rhetor , Ecclesiastical History
- 3 = John of Ephesus , Ecclesiastical History
- 4 = Melkite Chronicle
- 5 = Maronite Chronicle
- 6 = Jacob of Edessa, Chronical
- 7 = Historical notices for 712—716
- 8 = Chronical to the year 724
- 9 = Excerpts concerning the years 501—8, 763/4
- 10 = Chronical to the year 775
- 11 = The Zuqnin Chronical
- 12 = Chronical to the year 813
- 13 = Chronical to the year 819
- 14 = Chronicle to the year 846
- 15 = Dionysius of Tellmahre , Ecclesiastical History
- 16 = Michael , Chronicle
- 17 = Chronicle to the year 1234
- 18 = Gregory Abu'l Faraġ, Chronicle (secular and ecclesiastical)
- 19 = Continuator of Gregory
- 20 = Anonymous historical texts of the 14th/15th centuries

(East Syrian)

- 21 = Barhadbeshabba , Ecclesiastical History
- 22 = History of karka d-Beth Slokh
- 23 = Chronicle of Arbela
- 24 = Anonymous Chronicle
- 25 = John of Phenek, Resh Melle
- 26 = Elia of Nisibis , Chronography
- 27 = Fragment of ecclesiastical history .

An asterisk after a number in the following table indicates that the material in that source is either very brief or only partially preserved .

Creation - Alexander : 4* 8* 10 11 14 16 17 18 25 .

3rd - 1st century BC : 1 * 4 * 5 8* 10 11 14 16 17 18 25 .

1st — 3rd century AD : 1 4* 5 8* 10 11 13* 14 16 17 18 22 23 25 26.

4th - 5th century AD : 1 2 4* 5* 6*8* 10* 11 13* 14 16 17 18 21 22 23 25 26 27*.

6th century AD : 1 2 3 4 6 * 8*9*10* 11 13 14* 15* 16 17 18 21 23 24 25 26 .

7th - century AD 5 * 6 * 8 10 * 11 * 13 14 16 17 18 24 25 26

8th - early 9th cent. AD : 7 8 9 * 10* 11* 12 13 14* 15* 16 17

mid 9th — 13th cent. AD : 16 17 18 26 (42)

14th - 15th century AD : 19 20 .

Finally I list, in chronological order , some secondary literature of a more general character which is concerned Syriac historical texts :

A. Wirth, Aus orientalischen Chroniken (Frankfurt 1890) (43).

E. W. Brooks , The sources of Theophanes and the Syriac chronicles ' .

Byzantinische Zeitschrift 15 (1906) , 578-87. (Mainly on a source common to the 846 chronicle and the Greek chronicler Theophanes) .

R. Duval , La littérature syriaque (3rd edition; Paris 1907), 177 — 205 .

F. Haase, Altchristliche Kirchengeschichte nach orientalischen Quellen (Leipzig 1925) , 6-24 . (Survey of Syriac historical sources ; it should be noted that the references are not always accurate) .

N. V. Pigulevskaya , Siriiskie istochniki po istorii narodov SSR (Moscow / Leningrad 1941) .

— , Vizantiya i Iran na rubezhe VI i VII vekov (Moscow/ Leningrad 1946), 30—49 . (Survey of Syriac sources) .

I. E. Barsaum, Kitāb al lū' lū al mantūr ... , 126—37/173—89 .

R. A. Guseinov, Siriiskie istočniki XII-XII vv. ob Azerbaidzhane (Baku 1960).

42- To 1018 only .

43- Sss Krumbacher's critical review in Byzantinische Zeitschrift 3 (1894 , 607—25 .

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- J. B. Segal, ' Syriac chronicles as source material for the history of Islamic peoples' , in Historians of the Middle East (ed. B. Lewis and P.M. Holt ; London 1962) , 246—58.
- R.A. Guseinov, ' Les sources syriaques des XII et XIII siecles concernant l'Azerbaidjan ' , Bedi Karthlisa (Paris) 15/6 (1963) , 78—81 .
- I. Ortiz de Urbina, Patrologia Syriaca (2nd edition; Rome 1965) ,206-12,220-23 .
- E. Degen, 'Daniel bar Maryam . Ein nestorianische Kirchenhistoriker', OC 52 (1968) , 45—80 .
- J.M. Fiey, Jalons pour une histoire de l'eglise en Iraq (CSCO 310 ; 1970), 8-31. (Critical survey of sources) .
- A. S. Proudfoot, ' The sources of Theophanes for the Heraclian dynasty ' , Byzantion 44 (1974) , 367—439 .) Includes some references to Syriac chronicles) .
- S. P. Brook, 'Syriac sources for seventh-century history ' ,Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies 2 (1976) , 17—36 .